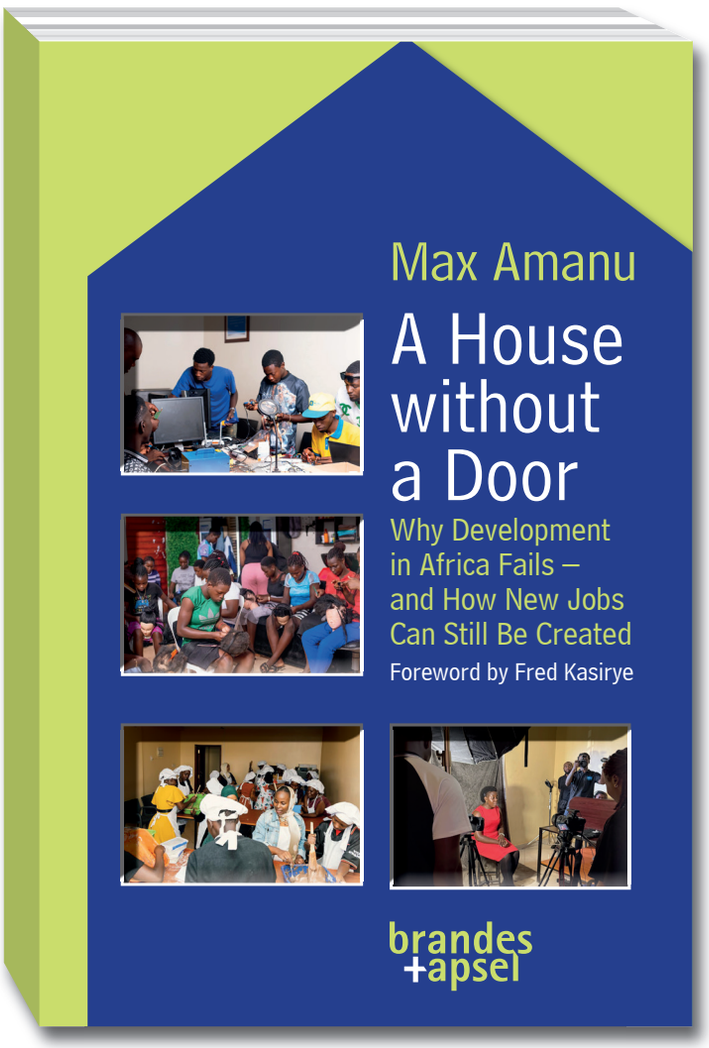
Max Amanu

A House without a Door

Why Development in Africa Fails – and How New Jobs Can Still Be Created



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»Uganda, like much of Africa, is not lacking in ambition, talent, or energy. What is often missing, however, is structure — systems and everyday practices that allow human effort to translate into consistent, sustainable outcomes. In my own work on enterprise development and generational continuity, I have often observed that talent without structure tends to dissipate, while even modest effort, when well-structured, compounds over time.« (Fred Kasirye, Foreword)

»In *A House Without a Door,* Max Amanu engages this same challenge from a grounded and refreshing perspective. Rather than focusing on preserving established institutions or large-scale economic abstractions, the book turns to a more immediate question: How do meaningful jobs emerge in environments where stability is fragile and daily life is shaped by uncertainty, pressure, and adaptation?

What makes this book compelling is its honesty and proximity to lived reality. It does not romanticize development, nor does it lean heavily on abstract models detached from practice. Instead, it is anchored in observation, engagement with young people, and reflections drawn from everyday economic struggle and resilience. This gives the work a clarity that practitioners, policymakers, and ordinary readers can all relate to.

One of the central insights is that the challenge we face is not purely economic — it is deeply structural and behavioral. When people operate within systems dominated by short-term survival, their thinking and decision-making naturally become short-term as well. Over time, this reality shapes not only livelihoods but also aspirations and social expectations. In such contexts, even well-designed interventions may struggle to take root unless the underlying structures of daily economic life are addressed.« (Fred Kasirye, Foreword)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Max Amanu, development economist, youth development strategist, and passionate advocate for education. His work is driven by a commitment to empowering young people as active agents of social change through access to quality education and meaningful participation in public life. An internationally recognized voice on youth participation and systemic reform, he works at the intersection of education, employability, governance, and institutional accountability. Amanu is the co-founder of the Northwind Foundation, a nonprofit organization that expands opportunities for young people from low-income communities in Uganda by providing free access to education and practical skills training. He currently serves as Regional Director for Africa at ***Changing-lives*** Switzerland, Coordinator of the Regional Academy on the United Nations, Thematic Lead for Education and Employability at the Queen Elizabeth II Commonwealth Trust, and a member of the Advisory Council of the AFS Youth Assembly. He also serves on the ***Integrity Youth Advisory Board*** of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime as one of the founding members representing East Africa.