

Kawiwi, an online marketplace for freelancers, consultants and service providers



By [Evan-Lee Courie](#)

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Zambia-born former banker, author and entrepreneur Edwin Ngwane has created a platform that gives consultants, freelancers, unemployed graduates, semi-skilled and skilled individuals access to markets. After spending 10 years in the banking sector, holding various positions Ngwane took the daunting and often uncertain road of entrepreneurship. A decision he says was inspired by feeling stagnant in what was his dream job.



Edwin Ngwane, founder of Kawiwi.com

We find out about his most recent project, an online platform called [Kawiwi.com](https://kawiwi.com)

■ ***Can you tell us a bit about Kawiwi?***

Kawiwi is an online marketplace for freelancers, consultants and service providers. It is a platform which allows people to have access to qualified and verified consultants and service providers.

■ ***When, how and why did you get started?***

Kawiwi was built in 2020 after seeing the challenges which consultant, freelancers and service providers face with getting paid clients. We also realised that many clients were struggling with finding credible and verified consultants and service providers. We therefore embarked on creating a platform which was going to be a solution for both clients and consultants. And that's how we started the project and launched it in demo mode later in 2020.

■ ***What is the core function of Kawiwi?***

The core function of the platform is being a platform where clients can easily hire credible and verified consultants and service providers. The platform also gives consultants access to a global clientele.

■ ***What are some of the obstacles you've had to overcome since starting out?***

The challenges we faced in the beginning was acceptance of the platform. However, many people have started accepting the platform and we are seeing many consultants and clients signing up every day.

■ ***What advice would you give to other aspiring entrepreneurs?***

An aspiring entrepreneur needs to understand that building a startup is not easy, but it is an endeavour worth pursuing. Once you embark on the entrepreneurship journey, you will meet challenges along the way, but you will be pleased with the rewards once it works.

■ ***What has been your proudest achievement thus far?***

The greatest achievement for me has been the number of people I have come to meet because of being in business. Entrepreneurship has opened so many doors for me that I have met and held meetings with great and powerful people.

■ ***What does the future of entrepreneurship look like to you?***

The future looks very bright. Kawiwi is still in its infancy stage and yet the progress is very exciting. We believe that with hard work and commitment, we will be soon become a household name in the business services space.

■ ***What would you like to see changed in the African startup landscape?***

I believe that the African startup landscape is going in the right direction, but we need more belief.

“ I know a number of entrepreneurs who have given up because they lacked enough belief in their work and what they set out to do. ”

And since entrepreneurship is not an easy journey, self-belief helps along the way when you face challenges. I therefore encourage any African Entrepreneur to believe in themselves so much until the business works.

■ ***What do you believe are the traits an entrepreneur needs in order to succeed?***

Hard work will always be key for any business to succeed, but it has to be coupled with goal focus, determination, resilience, innovation and people skills. These traits have helped me along the way and I think they can help any person who wants to succeed in the entrepreneurship journey.

■ ***Tell us about your biggest struggles as an entrepreneur, as well as some major highlights.***

The biggest challenge in my entrepreneurship journey has been financing. Almost every project I have worked on has been self-financed. And this is not easy.

“ In Africa, we do not have many banks or financiers for startups and this tends to be a challenge for most upcoming entrepreneurs. ”

I remember getting a personal loan of about \$25,000 from the bank for personal use and ended up diverting the funds to build Kawiwi. And this put a financial strain on my life, but I really didn't care until I finished paying off the loan and I think it was worth it.

■ ***Why would you encourage someone to become an entrepreneur?***

Entrepreneurship is the surest way of building wealth. I know that someone can build a steady income with a job but if you want to build wealth that will last a lifetime, entrepreneurship is the way to go.

And the other reason for becoming an entrepreneur is the control you tend to have on your life. When I was an employee, I can't count the number of times I missed radio and TV interviews because the company I worked for couldn't give me the time to do those interviews. And it wasn't because they were a bad company, but because I needed to offer a service to their clients and I was responsible enough to understand that I couldn't leave my work for my personal things.

However, after I left my job, I have been able to travel at short notice and do many interviews in a short period of time. This has helped the growth of Kawiwi and my writing business

📌 ***Where would you like to see Kawiwi in the next 5 years?***

Kawiwi is the next big thing. I believe that the future is not about permanent jobs but rather consulting and short-term gigs. Kawiwi will therefore become an African giant and provide opportunities for skilled people. Consultants and service providers will be able to get paid clients through the platform, and clients will also get access to verified and credible consultants and service providers.

We believe that Kawiwi will help with giving an alternative to employment and change the narrative about what the job is all about. Many African youths will use Kawiwi to offer their expertise and services and it will create employment for many youths.

ABOUT EVAN-LEE COURIE

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