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President, FAVO Capital

"Capital Is the Missing Link in Africa's Infrastructure & Innovation Boom"

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By Nikhil Boolell

The end of an epoch: "Serving as the boardroom stooge could land you jail time."

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"Capital Is the Missing Link in Africa's Infrastructure and Innovation Boom"

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Shaun Quin, President of FAVO Capital, shares his strategic outlook with BIZweek. In this in-depth interview, he explores the implications of U.S. trade policy under renewed Trump-era rhetoric, the growing influence of high-profile business leaders like Elon Musk in shaping economic dialogue, and the importance of maintaining agility in a volatile environment. Shaun Quin also details how FAVO Capital is responding to evolving market dynamics by investing in proprietary technology, scaling revenue-based financing, and partnering with Stewards Investment Capital to tap into Africa's growing appetite for alternative investments via Mauritius. With plans to uplist to the Nasdaq Capital Market, and a firm focus on supporting underserved SMEs, FAVO Capital is positioning itself as a nimble, tech-forward player in the future of global finance.

U.S. President Donald Trump has recently renewed calls for protectionist trade policies. What impact do you think that could have on U.S. businesses and global trade?

Renewed calls by Donald Trump for protectionist trade policies — such as tariffs, import restrictions, or favoring domestic production over global supply chains — could have a range of significant effects on U.S. businesses and global trade. I'd break it down into short-term and long-term impacts.

In the short term, U.S.-based companies that compete with foreign imports—especially in sectors like steel, aluminium, or manufacturing — may benefit as foreign goods become more expensive. This could provide a temporary boost in revenue and lead to increased hiring or reinvestment within those industries.

However, many American companies depend on global supply chains. Tariffs on imported components or raw materials could raise operational costs. That increase may lead to reduced profit margins, higher prices for consumers, and in some cases, even job cuts or a shift of operations offshore to remain competitive. To add to this, sudden shifts in trade policy can introduce uncertainty and market volatility, making it difficult for businesses to plan long-term investments or hiring strategies.

On the global trade front, protectionist measures often provoke retaliation. Other countries might respond with tariffs or trade barriers on U.S. exports, impacting key sectors such as agriculture, automotive, and technology. An example is the 2018–2019 U.S.-China trade war, during which American farmers were severely affected by Chinese tariffs on soybeans and other agricultural products.

There's also the risk of weakening global institutions like the World Trade Organization. Protectionism can erode multilateral trade agreements and damage relationships with key allies. In response, countries may increasingly look to regional trade blocs or strengthen bilateral relationships elsewhere, diversifying away from U.S. markets. This could reinforce trade alliances within blocs like the EU, RCEP, or Mercosur.

In the long term, isolationist policies may reduce the competitive pressure that promotes innovation. U.S. companies could risk falling behind in sectors that thrive on global collaboration—such as technology, semiconductors, and renewable energy. Consumers may face higher prices and fewer choices, particularly in markets like electronics, automobiles, and apparel.

I am of the view that the impact on the labour market will likely be mixed. While certain sectors may gain jobs due to domestic investment, others—particularly those tied to exports or global logistics—could see losses. The net effect will largely depend on how targeted and sustained these protectionist policies are.

Elon Musk and other high-profile business leaders have pushed back against tariffs and trade restrictions. How do you view their role in shaping economic dialogue?

That's a great question—and it really cuts to the heart of how business and policy interact in a globalized economy.

High-profile figures like Elon Musk, along with the CEOs of companies like Apple, Amazon, and JPMorgan Chase, play a significant role in shaping the economic conversation. Firstly, they have skin in the game. These companies operate across borders—Tesla, for instance, manufactures and sells in the U.S., China, and Europe. Tariffs and restrictions can directly affect their supply chains, profitability, and global competitiveness. So when Musk speaks out, it's not just theoretical—he's actively defending business interests.

Secondly, they help shape both public and political opinion. Musk, with his massive platform (particularly on X), can reframe tariffs from abstract policy tools into something people connect with—whether it's the price of EVs, phones, or the availability of jobs. Politicians take notice, especially when these views reflect broader industry concerns.

Thirdly, they serve as a counterweight to protectionist narratives. When a well-known CEO challenges tariffs, it introduces a pro-business, pro-innovation perspective into the conversation. That contrast can influence the tone of legislation or push policymakers to craft more targeted, sector-specific measures rather than sweeping restrictions.

When it comes to economic dialogue more broadly, these leaders have a few key impacts. They make complex issues more accessible. A tweet or interview from someone like Musk can draw more public attention than a dense government report. That helps bring economic policy into everyday conversations.

They also often steer the debate toward innovation and long-term competitiveness. Instead of focusing solely on preserving existing jobs, they're asking how the U.S. can lead in areas like AI, EVs, or space exploration if we cut ourselves off from global talent and supply chains.

Influential CEOs also highlight the real-world consequences of policy. They are able to speak to tangible outcomes—factory delays, layoffs, price hikes, missed opportunities—which helps ground the debate in facts rather than ideology.

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> This is a clear signal that African institutional investors are becoming more sophisticated and forward-looking in their approach to capital deployment.

Of course, there's a balance to be struck. Critics argue that these business leaders are primarily protecting their own profits and may downplay the disruptions that globalization has caused in traditional industries. On the other hand, supporters believe they bring real-world experience and long-term vision to a debate that's often driven by political rhetoric or short-term gains.

In the end, Musk and others function almost like de facto ambassadors of the modern economy. They don't make policy, but they have a powerful influence on the national conversation. And in today's media-driven political landscape, that's often half the battle.

How would you describe the state of the U.S. economy right now, and what indicators are you watching most closely?

As of April 2025, the U.S. economy is a bit of a mixed bag. On one hand, we're seeing real signs of resilience — especially in consumer spending and the labour market. On the other hand, there are some serious headwinds, particularly around trade and inflation.

GDP is projected to grow at about 2.3% this year, which is steady and encouraging, thanks largely to strong consumer demand and a still-resilient job market. Inflation has cooled somewhat, with the CPI at 2.9%, but that's still above the Fed's target, so there's lingering pressure in certain sectors. Unemployment remains low at 4.1%, which shows strength, though job growth has slowed a bit compared to recent highs.

There are a few indicators I'm keeping a particularly close eye on. Firstly, trade policy. The recent wave of tariffs—especially the sharp drop in U.S.-China trade—has really shifted the global supply chain landscape. An 80% decline in merchandise trade between the two countries, as projected by the WTO, is not a small number. That kind of decoupling has far-reaching implications.

Secondly, investor sentiment is something I'm watching closely. According to a recent Bank of America survey, we're seeing the most bearish investor outlook in decades. A lot of that is driven by fears of stagflation and general uncertainty about where the global economy is headed.

And thirdly, the Federal Reserve's stance. They've paused rate cuts and are holding the benchmark rate between 4.25% and 4.5%. While this suggests a cautious approach to monetary policy, the Fed remains vigilant in balancing inflation control with economic growth.

Now, from the perspective of the private credit sector—especially within the small and medium-sized business market—we're actually seeing strong momentum. Despite the macroeconomic noise, SMBs have been incredibly agile and continue to pursue growth capital. Non-bank lenders like us are stepping in to meet that demand, and what we're seeing is sustained appetite and optimism across the board.

In fact, this feels like a pivotal moment for private credit. As traditional banks pull back, we have an opportunity to play a much more active role in supporting entrepreneurship, innovation, and long-term economic resilience. We're confident that this momentum will not only continue, but accelerate.

How is FAVO Capital responding to these economic trends?

At FAVO Capital, we're very much tuned in to what's happening in the broader economy—especially in the private credit and revenue-based funding space. As traditional banks continue to pull back from lending, we see a clear opportunity to step in and support small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) with the flexible capital they need to grow.

We're leaning into fintech innovation to do that. By integrating smarter technology into our processes, we're able to improve the speed and flexibility of our funding solutions. That's crucial for SMBs, who often don't have the time or resources to navigate slow-moving traditional financing options. We've also been strengthening our internal infrastructure—both to enhance our client experience and to prepare for increased regulatory requirements and future partnerships with institutional investors.

One of our core offerings is revenue-based financing, particularly through Merchant Cash Advances (MCAs). It's a model that really resonates with businesses that have seasonal or fluctuating income, because repayment is tied to daily revenue. It's all about aligning with the business's cash flow, not boxing them into rigid repayment structures.

With the various strategic growth initiatives and innovative approach, our company has been recognized globally, winning the "Structured Finance Deal of the Year" at the Global Private Banking Innovation Awards 2024, with our partners Stewards Investment Capital. More recently, they announced their achievement at the prestigious Euromoney Private Banking Awards 2025, held at The Savoy in London, on the 27th of March 2025, where they were honoured with two significant accolades: Africa's Best for Alternative Investments and Mauritius' Best for

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Alternative Investments. FAVO Capital is proud to be a part of those accolades by underpinning these award-winning investment solutions.

So in short, FAVO Capital is responding to these economic shifts by staying nimble, investing in tech, and focusing on financing models that meet the evolving needs of today's entrepreneurs. The momentum in the private credit space is real—and we're excited to be part of driving it forward.

Private credit has grown rapidly in recent years. Where do you see this segment heading?

Private credit has officially moved into the mainstream. What began as a niche strategy for hedge funds is now a key component of institutional portfolios—including pension funds, insurance companies, and sovereign wealth funds.

In the U.S. alone, the private credit market has grown to over $1.7 trillion in assets under management as of 2024, with projections pushing that figure past $2.5 trillion by 2027. This expansion stems from a long-term structural shift: as traditional banks retreated from middle-market lending following the 2008 financial crisis, private lenders stepped in—offering faster, more flexible, and customized financing solutions.

The asset class continues to attract a broadening base of investors, drawn by its strong risk-adjusted returns and low correlation to public markets. Looking ahead, we're likely to see more specialization, increased regulatory oversight, and a greater demand for transparency. The firms that can deliver consistent performance while maintaining rigorous compliance will be the ones shaping the future of this space.

SME lending carries a reputation for being high-risk. How do you manage that at scale?

Indeed, this is often seen as high-risk, and that's not without reason—many of these businesses lack the collateral, credit history, or financial stability that traditional lenders look for. But at scale, risk doesn't have to mean instability. It's all about how you manage it.

At FAVO Capital, we approach SMB lending with a disciplined, data-driven strategy that balances flexibility with robust underwriting. We use advanced analytics, real-time financial data, and proprietary risk models to assess businesses not just on past performance, but on forward-looking indicators like cash flow trends and sector resilience.

We also diversify our portfolio across industries, geographies, and deal structures to reduce concentration risk. And by offering revenue-based financing solutions like merchant cash advances, we align repayment with a business's actual performance—giving us more dynamic visibility and giving the business breathing room to grow.

Scaling responsibly means blending high-tech tools with hands-on experience. Risk will always be part of SMB lending, but with the right infrastructure, it becomes manageable—and even an opportunity for outsized returns.

FAVO Capital uses its proprietary Lendtech CRM. What role does that technology play in your operations?

Our proprietary Lendtech CRM is the backbone of our operations—it's not just a CRM; it's our full-stack servicing engine.

On the front end, Lendtech powers a highly efficient

> **Africa's unique economic, cultural, and regulatory landscape requires tailored approaches — one size does not fit all.**

onboarding process. We're able to automate document collection, verify data in real time, and process bank statements within minutes using third party service providers that are linked to the platform. That speed enables us to make fast, informed credit decisions—something that's critical in SMB lending, where timing can make or break a business opportunity.

Behind the scenes, Lendtech plays a significant role in how we manage risk and maintain portfolio performance. It allows us to apply proprietary scoring models and evaluate borrower health using both traditional and non-traditional data points. We can underwrite with more precision and consistency at scale.

On the servicing side, it streamlines collections, tracks performance in real time, and automates reporting for both internal teams and external stakeholders. That operational efficiency translates into a smoother experience for our merchants and greater transparency for our investors.

I would say Lendtech gives us a competitive edge. It allows us to move with the agility of a fintech while maintaining the discipline of an institutional lender.

FAVO recently expanded into Mauritius. What drove that decision?

Our expansion into Mauritius through Stewards Investment Capital is a carefully considered strategic decision that reflects FAVO Capital's broader vision: connecting global investors with high-growth opportunities across both established and emerging markets.

Mauritius serves as an ideal gateway for this ambition. Its strategic positioning between Africa and Asia makes it accessible to some of the world's most dynamic growth regions. In Africa, sectors like infrastructure, energy, and fintech are rapidly evolving, fuelled by a young, tech-savvy population and rising demand for capital. Meanwhile, parts of Asia are becoming increasingly integrated into global trade and investment flows—making Mauritius a natural bridge between these economies and global capital markets.

What sets Mauritius apart is its combination of strategic location and institutional strength. The

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country boasts a robust, transparent regulatory framework, a pro-business climate, and a strong financial services infrastructure. Its legal system, grounded in both English and French law, provides clarity and confidence to international investors. Moreover, its extensive network of double taxation avoidance agreements (DTAAs) and investment treaties—particularly with African nations—makes it an efficient and effective platform for cross-border investment.

Mauritius also offers access to a highly skilled, bilingual workforce and a well-established ecosystem of professional services. This creates a stable, scalable base from which to manage and expand our global investment initiatives.

You're partnering with Stewards Investment Capital in that region. How does that partnership work?

Our partnership with Stewards Investment Capital is grounded in shared values, aligned vision, and complementary capabilities.

Stewards brings deep regional expertise, a decades-long track record in the African investment landscape, and a trusted network of institutional relationships. Their credibility and longstanding presence across the continent open doors and build trust—access that might otherwise take years to establish.

FAVO Capital contributes a strong foundation of U.S.-based lending infrastructure, structured finance capabilities, and a proven track record in private credit and alternative funding. We bring the systems, scalability, and operational rigour needed to execute complex transactions with speed and precision.

What makes this partnership uniquely powerful is the ability to originate and structure investment opportunities that are not only investor-ready, but also impact-focused. Together, we're ensuring that governance, compliance, and execution are held to global standards—while remaining deeply attuned to local context and opportunity.

By combining FAVO's financing engine with Stewards' strategic footprint, we're creating a model for responsible, scalable growth in emerging markets—one that connects global capital to high-impact, high-potential opportunities.

You participated in PIAfrica 2025 last week. What stood out to you from the conference?

PIAfrica 2025 provided a powerful platform that brought together some of the most insightful and forward-thinking leaders in long-term capital deployment. What stood out to me was the strong consensus around private credit as a primary and enduring financing tool, rather than just a temporary solution. The conversation highlighted a significant shift in the way capital is being allocated—private credit is now recognized not only as an alternative, but as a critical pillar for sustainable growth in emerging markets, particularly in Africa.

One of the most compelling themes throughout the conference was the focus on localizing funding strategies. There was a collective understanding that Africa's unique economic, cultural, and regulatory landscape requires tailored approaches — one size does not fit all. Rather than simply adapting Western financial models to African markets, there was a call for more nuanced, region-specific frameworks that can better address local challenges and opportunities.

This conversation was both refreshing and forward-looking, as it demonstrated a deeper commitment to understanding and addressing the specific needs of African businesses and industries. It was clear that the future of private credit in Africa lies in developing bespoke solutions that draw on the continent's strengths, while considering its unique challenges. This emphasis on localization will be key to ensuring that capital flows are more sustainable and aligned with long-term economic development goals.

With growing interest in alternative investments across the continent, what role do you see FAVO playing?

We see ourselves as a catalyst in the rapidly growing alternative investment landscape across the continent. We focus solely on serving the United States. However, Africa is rich with opportunities — whether in infrastructure, fintech, energy, or small business development—but what often holds back growth is the gap between the abundant potential and the capital required to unlock it. What's missing isn't just any capital; it's capital that moves at the speed of business, but with the right structure and discipline to mitigate risk and deliver sustainable returns.

Our role in the United States is to bridge this gap. We are committed to providing institutional-grade investment solutions that are tailored specifically to the needs and dynamics of local markets. That means we won't just look at importing Western models or impose cookie-cutter solutions in the future; instead, we would take a deeply localized approach to understand the unique challenges and opportunities in each market.

For us, apart from providing capital, we ensure robust risk management practices, promoting transparency at every stage, and driving measurable impact through the investments we make. We are dedicated to supporting businesses and projects that offer financial returns and also contribute to the long-term economic development of the region. Whether it's enabling small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) to grow, or backing large-scale infrastructure projects, our goal is to be a trusted partner that brings both speed and structure to the table.

On a continent full of untapped potential, FAVO aims to be a key player in channelling capital where it can make the most difference — quickly, responsibly, and with a focus on measurable outcomes.

Any new developments or partnerships coming out of PIAfrica that you're excited about?

At the recent discussions, there was a lot of exciting dialogue around fintech integration and the growing potential for regional syndication across Africa. We are actively exploring several promising collaboration opportunities in both East and West Africa. These conversations are providing valuable insights into the direction of the market, and we are poised to leverage these emerging opportunities in the near future.

One particularly encouraging development is the growing recognition among African pension funds of the need to diversify their portfolios. Many of these funds are actively exploring opportunities for offshore exposure to balance their returns and reduce risk through international investments. This is a clear signal that African institutional investors are becoming more sophisticated and forward-looking in their approach to capital deployment.

Equally promising is the trend we've observed where various funds are rethinking their allocations and shifting capital toward non-correlated investment opportunities. In today's uncertain global economic environment, there is an increasing demand for alternative investments that offer stability and consistent returns, regardless of broader market

> **"The future of private credit in Africa lies in developing bespoke solutions."**

fluctuations.

At both FAVO and Stewards Investment Capital, we are well-positioned to play a key role in this evolution. Our expertise in providing alternative financing solutions, along with our strong U.S.-based infrastructure, allows us to offer African investors access to innovative, diversified investment opportunities that align with their evolving strategies. Whether through private credit, structured finance, or other alternative instruments, FAVO is uniquely equipped to deliver these solutions and help African investors diversify their portfolios effectively.

Tell us a bit about your professional journey—and what's ahead for you and FAVO Capital.

My professional journey has always been driven by a deep passion for businesses that solve real-world problems. Throughout my career, I've had the opportunity to work across diverse industries, including technology, financial services, and global operations. What's consistently tied my experiences together is a focus on building systems that unlock access—whether that's access to capital, tools, or opportunity—especially for those who need it the most.

At FAVO Capital, we've created something unique: a high-performance platform built with integrity at its core. This combination is rare in the financial space, where speed and innovation often come at the expense of governance and transparency. What excites me about the future is scaling this model—expanding our footprint globally, diversifying our offerings, and continuing to drive value for our clients, partners, and investors. We're committed to long-term growth and ensuring that the solutions we provide are not just effective, but also sustainable.

Looking ahead, FAVO is poised to take its next major step forward. We've recently filed our S-1 registration statement with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) as part of our plan to uplist to the Nasdaq Capital Market. This filing marks a significant milestone in our strategy and represents our commitment to increasing market visibility, enhancing liquidity, and broadening access to institutional investors.
The uplisting to Nasdaq will expand our investor base and also fuel our ability to scale faster and drive growth in our core areas—particularly in providing flexible, tailored financing solutions to small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs). For FAVO, this represents our continued commitment to transparency, financial discipline, and creating long-term value for all stakeholders. It's a pivotal step in ensuring that we remain at the forefront of innovation in the alternative financing space.