

Eddie Hatitye from Music in Africa on promoting a healthy music industry

By  Emily Stander

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On 14 November, Hunters, in association with Music in Africa, hosted a #MusicNeedsYou concert in Johannesburg. The concert was aimed at helping South African artists kick-start their live music events and promote the Covid-19 vaccination.



Eddie Hatitye

We spoke to Eddie Hatitye, director of the Music in Africa Foundation, to find out more about his work, the concert, and the challenges that the South African music industry faces...

■ *Tell us a bit more about your role and what your day-to-day looks like*

My role is quite agile, which is perhaps a reflection of the multifaceted field we operate in as the Music In Africa Foundation. I spend a lot of time on strategy, business development, fundraising, financial planning, building alliances, and, of course, a lot of focus is on the daily management of the business and its various units and projects in different African countries.

We are a young but very ambitious organisation and we see ourselves as a learning organisation, which requires me to play a mentoring role in different departments.

■ *Tell us a bit more about Music in Africa.*

The Music In Africa Foundation is a pan-African, non-profit organisation working in different African countries with a key mandate to support African music professionals.

We do this by creating and sharing opportunities for music professionals to learn, exchange, develop and promote their careers, and by actively implementing developmental projects, including, but not limited to, artist mobility, capacity building, educational programmes, performance, lobbying, conferences and other related initiatives. We have been operating since 2013. Our head office is in South Africa and we have satellite offices in Kenya, Senegal and DRC. Our new Ghana office will open early next year.

🔴 ***What, in your opinion, is the importance of promoting a healthy music industry in South Africa?***

A healthy industry is supremely important for industry participants to get fair rewards for their hard work. This also implies to all those who are starting up and often find it very difficult to breakthrough. A healthy industry is not only about money, but also education, skills development, collaboration and openness to experimentation.

🔴 ***What does a healthy music industry look like to you?***

Well, that's a space where all the key stakeholders in the value chain are present and putting in their best work to shape an enabling music ecosystem for musicians to excel.

🔴 ***What challenges does the South Africa music industry face today, and are there possible solutions to these challenges?***

Most of the challenges are concerned with money. These challenges mostly stem from non-compliance from broadcasters and other industry players.

In addition to this, a majority of musicians still don't know how royalties work and where and when they should be paid. This opens them up to a lot of manipulation. There is also a serious lack of live venues in South Africa, which affects artists revenues.

In the past few years, a lot of criticism has also been on our policies and legislation which seems to be failing to protect musicians at a time when the fourth industrial revolution has completely shifted the music industry.

🔴 ***Hunters chose Music in Africa as its benefactor to spread the message about the vaccine, could you tell us more about that?***

We are very excited to collaborate with Hunters. Their donation comes at a crucial time when the Foundation is mobilising resources to support the music industry after many tough months because of Covid-19.

🔴 ***What value do you see in collaborating with brands like Hunters?***

The local music industry needs all the support we can get so when big players like Hunters come on board, we get very excited. We hope that this can also inspire many other brands to collaborate with the industry and inject much-needed energies especially at this time when the industry is on a recovery path.

ABOUT EMILY STANDER

Freelancer specialising in games and entertainment | My first loves are writing, music and video games
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