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## **What every woman needs – money on her mind**

Last year Forbes ran a quirky article by Rebecca Bellan entitled, “The woman of 2020 doesn’t need a man, but she does need Pinterest”. Pinterest to find advice on how to ask for a raise at work? How to buy your first home? What solo travel ideas are best and so on.

In 2020, and of course in 2021, women are searching for ways to live their best lives solo, be financially independent and support and empower other women. “At African Bank we loved this article as it resonates with so many of our young single women customers,” says Eloise Boezak, Head of Customer Experience at African Bank.

Boezak agrees that the priorities of modern women are very different to what they were a decade or two ago? Marriage rates are generally down globally, and young women are looking for men who can support their careers and their aspirations to buy their own homes, travel to their dream destination and generally not wait for a partner or friend to fulfil their life experiences. She says they want to become financially stable and independent. “It is so exciting to see how many women are even deciding to go back to their studies, or taking their ideas to the next level and looking for new business opportunities in our very crowded workspace. This entrepreneurial mind set bodes well for the future and as Bellan says, they are not scared to do the mental and emotional legwork needed for success.

If this concept appeals and has caught your attention you may want to read on and follow some of our financial tips.

### **1. Review your finances**

It all starts with a budget. When creating a budget, you need to consider your total income and your total expenses. Look for all the streams of income you receive each month and add all these up to get to your total monthly income. We know these days many people have their day job, then they have a side hustle to help pay the extra bills.

### **2. Understand your spending patterns**

The next step is to look at how you’re spending that money each month. In this list, you may include water and electricity, food, rent, transport, school fees if you are a single mom, debt payments and entertainment. If you are saving money, include savings on your list too. The total you get from tallying up your expenses will then be subtracted from your total income.

Ideally, you should have money left over. This is money you could use to boost your savings or use to pay off your debt more quickly, especially if you're still dealing with student loans, a car loan or credit card balances. If you don't have anything left over, or even worse, you're in the negative, you'll need to fine-tune your single mom budget by reducing your expenses.

### **3. Drawing up your budget**

Once you have reviewed your income and expenses and have a better picture of your financial standing, you can start to create your budget. To start, you can use the 50-30-20 rule to budgeting. 50% of your budget should go towards paying your fixed expenses, 30% should be reserved for any additional costs that vary from month to month, such as petrol, groceries, entertainment, eating out and 20% towards your savings and investments.”

Alternatively, simply decide which expenses are most important and allocate money there first.

Once you have your budget drawn up, you'll get an even clearer picture of how much money you have to spare towards **travel**, emergency savings, clothes, etc.

#### **4. Track your spending**

A budget is only as effective as your commitment to sticking to it. For your budget to work, you must make sure that you know how much money leaves your bank account, and when. African Bank offers a mobile banking app that lets you see your balances, make transactions and more, 24/7.

If you need to, you can then adjust how much you're spending on certain items to make your money go further.

#### **5. Make saving a priority**

Having a savings plan is key, you're relying on your income alone, so it makes sense to have a back-up plan for expenses. Because you work hard for your money, where you choose to save is just as important as saving. A priority should be to get an account with SA's best rate, like African Bank's Tax-Free savings account. This account allows you to save smartly by investing your money with non-taxable pay-outs.

Finally, Ballan's article talks about "Move slow, build things" and that is no different when you are trying to accumulate wealth. "Unfortunately, there are no quick fixes but if you are disciplined you will definitely reap the rewards and start to see your money working for you," concludes Boezak.

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