

Writing the story of the rise of African rugby

Rugby is developing at an unprecedented pace in Africa. In 2017, growth in player registration in African nations (excluding South Africa) was 66%, against an overall global increase of 27%. In the female game, the number of registered players has increased by 50% in the last year alone. This phenomenal growth at grass roots level is starting to bear fruit on the international scene.



Michael Wokorach races towards the try line. Credit: APO.

The popularity of the sport is booming all over the continent, and [APO Group](#), the leading media relations consultancy for Africa and the Middle East and main Official Partner of World Rugby's African association, [Rugby Africa](#), has released a new published guide to the sport called, *The Incredible Rise of African Rugby*.

The publication, downloadable from the [APO Group website](#), provides information on the development of African national rugby unions, the grass roots game and key international competitions. There is also a section dedicated to the women's game, which is developing at an even quicker rate than the men's.

World Rugby chairman Bill Beaumont has acknowledged that rugby has experienced tremendous growth across Africa in recent years. "There has never been a more exciting time for rugby in Africa," he said recently. "Ten African nations are currently placed in the top-50 of the world rankings and more women and men, girls and boys, are playing than ever before. The players are inspirational role models for the next generations of young Africans who are discovering the sport."



Rugby Africa appoints APO as global sponsorship agency

3 May 2018



APO Group became the main Official Partner of World Rugby's African association Rugby Africa in 2017 and remains committed to raising the profile of African rugby on a global scale, helping introduce new fans to the game and building knowledge and awareness.

“Although few may know this, out of 105 countries playing rugby competitively, one-third are African,” said Nicolas Pompigne-Mognard, founder and CEO of APO Group. “There are many talents in Africa who deserve better recognition by the general public. Rugby generates great excitement amongst African children, millennials and women too - making it the fastest-growing sport on the continent.”

Abdelaziz Bougja, President of Rugby Africa, added: “Just a couple of weeks ago, Namibia won the Rugby Africa Gold Cup, securing its place at the World Rugby Cup 2019 in Japan. This month will see the start of the African regional Rugby 7s tournaments which double as pre-qualifier for the 2020 Olympics. These global showcase events give further exposure to our game and allow global audiences to learn more about what Africa has to offer.”

To download APO's guide *'The Incredible Rise of African Rugby'*, visit: <https://bit.ly/2oYs0XW>.

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