



## Growing Up

### From Adolescence to Adulthood

By Josephine Gross, Ph.D.



*Reverend Francis Michel Mbadinga with the President of the Republic of Gabon. The result of this meeting was full government support for Reverend Francis to add network marketing to the curriculum at his university. Upon receiving this news, we decided to partner with him by sharing educational content and resources through Networking University.*

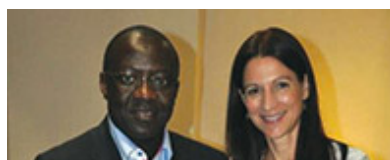
For this year-end issue of *Networking Times*, we invited network marketing leaders to articulate their visions for how they see our profession and business model evolving in the coming years.

Their unanimous excitement about the future was based on some obvious factors, including: the evolution from a home-based model to a completely mobile business anyone can conduct from anywhere in the world; how raising our standards of professionalism will make network marketing even more universally accepted; how the social nature of our business plays directly into the rising economic significance of the social web.

There also was a general consensus about an even bigger vision: by showing individuals how to take charge of their financial future, network marketing presents a

potential solution to some of the most pressing problems our global community

faces. As economic turmoil forces people around the world to develop a more entrepreneurial mindset, moving from dependence on governments and corporations to taking personal


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[Josephine Gross,  
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corporations to taking personal responsibility, network marketing can hugely facilitate this shift.

Last month I met Reverend Francis Michel Mbadinga, from Gabon. Together with his wife, Reverend Francis heads up a network of churches all over Africa. Entrepreneurs and educators at heart, they founded a university for continuing education, starting with a curriculum in Bible study. Acutely aware of the need for teaching self-reliance in a culture where people have counted on donations and subsidies for generations, they added a leadership and wealth creation track.

Reverend Francis had joined a network marketing company just two months before we met and already had 200 people in his team. Upon hearing his story, I gave him a *Networking Times* issue featuring a master networker from Nairobi, Kenya.



*During our conversation, Reverend Francis pointed out that based on current demographic trends, by 2025 Africa will have 500 million youths with university degrees and no jobs. "The Arab Spring was nothing," he added. "This is the real time bomb."*



After looking at it, he asked me for an extra copy, saying he wanted to share it with the president of his country, with whom he was meeting the following week.

A few days later he sent me pictures of his audience with His Excellency Ali Bongo Ondimba, where he had a chance to present network marketing as one solution to what ails Africa. He talked about the built-in system for success our business offers and how it teaches skills people can apply in every area of their lives.

*His Excellency Ali Bongo Ondimba, President of the Republic of Gabon, with his "chef de cabinet," holding Networking Times, Sept 12, 2012. The President wants to see our journal translated into French and available on newsstands across Africa.*

Thought leaders have described the shift of 2012 as humanity moving from adolescence, characterized by entitlement, excess, and instant gratification, into adulthood, rooted in accountability, contribution, and a trans-generational perspective.

As evidenced in Reverend Francis's story, network marketing plays a role in this evolution. We are part of the solution and

our future is bright.

I believe one of our profession's callings is to put power and prosperity in the hands of people who earn their wealth by being servant leaders dedicated to empowering and enriching others.

I also believe if we can heal Africa, we can heal the world.

*DR. JOSEPHINE GROSS is cofounder and editor in chief of Networking Times.*

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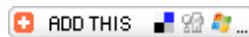


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