

# when it / clicked

FOR...

VIOLA LLEWELLYN

## A CAPITAL IDEA FOR AFRICA

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“  
WE’RE CREATING A  
NEW NARRATIVE—THIS  
IS NOT YOUR GRAND-  
DADDY’S AFRICA.”  
”

**IT WAS DURING** a conversation with her now-business partner when the lightbulb moment happened for Viola Llewellyn, and the idea of Ovamba—a mobile app that connects businesses in Africa and other emerging markets with investors instead of micro loans—was born. “We looked at how much it costs for Africans abroad to send money home, and realized that there isn’t a growth metric attached to it,” she says. “The answer to the problem of access to capital [in Africa] is not more money, but rather improving cash flow to control and manage growth.” Since its inception five years ago, Ovamba has raised more than \$10 million in capital and has loaned nearly \$24 million to African businesses. “As soon as money goes out and comes back, it goes out again.” —SUSAN B. BARNES



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### BIO

Viola Llewellyn was born in London and raised both there and Cameroon; she moved to the U.S. in 1992. As a highly sought-after international financial technology speaker who was recently selected by the World Economic Forum as a Global Technology Pioneer, she was included in a Maximum Destiny spotlight in *Vanity Fair* (April 2018) that featured 26 female CEOs, founders, and entrepreneurs of color who have raised \$1 million or more in outside capital. Llewellyn relaxes by listening to heavy metal and her all-time favorite artist, Prince.

