

# Great opportunities lie in challenges

By Mwangi Wanjumbi [smartcompany@nation.co.ke](mailto:smartcompany@nation.co.ke)

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**IN SUMMARY: SOLUTIONS TO BUSINESS PROBLEMS ARE WITH US. NOT GOVERNMENT OR CITY AUTHORITIES**

A recent news item captured some youngsters making good business out of scrap material at the Dandora dumping site. However, what attracted my attention more were lorries seemingly stuck in the middle of the dumpsite. The sight reminded me of a meeting that we had with Maria, an entrepreneur this takataka (garbage) business.

Maria was closing her business and opening another. I had never imagined being a receiver for a business undergoing difficult times. Maria appeared to be in a hurry and restless.

“You trained us in business club seminars organized by our bank. So, I felt you must be in a position to help me sort out my challenges,” Maria insinuated.

“So, what is the problem Maria?” I asked.

“I have been in the business of collecting and dumping garbage for many years. Business has been good but is now very frustrating because the dumping site is not properly managed. We, the takataka people have tried to lobby but without success.

“Maria, what have you been lobbying about?” I interjected.

“You see, when heaps and heaps of takataka have been delivered to the site; we are always in a hurry to go back for more. So, we all dump the garbage at the edges. A tractor has to be used to drag the murky waste to the far end.

“So, how does this personally affect you?” I asked. “The only tractor in use which belongs to a councillor is not enough. Meanwhile, our vehicles are breaking down and are therefore constantly replacing the truck propeller shafts,” Maria added.

Apparently, the increased maintenance costs had now frustrated Maria into deciding to close this business. “So where do you want us to start in closing the business Maria?”

“First you as a consultant must help me in understanding what I will do next, after this business. I am past being employed,” Maria lamented.

“But Maria, much as your takataka business is threatened; you cannot see any opportunities given the scenario you have just described?”

“No, I can’t. When I look ahead, I can only see frustrations compared to the lucrative past.”

“Maria! I am sorry I am not going to help you in closing your business. I can see a great opportunity for you to continue doing the same business and progressing even further. Can you now see it?”

After a pause Maria shook my hand and said, “I will never again think alone during difficult times. Let me go and organise how I will now acquire a tractor. I will then obtain a license to operate in the dump site. My vehicles will no longer break down as I also make money helping others.”

The solutions to business and other challenges are right here with us. Not the government or city authorities. The two provide enabling environment for us to do business. Besides, there is an opportunity in every threat. There is strength in every situation of weakness. This is what drives business anywhere.

Think of the new constitutional dispensation that we have now started experiencing. Let us consider the opportunities available to us even as we moan those that may have been lost in the process of change.

Above all let us consider the business opportunities that will arise from the devolution of our nation into counties. Perhaps, we could benefit more if we were to involve more of professionalism than before.

Had Maria kept to herself during her challenging moments, maybe she would be in hospital suffering from depression or even worse. Let us all march into the future not moaning the threats (or lost opportunities), but eyeing the opportunities associated with the new changes. Indeed, the future presents numerous opportunities of doing business. Let us take full advantage of the changes.

***Mwangi Wanjumbi is a Management Consultant/Trainer and CEO of Newtimes Business Solutions.  
www.newtimesconsultants.com***