

As Rwanda battled Covid-19, one of the measures that were put in place was a lockdown across the country. The move was aimed at halting and controlling the spread of the virus. However, this measure affected operations of different businesses hence leading to loss of employment.

As the economy slowly re-opened, two ladies, Delphine Umugwizawase and Henriette Nishimwe Dusabe realised they could use their childhood passion and dream of being artists to set up a company that would give people employment and also make them some money.



Delphine Umugwizawase and Henriette Nishimwe Dusabe

Nishimwe, the Managing Director revealed that in July last year, the two fulfilled their art dream when they officially launched UBUDASA Wall Paints Ltd dealing in humid wall treatment painting, exterior and interior designs.

“When Covid-19 broke out in Rwanda, different businesses halted operations consequently affecting sources of income for many people who had jobs. We thought of what we could do to contribute in reduction of that but also do what we love on top of earning us income,” Nishimwe notes.

Before registering the company, Ubudasa loosely translated as “uniqueness”, the two used to work casually and most times they would offer free consultancy services to families and friends who had new houses to paint, advise expectant mothers on how to design rooms for their new born among other things.

The CEO of the company, Umugwizawase observes that the style of painting they do for interior and exterior wall paints is in 3D dimensions and have undisputed expertise controlling and fixing humid walls. She emphasises the use of quality paint on special orders from manufacturers together with humidity treatment and prevention mechanism (products, with use of other technologies).



The ambitions of these young ladies are not limited to uplifting themselves alone but to empower other women and break stereotypes that hold women back at workplace. The company employees about 70% women to demonstrate their capability, neither do they shy away climbing walls to paint in what has been known as a male only profession.

Unique in perfecting their designs and painting, she says they order quality paint directly from manufacturers to maintain quality and this is at no extra charges to their clients. She also revealed ambitions to establish their own paint manufacturing plant in future to maintain quality.

Umugwizawase, her partner and their architects have received trainings from different countries to perfect the 3D dimensions and apply other artistic designs. Rwandans that used to look for such skills elsewhere can now source them from UBUDASA Wall Paints.



“We have carried out research and gained skills in fixing different kinds of humid walls. This has helped us find different solutions depending on whether the affected area is inside or outside,” Umugwizawase explains.

She underlined that, “So far the laboratory tests conducted on their solutions have found them to be effective and testimonies from their clients have shown that these solutions work very well.”

However, Nishimwe says all has not been rosy as the company has faced a number of challenges including lack of raw materials on local market hence they are forced to import which is quite expensive.

“We use specific materials for our designs and the main problem is that they are not available on our local markets, but we are working hard to produce them locally and probably we will soon have enough materials,” she notes.

This women-led business is unique as the company name states, they say that as women painters they understand that painting is a male-dominated field and at times some clients doubt whether they can do a proper job. “However this doesn’t discourage them but rather encourage us with our team and we are able to deliver quality services that end up impressing everyone.”



As business grows, UBUDASA Wall Paints is doing well locally and started looking to the west in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where they already expanded with a new branch opened in city of Goma and clientele is slowly growing.

Nishimwe calls on the youth and women in particular to grow their self-confidence and not fear going out to start doing what's their passion whether as main job or side activity.