



**Kuza Africa**

# **THE SOCIAL PULSE:**

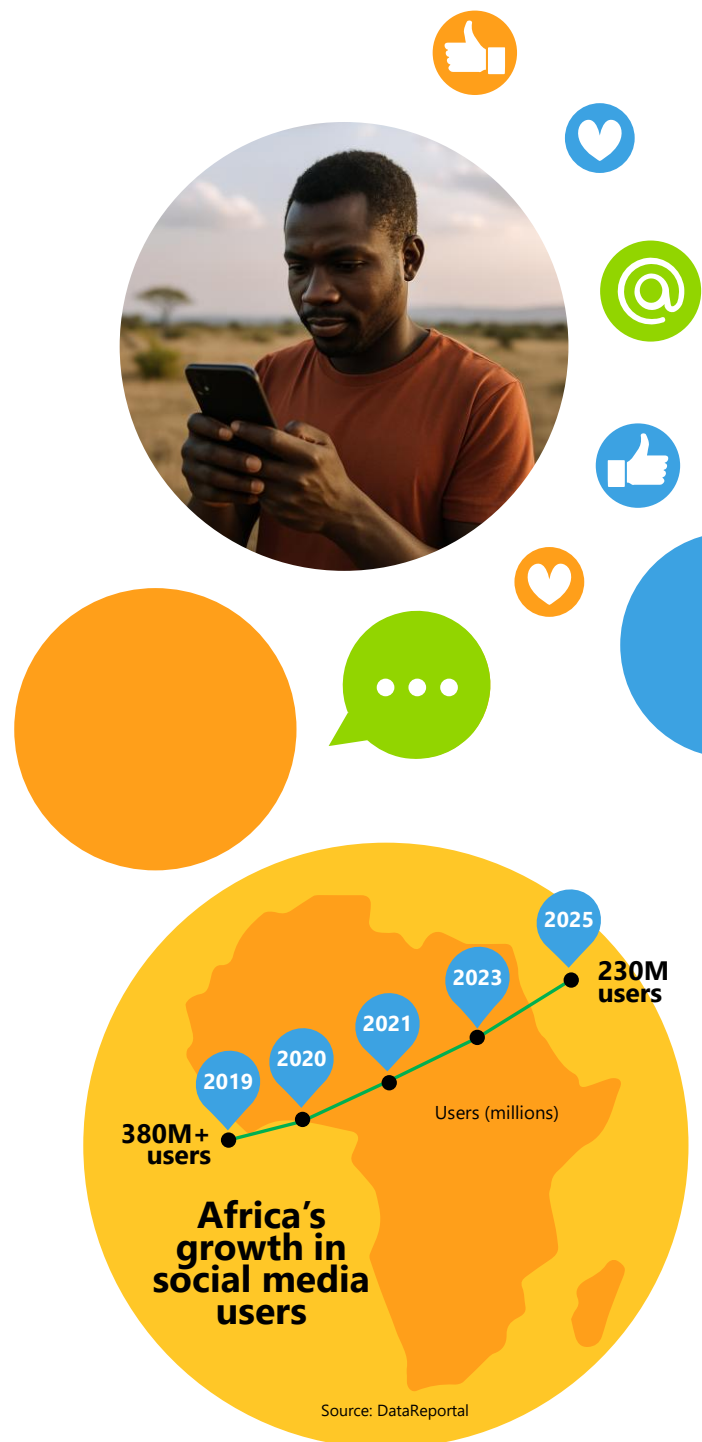
**Influencing Trends, Shaping Narratives**

**May | 2025**

# Introduction

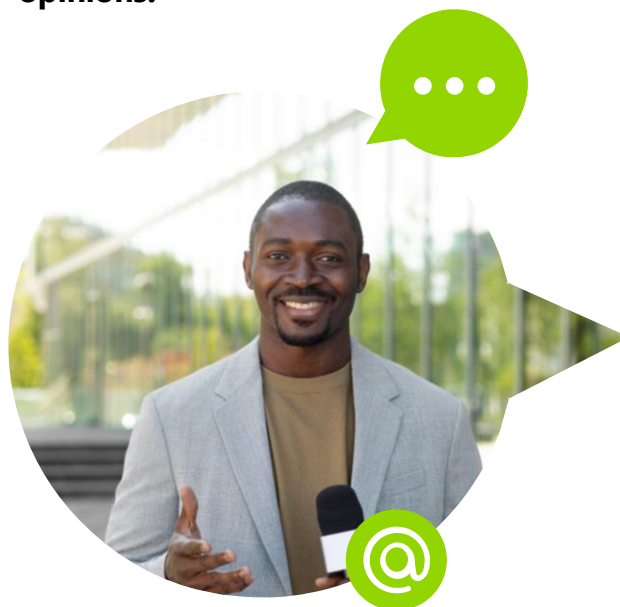
Africa's 380 + million social-media **users now create, remix, and monetise culture in real time**. Platforms once used purely for connection have become **marketplaces, newsrooms, talent scouts and social-justice megaphones**. From TikTok dance challenges that leap borders overnight to WhatsApp groups that mobilise neighbourhood commerce, the "social pulse" is where **narratives form and where brands are judged**.

What makes the continent unique is the **youth bulge** ( $\approx 60\%$  **under 25**), **mobile-first access** ( $\approx 70\%$  of web traffic) and **creator ingenuity**. Influence is decentralised: **micro-creators** in Lagos or Nairobi can **move product lines as fast as celebrities** in Johannesburg or Cairo. Understanding this pulse lets brands **shape momentum** instead of reacting to it.



# The Evolution of the Social Pulse: From Passive Scrolls to Active Influence

In Africa, social media has evolved from a space for **basic peer-to-peer communication** into a **cultural and commercial force**. Platforms like Facebook, TikTok, X (formerly Twitter), and Instagram are no longer just entertainment hubs—they are now critical arenas where **consumers learn, express themselves, shop, protest, discover trends, and form opinions**.



African consumers have become active participants in **shaping narratives, not just consuming them**. Where social platforms once served mainly as chat tools or entertainment channels, today they are **trusted sources of news, lifestyle inspiration, and even health and financial guidance**. In fact, **65% of Gen Z in Africa** now cite social media as their primary source of news (*DataReportal, 2023*). Users engage with a mix of **local influencers, grassroots movements, and global trends, merging traditional values with modern expression**.

Platforms like TikTok have empowered users to **revive local languages, showcase cultural pride, and build communities** around shared interests—from fashion and food to entrepreneurship and mental health. Moreover, social platforms have dramatically **shifted the path to purchase**. A growing share of users discover and evaluate products via peer content, short videos, and comment threads—well before they ever visit a website. **Social proof** and **community engagement** now rival traditional advertising in influence.



So, what do these  
**changes** mean to  
consumers?

How is it impacting  
and **influencing the**  
**choices they** make?

How can companies  
**stay relevant** in this  
new context?





# The Key Trends Shaping the Digital Boom

1



**Explosive User Growth & New Entrants** - 150 M new Africans will join social platforms by 2025.

2



**Social Commerce & Influencer Sales** - Engagement converts straight to checkout; feeds = storefronts.

3



**Social-as-Newsroom** - A majority now hear breaking news first on social timelines.

5



**Purpose-Driven Social Activism** - Social media is a platform for civic action and brand accountability

4



**Messaging Super-Apps & Embedded Services** - WhatsApp, Ayoba, Telegram become service, pay, and content hubs.

**Local Language & Urban Slang Content** - Youth are reshaping digital culture through local dialects and slang.

6



7



**Live & Audio Communities** - Real-time Spaces/Lives create mass town-halls & product drops.

# Trend 1

## Explosive User Growth & New Entrants

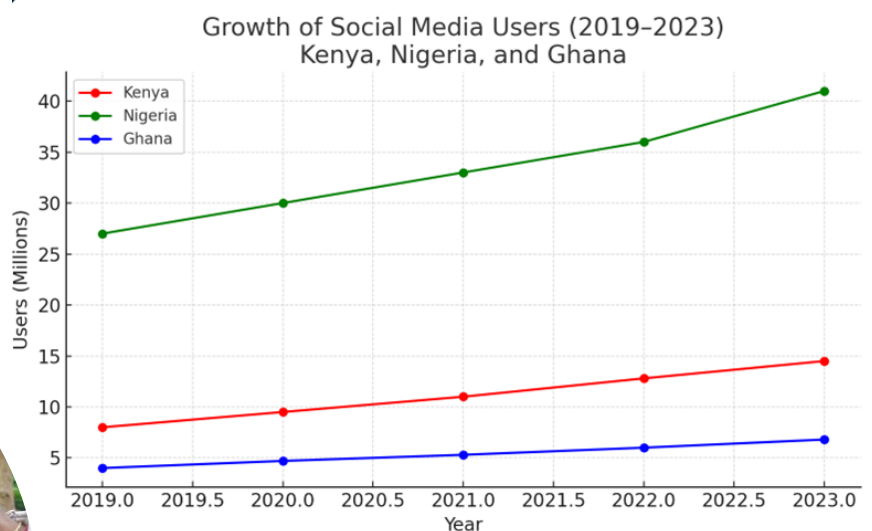
The continent's digital population is surging, driven by smartphone access, youth demographics, and cheaper data. This creates an unprecedented expansion of the social media audience base.

### How Brands in Africa Can Leverage This Trend:

Run mass-awareness campaigns **targeting first-time social users.**

**Localize content** for lower-literacy, mobile-first audiences.

Leverage data to **understand emerging cohorts and trends.**



Kenya, Nigeria, and Ghana all recorded >10% year-on-year social user growth (DataReportal, 2024).

### Social Commerce & Influencer Sales

Social media has become a full-fledged sales channel, with influencers driving impulse buys and in-app shopping tools streamlining purchases. Instagram Shops, TikTok Shop, and Facebook Marketplace are enabling real-time, product-tagged content.

#### How Brands in Africa Can Leverage This Trend:

**Partner with local influencers** for conversion-focused campaigns.

**Use shoppable posts** and integrate with Instagram/TikTok commerce tools.

Offer **exclusive product drops** or flash sales on social channels.

Nigerian beauty brand **Nuban Beauty** has seen direct sales spikes during influencer live demos on Instagram.



**Flutterwave "Creator" codes** let influencers drive Send-app remittances.

**How to create discount codes on the Flutterwave Store**



## Trend 3

### Social-as-Newsroom

Africans increasingly turn to social media for **real-time updates**, replacing traditional media as the first source of information. Timelines on X (Twitter), Facebook, and TikTok double as **newsfeeds and public discourse spaces**.

#### How Brands in Africa Can Leverage This Trend:

Use social platforms for **timely announcements and brand responses**.

Engage in **social listening** to stay ahead of trending topics.

Train teams to **respond with authenticity** during major news cycles.

During Ghana's e-levy debate, MTN clarified fee impacts on Twitter Spaces, calming churn rumours.



fuinuane

This journey is about lifting others and making the future better for everyone despite these trying times.



Safaricom "#Tuinuane" data-for-schools pledge rolled out live on Facebook, then syndicated to TV.



## Trend 4

### Messaging Super-Apps & Embedded Services

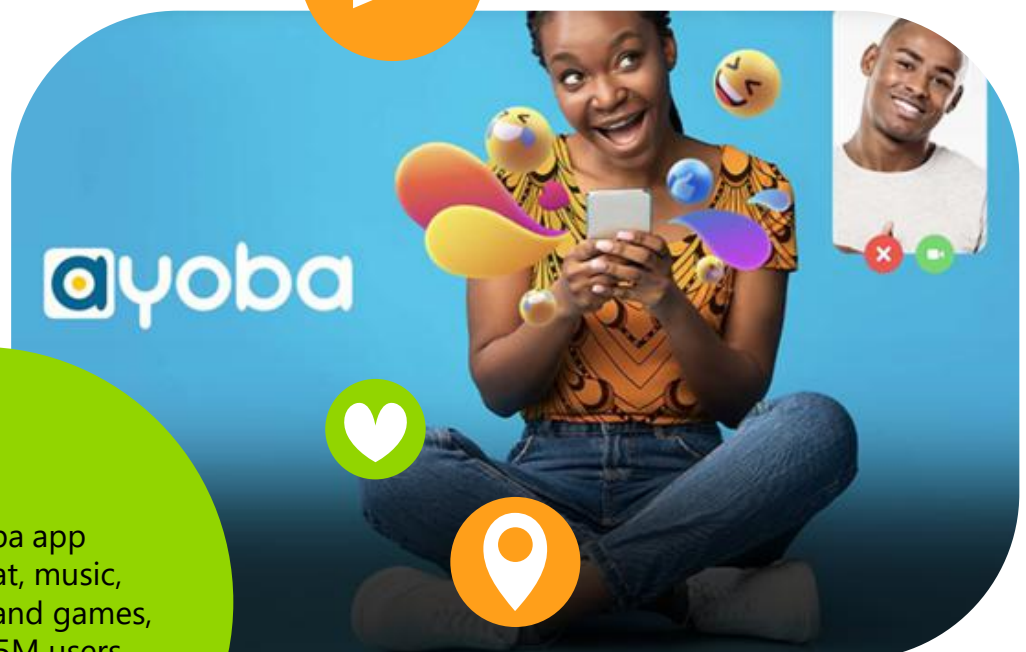
Messaging platforms are evolving into multi-functional ecosystems—offering payments, customer support, shopping, and content delivery. For many users, WhatsApp is now the internet.

#### How Brands in Africa Can Leverage This Trend:

Offer **WhatsApp-based shopping**, support, and loyalty services.

Explore **integration into Ayoba or Telegram Bots** for deeper engagement.

**Deliver mini content formats** (tips, videos, offers) through messaging.



MTN's Ayoba app bundles chat, music, payments, and games, with over 35M users across Africa.

## Trend 5

### Purpose-Driven Social Activism

African youth use social platforms to **champion causes**—from climate action to gender rights. Movements gain visibility fast, and **brands are expected to show social consciousness**.

#### How Brands in Africa Can Leverage This Trend:

**Publicly support relevant causes** aligned with their values.

**Partner with credible activists** or nonprofits to drive meaningful campaigns.

**Be transparent**—performative activism gets called out quickly..

Airtel partnered with AXA Mansard to offer health insurance bundled with data plans. This initiative provides customers with access to telemedicine services and health coverage, with promotional efforts and customer testimonials shared via social media platforms.

Safaricom collaborated with UNICEF Kenya to connect schools to the internet, promote child protection, and disseminate health information during emergencies. The partnership includes the "Spot it, Stop it" campaign, which raises awareness about violence against children, both offline and online, utilizing social media for broader reach.



[Home](#) / [Media center](#) / [Press Releases](#) / [Unicef Kenya And Safaricom Announce Landmark Partnership For Children](#)

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### Local Language & Urban Slang Content

Sheng (Kenya), Nouchi (Ivory Coast), and Tsotsitaal (South Africa) are dominating TikTok and meme culture. Content that reflects how people actually speak is more relatable and viral.

#### How Brands in Africa Can Leverage This Trend:

Use **local dialects** in ad scripts, subtitles, and hashtags.

Co-create content with **youth creators** fluent in digital street culture.

Test audio formats like voice notes and local jingles.

#### Red Bull Kenya – “Usikubali Vibes Zishuke” Campaign

Red Bull localized its global slogan “Red Bull Gives You Wings” into Kenyan Sheng as “Usikubali Vibes Zishuke,” translating to “Don’t let your vibes drop.” This adaptation aimed to resonate with Kenyan youth by using colloquial language.



#### GTBank Nigeria – “No Wahala” Campaign

GTBank launched the “No Wahala” campaign, blending Nigerian Pidgin English and Yoruba to communicate ease and simplicity in banking services.

YOU'VE GOT BILLS  
TO PAY? NO WAHALA,  
Do it with  
**\*737\***



## Trend 7

### Live & Audio Communities

Live video and audio rooms offer spontaneous, unfiltered interaction—great for Q&As, launches, or storytelling. They're shaping a new type of brand and community intimacy.

#### How Brands in Africa Can Leverage This Trend:

**Host live** product tutorials, launches, or behind-the-scenes events.

Collaborate with creators for **co-hosted sessions**.

Use live formats to answer questions and **build credibility in real-time**.



Auqli is Nigeria's first interactive live shopping platform, aiming to revolutionize the e-commerce experience. It utilizes Instagram Live to host shopping events where vendors present their products in real-time. It incorporates interactive features like live chats and instant purchasing options.

#### Impact:

Enhances customer engagement through interactive sessions.

Creates a sense of urgency and excitement around product launches.



#### Girl Effect – Interactive Voice Response (IVR) & AI Chatbots

Girl Effect, an international non-profit, has implemented innovative audio-based platforms to reach adolescent girls with vital health and education information. In Tanzania, they launched an IVR system allowing girls to access stories and advice on topics like entrepreneurship and financial literacy using basic mobile phones. In South Africa, the AI-powered chatbot "Big Sis" on WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger provides confidential advice on sexual health and relationships.

#### Impact:

The IVR platform received over 1.5 million calls.

"Big Sis" engaged 44,000 users, exchanging over 1 million messages.





Africa's digital boom touches every generation—but how they engage, what influences them, and how they respond to brands varies significantly. A tailored approach is essential. Here's how each generation connects to digital platforms, brand themes, and engagement styles:



## **GEN ALPHA** (2013 onwards)

Africa's first fully post-digital generation—growing up with smartphones.

**Digital Behaviors:** Edutainment apps, kids' YouTube, mobile games, voice search, smart devices (via parents).

**Themes That Connect:** Play, learning, cultural pride, visual storytelling, gamified learning

**Channels That Work:** YouTube Kids, gamified apps, interactive digital books, AR filters.

**Brand Aspects That Matter:** Parent-approved content, safety, fun, Afrocentric relatable characters; safe environments and stories.

**Engagement Style:** Highly influenced by parents and siblings. Co-watching and family-centered discovery are key.



## **GEN Z** (1997 - 2012)

Africa's digital natives—bold, expressive, and mobile-first. They live on TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube, where trends are made in real time.

**Digital Behaviors:** Mobile-first digital natives. Spend most of their time on social media. Frequently engage with short-form video and memes..

**Themes That Connect:** Self-expression, authenticity, creativity, social justice and entrepreneurship

**Channels That Work:** TikTok, Instagram Reels, YouTube Shorts, peer-led WhatsApp groups.

**Brand Aspects That Matter:** Raw, unfiltered content; influencer alignment; trend participation; brand purpose.

**Engagement Style:** but community-validated. They co-create, share widely, and join digital movements.



## **MILLENNIALS** (1981 - 1996)

Africa's early adopters of digital tech—convenience, upward mobility, and social validation are key.

**Digital Behaviors:** Oni-channel users, social commerce, online reviews, mobile banking, Facebook & WhatsApp groups.

**Themes That Connect:** Career growth, parenting hacks, convenience, social status and financial wellness.

**Channels That Work:** WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, e-commerce platforms.

**Brand Aspects That Matter:** Trust, lifestyle alignment, value, seamless UX, social proof.

**Engagement Style:** Self-driven tech adopters, community-informed decisions.



## **GEN X** (1965 - 1980)

Digitally active but cautious—practical users who value reliability and prefer services with human support.

**Digital Behaviors:** Increasingly active on WhatsApp and Facebook. Use platforms for community groups, business updates, and news.

**Themes That Connect:** Family, security, community service, brand loyalty.

**Channels That Work:** SMS, Facebook, traditional media, community outreach.

**Brand Aspects That Matter:** Simplicity, longevity, clear benefits, hybrid service models.

**Engagement Style:** Community-influenced, pragmatically self-guided.



## **BABY BOOMERS** (1946 - 1964)

Least digitally active, but open to simple, helpful tech introduced by trusted sources like family or church.

**Digital Behaviors:** Limited social media usage, but growing presence on WhatsApp and Facebook. Often guided by family members..

**Themes That Connect:** Respect, tradition, trust, ease-of-use.

**Channels That Work:** TV, radio, in-person, family-mediated digital touchpoints.

**Brand Aspects That Matter:** Familiarity, clarity, personalized support, cultural respect.

**Engagement Style:** Community-driven, family-assisted digital access.

# OUR **4SiGHT Live Suite**



## **PANEL AFRICA**

Our pre-recruited ahead-of-the-curve panel for quick, cost-efficient research needs, offering a window into live data



## **COMMUNITIES**

Designed to build an agile system to conduct research while keeping the customer at the heart of the business.

Enables clients to make consumer relevant decisions by testing on the go



## **CONSUMER CONNECTS**

4SiGHT's solution to curate and build a customized calendar of immersive interviews for client teams to get the pulse of the consumer

Available as ad-hoc & annual programs

For more information, contact  
**[info@4sight-global.com](mailto:info@4sight-global.com)**



OUR

## Research Tools

### INSIGHT EXPRESS

Enables swift and efficient innovation testing, reducing the risks linked to a comprehensive launch allowing you to explore, experiment, and fail cheap.

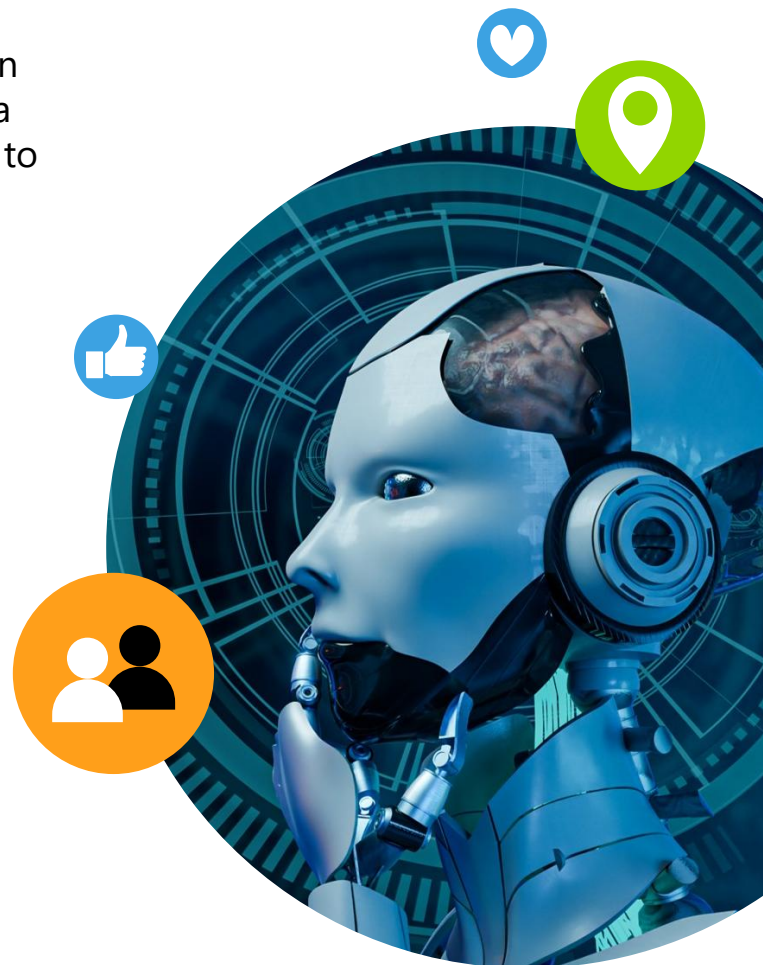
### AASMA | CHATBOT

Facilitates interactive conversations with consumers, streamlining the process of filling consumption/usage diaries. Leading to improved efficiency and quality of data collection.

### SPRINT+

Provides an innovative boost to your iterative process by making it more AGILE through co-creation workshops, giving wings to potential ideas/improvements

For more information, contact  
**[info@4sight-global.com](mailto:info@4sight-global.com)**



# OUR Calendar 2025

## **JANUARY**

**KUZA AFRICA:  
UNVEILING  
OPPORTUNITIES,  
EMPOWERING  
CHANGE**

## **FEBRUARY**

**KUZA AFRICA:  
CULTURAL  
RENAISSANCE**

## **MARCH**

**ROOTS REVIVAL:  
EMBRACING, LOCAL  
AND TRADITIONAL,  
FAVORITES**

## **APRIL**

**DIGITAL BOOM:  
AFRICA'S LEAP INTO  
THE FUTURE  
ECONOMY**

## **MAY**

**THE SOCIAL PULSE:  
INFLUENCING  
TRENDS, SHAPING  
NARRATIVES.**

## **JUNE**

**GREEN CHALLENGES:  
TACKLING CLIMATE  
CHANGE AND ECO-  
PRESSURES**

## **JULY**

**CONSCIOUS  
CHOICES:  
SUSTAINABILITY  
MEETS ETHICAL  
LIVING.**

## **AUGUST**

**UNITED MARKETS:  
AFCFTA POWERING  
REGIONAL GROWTH**

## **SEPTEMBER**

**RIISING STARS:  
YOUTH AND  
WOMEN LEADING  
CHANGE**

## **OCTOBER**

**PLAY TO WIN: E-  
SPORTS AND  
GAMING ON THE  
RISE**

## **NOVEMBER**

**UNWINDING  
AFRICA:  
ENTERTAINMENT  
AND LEISURE  
REDEFINED**

## **DECEMBER**

**WELLNESS  
REVOLUTION:  
PRIORITIZING  
HEALTH AND  
BALANCE**

For more information, contact [\*\*info@4sight-global.com\*\*](mailto:info@4sight-global.com)