

91^{of} 100Emily
Agasa

Here to be Imaginative

From Kibera to creating a greener future:
Emily Agasa is building change from the ground up.

From planting thousands of trees to mentoring young entrepreneurs and creating opportunities for women and girls with disabilities, Emily Agasa has turned her belief in community into practical action.

Growing up in Kibera, one of Africa's largest informal settlements, gave Emily an early understanding of what access to opportunity can mean and allow. Today, while building her career at Absa Kenya, she remains closely connected to the community that shaped her and is finding practical ways to create opportunities for others.

One of those avenues is the HerAbility Initiative, where Emily volunteers and advises

on programmes supporting women and girls living with disabilities. In August 2026, an empowerment workshop that initially aimed to reach 40 participants welcomed 56 women and girls. They received mentorship, skills development, networking opportunities, mental wellness support and dignity packs. Together with three childhood friends, Emily is now working to develop HerAbility into a sustainable mentorship platform.

Her commitment to opening doors extends to young entrepreneurs. Selected by the Absa Kenya Foundation for the MK-Africa Innovation Bootcamp, Emily spent six weeks coaching 60 aspiring entrepreneurs, helping them strengthen their ideas, refine their value propositions and prepare investor-ready pitches. Sixteen participants progressed to the semi-finals at Strathmore University, while four finalist teams secured cash awards and a further year of mentorship from ecosystem partners.

She has brought the same energy to environmental sustainability. Emily founded the Green Army Initiative, which has grown into a network of more than 100 sustainability champions. In 2026, the initiative planted more than 2 200 trees to mark World Environment Day, achieving an 85% survival rate. Rather than treating tree planting as a once-off event, regional champions coordinate planting around seasonal rains to help sustain the programme throughout the year.

Emily is also looking at how environmental awareness can reach younger generations, with plans to establish eco-clubs in more than 50 schools. Through the Green Lounge Experience, held twice a year, she has created another space for colleagues to engage with sustainability, well-being and change in a more practical way.

Her community work sits alongside a strong focus on innovation within Absa. Recognised as one of the Top 3 Innovators in Absa Kenya, Emily is leading paperless initiatives including digital branch queue management and paperless ATM processes. These initiatives are expected to generate approximately KES3 million (R377 000) in annual savings while improving customer experience and reducing paper consumption.

What ties Emily's work together is not one title or initiative, but a willingness to get involved where she sees an opportunity to make something better. From Kibera to Absa, and from environmental projects to entrepreneurship and disability inclusion, she has found ways to turn ideas into practical outcomes.

Your
story
matters

