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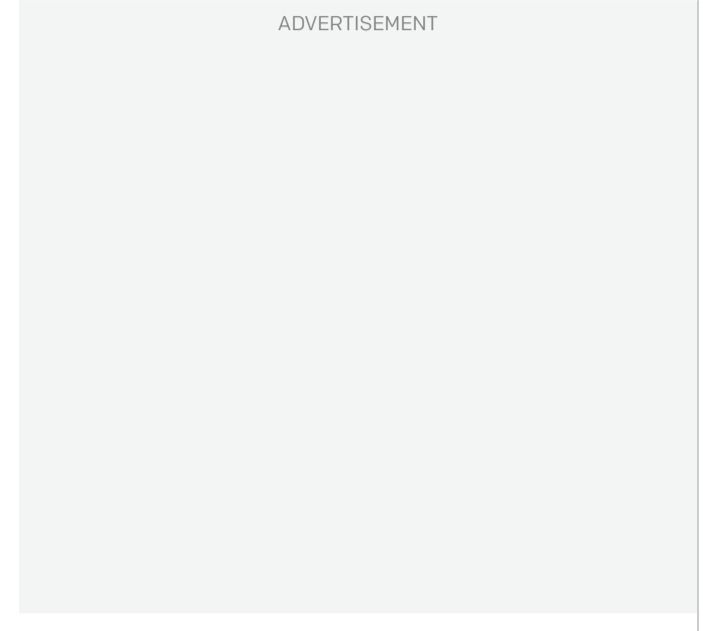
The East African / Magazine

Jokate: Administrator, actor and beauty queen with passion for Tanzania youth growth

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Jokate Mwegele, who is a Tanzanian politician and the District Commissioner for Korogwe District in Tanzania. PHOTO | POOL



By **EMMANUEL ONYANGO**
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Jokate Urban Mwegele wears many hats, the most conspicuous being the one that forms part of the uniform of a district commissioner in Tanzania, where she is the youngest officer to occupy such a position.

A fashion entrepreneur and influencer in her country, she is one of the most influential young people in Africa.

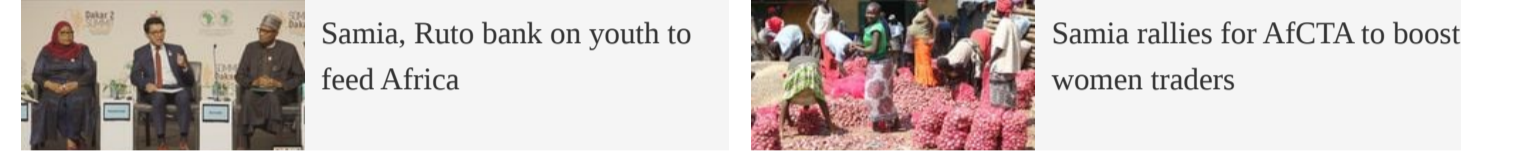
Indeed, she was among Africans on the Forbes 30 Under 30 list in 2017, when the Africa Youth Awards named her among the 100 Most Influential Young Africans due to her entrepreneurship acumen.

And recently, she joined a group of 23 people selected to the Club de Madrid's Network of Young Decision Makers. The club brings together young leaders aged under 36 years, who are active in politics and decision-making bodies and who have reached positions of influence to advocate greater political participation by the youth.

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A film actor, beauty queen and politician, she has been a DC since 2018, serving in Kisarawe in Pwani Region, Temeke in Dar es Salaam, and Korogwe in Tanga Region.

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In her earlier days of public service, when she served in the ruling Chama cha Mapinduzi's Youth Wing, she espoused a passion for education, health, food security, tourism and social enterprise. Now, as an administrator, she has continued to pursue these, with a bias towards helping youth and women.

She says she is used to producing high-quality results in whatever she undertakes. It is this leadership passion that got her into the Madrid Network.

Jokate and other participants from Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean were selected because of their "exceptional leadership skills, inspired by high dedication and commitment in creating positive changes in the societies."

"I am honoured to be selected as a member of the club," she told *The EastAfrican*.

"This global network provides an opportunity for young leaders like me to connect, learn, and drive positive change."

Club de Madrid is considered one of the world's largest forums of former heads of state and government, comprising 126 regular members from 73 countries, including seven Nobel Peace Prize laureates and 20 first female heads of state or government.

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Among the main goals inspired by the club are strengthening of democratic institutions and counselling on the resolution of political conflicts as well as response to crises.

A year after she was listed on the Forbes 30 Under 30 in Africa, she was named the third-most influential Tanzanian youth in the Advance Media's 2018 Most Influential Young Tanzanians Awards, featuring in the Governance and Law category.

She was first appointment DC by the late president Dr John Magufuli, aged only 31.

President Samia Suluhu Hassan retained her in July 2021, four months after she assumed power, and appointed her again as the DC for Korogwe. She also survived the January 2023 mini reshuffle of administrators and other government officials as President Samia continued to streamline the public service.

Wherever she goes, Jokate leaves a mark. For instance, while at Kisarawe district, she pioneered a successful education development campaign dubbed Tokomeza Zero that raised more than \$500,000, which was used to build a girls boarding school named Jokate Mwegele Secondary School.

She has been at the forefront in addressing issues of girls' education, teenage pregnancies and early marriages, creating facilities for girls to feel safe and to pursue their dreams.

A graduate of political science, she decided to do fashion after leaving the University of Dar es Salaam and formed an accessories company called Kidoti Loving Company Ltd in October 2012, which still runs to date. The company flourished, and in December 2014 she teamed up with a Chinese company Rainbow Shell Craft to make school bags, wigs, slippers, and various fashion accessories under the Kidoti brand.

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Her company has also worked with Tanzania billionaire Mohammed Dewji in the past. In 2017, Clouds Media awarded her the Malkia wa Nguvu Prize in business innovation.

To mentor youth, she organises events such as inter-school games and other competitions and mentorship programmes.

At her current working station in Korogwe district, Jokate has been trying to merge social influence with partnerships with development partners to establish infrastructure that advances development in that area.

she has also been seeking technologies that make food security, trade and development possible.

Jokate was born on March 20, 1987, in Washington DC, USA, where her parents were working. But she was raised in Dar es Salaam.

Her leadership qualities started primary emerging at Olympio Primary School, where she served as a prefect. She later attended St Anthony Secondary School in 2000, where she was assistant head girl.



In March 2004, she joined Loyola High School in Dar es Salaam, for Advanced Secondary Education, graduating in February 2006 with an Advanced Certificate of Secondary Education and again she was appointed a prefect responsible for coordinating all club activities.

On completion of her 'A' levels, she contested in the Miss Tanzania beauty pageant and emerged the runner-up. She was nicknamed Ambassador of Redds Fashion.

She went to the University of Dar es Salaam and graduated Bachelor of Arts in political science and philosophy. While there she founded and coordinated the university's United Nations Association Chapter in 2008.

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