

Evans Muriu is our guest for this week's fnnONcall. He's a man who describes his age as 'Old enough to vote, but not old enough to be a president'. Evans was quoted on the show saying, "Its better you think on how to sell for an hour, you sell for a minute; than think for a minute, and sell for an hour." Maybe that is why he runs over 5 businesses, self-started and self employed. He is here today to talk about Kuna Vijana, an NGO that he started and runs using his own money from his hard work elsewhere.

Vincent to Evans

Welcome to the show. First, there are those who do not know you, who is Evans Muriu?

Evans

Evans Muriu is the guy who wants to change the way the world rotates. I want to be a living example that the impossible can be done and retire at 30.

Vincent

Interesting, so how old are you? That's if you won't mind saying!

Evans

Old enough to vote but not old enough to be a president. Not that I want to be a politician...

Vincent

Ha! You have a big profile as I can see; you've worked a lot...talk about it in summary. How many jobs have you been on so far and what have you gained all rounds?

Evans

It is all about trying out stuff in life, there is no guarantee what you start will succeed. I would hate to have a business that I will be feeding my family then it fails...I want to have backups...I want to make sure there is money in circulation coz I believe if I empower guys by creating employment etc... guys will have no reason not to promote my biz. I have not been employed by anybody. All jobs are self started and running and registered. I have however worked with SCAD.

Vincent

I can tell that, from your age, and graduating in or after 2010, and with the way we know the place where you come from, you'd not have been employed on all those jobs...You'd like to mention companies and businesses you have started and on which you have employed yourself? Just briefly?

Evans

Vance Motors – This is a company that specializes in selling cars and hiring them out.

Car – Matt – This is an online business which seeks to connect all car users.

Vance Entertainment – This is an entertainment unit which provides all visual and audio entertainment needs to suit the needs of the client. It also does events.

Vance technology – This is a shop which specializes in selling and repairing computers and laptops. Other modern electrical items are also sold. It mostly sells in large quantities.

Winsway products – This is a soap manufacturing company located in Kariobangi light industries. It manufactures and sells detergents and powder soap.

Get it Agencies – This is an agency that specializes in getting clients exactly what they need for the best quality and best price. It deals with everything provided it is legal.

Kuna Vijana initiative is a nationwide youth initiative registered as an NGO that seeks to EARN Kenyan youth a name and a reputation by FULLY TAPPING, UTILIZING and EXPOSING TALENT. It has been in existence since 2008 and has over 5000 members.

S.A.P.P (Studies Abroad Preparation Programme) The organization seeks to equip Kenyan students who go to pursue studies in other countries with skills that will help them overcome the challenges they are likely to come across with as they study away from home.

Vincent

Talking about Kuna Vijana, it's a name is swahili, right?

Evans

Yes. It means 'there are youth'

Vincent

Why the name though? Why Kuna Vijana?

Evans

The Kenyan society knows youth for all the wrong reasons and I don't blame the society. You will find youths engage in wrong behaviors coz of lack of jobs, continuity in the society etc. the name is all about showing the right side of the youth.

Vincent

But then, as you translated, Kuna Vijana means 'There are Youth', they could be there for the bad, what makes people think it positive when they hear of it?

Evans

We reform the bad ... by hearing the name guys tend to be keen to look out what is it they are doing before branding them bad youths....

Vincent

People would like to know, how you are bringing on the right side of the youth through Kuna Vijana...What do you do?

Evans

As I mentioned earlier Kenyan youths do the wrong mostly coz they are idle and jobless. We use talent and education to drive the point home... I believe if we fully tap utilize and expose talent a youth will not be idle for example, there is a lady who went for our auditions and she is now earning from acting...we are like eye opener....education in the lines of entrepreneurship....how to start and run a successful biz or make wise investment.... we also get them to take part in charity by so doing they get to be their brothers keepers and not take everything for granted.

Vincent

Precise, I like that, I can see one of my co producers nodding at that... You've already told us one of the things that inspired you to having Kuna Vijana formed...How did you come to think of Kuna Vijana? What made you think that an NGO can solve that block of thoughts of wrongs about the youth?

Evans

Kuna Vijana came to me as an idea in mid 2007....I worked on it a little then forgot about it...I have had a tendency of postponing a lot, then in 2007 there were skirmishes after elections and I got to see a documentary where its only youths who were turning Kenya upside down....if you go to prisons in Kenya they are full of youths so it hit me....if Kuna Vijana had started maybe Kenya wouldn't have gotten to its knees so I embarked on it in 2008 January. Guys take NGOs seriously and I had an objective which is to empower youths socially and economically...not to make a cent but to help youths make shillings with what is at their reach.

Vincent

Wow! And you started an NGO...Brilliant! But there is a John or a Linet on FNN right who knows how hard it is to start anything, more especially in the African culture and response...How did you actually start? Dug out of your pockets...spoke to friends? Approached some big brothers somewhere?

Evans

Yes and the beauty is I got this at heart and with or without sponsors I gotta change the way the world goes round....so far we haven't gotten sponsors.... I use the money I make from my car biz and I aint regretting....am actually loving it big time.....It is hard yes but with the determination and heart to do it I did it....

Vincent

You know how many people are smiling because of what you do? Well, blessings, man! You've talked about some successes people have had through Kuna Vijana...what about you? What do you look at in Kuna Vijana and you feel' God, thank you!'

Evans

Unfortunately due to financial constrains I have just achieve like 40 percent of what I wanted to be...I am happy guys have stopped using drugs and now use their money wisely. It has also given me the chance to meet people who add value to lives.

Vincent

One thing that I am realizing from this conversation, which I guess most of our FNN receivers are too, is that you are so people-centered, you are not selfish as I can put it...for a moment, what makes you have such a heart, is it natural or is there a person you admire doing something similar that you are emulating?

Evans

I would say its a combination of all that and also my parents the way they brought me up, the environments I have been to have contributed to this....

Vincent

That is great! Here at FNN, people ask, "guys are you making any money?", "why are you doing all these for nada?"...Be encouraged because what FNN runs on are part of bucks earned from elsewhere else. A program like this we are doing right now is part of what ignites the youth and we are happy because of that...that's our payment.... You've faced a lot of challenges, apart from finances, what else has been a rock to carry along your way on KunaVijana? What other challenges?

Evans

The youth think we are here to exploit their talents...many have come in the name of NGOs and have done that but what we have done in the one year, they are trusting us slowly....6,000 youths have...

Vincent

That means you enroll youths?...you get the youth to register with you?

Evans

They just fill forms....we don't enroll them but for example music guys come get their music and use it to make themselves rich. You understand...

Vincent

In case we run out of time before we say this...give us the procedure on how to get to Kuna Vijana. If Vince wants Kuna Vijana to help him, what should he do?

Evans

We are launching a website one can be a member there or on Facebook.... if you want Kuna Vijana to help you, you should be patient and disciplined....fill in the registration form that's it...

Vincent

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Vincent

What happens after I fill the form and how do I get it? Is it open for every disciplined youth?

Evans

It is open...we used to have registration desks within Nairobi but we know with the website it will be easier to register....we do our best to get you opportunities that will make you grow as a person.

Vincent

...if you are need of help before you start your own website, FNN can help you as I am informed by someone in here, can we host your registration form on <http://feltnews.com> that'll be used till then....you have a lot to do.., how do you run KunaVijana, are you helped by someone, or you are just alone on it?

Evans

I am helped by people....head of operations in regions, project mangers etc...

Vincent

You earlier mentioned that you spend part of what you earn from somewhere else to run Kuna Vijana, from it you pay these people too?

Evans

They are volunteers...they see my vision and help me achieve it.

Vincent

Birds of the same feathers flock together, that applies to you, uh?

Evans

Yeah but also other species can bring to the table what we don't have in terms of ideas and strategies....

Vincent

Closing it up...before you go visiting IDPs at the 20th...Say your plan in three years ahead, please?

Evans

Eliminating idleness....using talent on a more personalized level and getting youths to use their energy in a positive way...not uprooting railway lines...

Vincent

Your parting shot...

Evans

Its better you think on how to sell for an hour, you sell for a minute; than think for a minute and sell for an hour. It makes sense!

Vincent

Thanks very much. Success!

Evans

It was nice having me on Call.