



## PRESS RELEASE

### **UGANDA INTERNATIONAL FASHION WEEK RETURNS TO CHAMPION UGANDA'S CREATIVE ECONOMY AND EMPOWER OVER 10,000 WOMEN AND YOUTHS**

#### **UGANDA INTERNATIONAL FASHION WEEK RETURNS THIS JUNE AFTER SIX-YEAR HIATUS**

Kampala, Uganda – March 23, 2026: After more than two decades of shaping Africa's fashion landscape, Uganda International Fashion Week (UIFW) is set to return this June, 22nd –27th, at the prestigious Kampala Serena Hotel, reaffirming its position as one of the continent's and Uganda's most influential platforms, spotlighting fashion as a business.

The 2026 Edition marks an exciting new chapter for the fashion sector, with the launch of a Creative Economy Program (2026–2028), designed to equip over 9,840 youths aged 15–35, the majority of them women and girls, with practical skills, mentorship, coaching, enterprise development support, and access to regional and global markets within the fashion and creative industries.

Supported by Mastercard Foundation, the initiative aims to unlock opportunities for youth employment and women empowerment by strengthening Uganda's rapidly growing fashion ecosystem while mobilising additional partners to scale its impact across Africa's creative economy.

Founded in 2003 by renowned fashion designer and entrepreneur Santa Anzo, Uganda International Fashion Week has spent more than two decades showcasing Ugandan designers and connecting creatives to global opportunities. The expanded program now goes beyond runway showcases to focus on skills development, entrepreneurship, and industry growth across the fashion value chain.

"We don't just exhibit fashion, we build livelihoods," said Santa Anzo, Founder of ARAPAPA and the Uganda International Fashion Week. "Fashion is not only about passion, creativity, and self-expression; it is also a powerful engine for entrepreneurship, job creation, and cultural influence. Through skills training,

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MAGNIFICENT OUTCOMES UGANDA LIMITED, P.O.BOX 151342, KAMPALA, UGANDA.

Tel: +256 393 20 6454 /Email: [admin@uifwglobal.com](mailto:admin@uifwglobal.com) / [arapapabysantaanzo@gmail.com](mailto:arapapabysantaanzo@gmail.com) / [www.uifwglobal.com](http://www.uifwglobal.com)

Participants mentorship, and enterprise support, we want to help young people transform their talent into sustainable businesses and careers,” she said.

Through this initiative, participants will receive comprehensive, end-to-end support across the fashion ecosystem, including impact showcasing, design, garment manufacturing, model development, practical skills training, business structuring, mentorship, and access to markets and buyers. The programme is designed to drive employment and income generation within the fashion industry and its related sectors, while strengthening linkages between creatives, buyers, investors, and development partners.

The annual Uganda International Fashion Week will remain the flagship platform for showcasing this growing creative economy, bringing together academia, manufacturers, designers, creatives, entrepreneurs, and industry leaders, while positioning Uganda as an emerging hub for African fashion and creative entrepreneurship.

With preparations already underway for the 2026 UIFW, the Organisers are inviting development institutions, corporate partners, impact investors, cultural organizations, and governments to collaborate in expanding opportunities for women and youth, to strengthen manufacturing capacity, and open global market pathways for African designers.

The annual Uganda International Fashion Week 2026 is proudly hosted in partnership with the Mastercard Foundation, alongside the International Trade Centre, Bayimba, and ARAPAPA by Santa ANZO..

### **For More Information**

ARAPAPA by Santa ANZO

UGANDA INTERNATIONAL FASHION WEEK

Email: [admin@uifwglobal.com](mailto:admin@uifwglobal.com) | [arapapabysantaanzo@gmail.com](mailto:arapapabysantaanzo@gmail.com)

Tel: +256 393 20 6454 | +256 700 860 657

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