



**SCIENCE  
AFRICA**

*Africa's Leading Publication on Science, Innovation & Development*

**SPECIAL ISSUE: IWD2023**

**REVIEWING AND  
COMMEMORATING  
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY  
MARCH 8<sup>TH</sup> 2023**

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# WAYA 2023

Women Agripreneurs of the Year Awards



# Applications are now **open!**

## #VALUE4HER Women Agripreneurs of the Year Awards – WAYA 2023

The VALUE4HER Women Agripreneurs of the Year Awards (WAYA) recognizes African female agripreneurs who have excelled in the agricultural value chains and have demonstrated remarkable innovation by contributing positively towards food security, climate resilience, women and youth empowerment.

The awards aim to create visibility for successful women and promote them as positive role models, trigger innovation, and spur ambition among women agripreneurs.

### Award Categories

01

#### Young Female Agripreneur (Rising Star)

Recognizes high potential young females (<35 years) demonstrating innovation and leadership in agribusiness.

02

#### Female Ag-Tech Innovator

Recognizes female agripreneurs championing technological advancement in agribusiness.

03

#### Outstanding Value-Adding Enterprise

Recognizes female agripreneurs championing technological advancement in agribusiness.

The winners will each receive a cash prize of **USD 20,000** at the AGRF Summit in September 2023.

### Applicants' criteria:

- ✓ The business/entity must be operating in and along the agriculture and or agribusiness value chain
- ✓ The business should be at least fifty-one percent (51%) owned and managed by one or more women who are citizens of one of the 55 African countries
- ✓ The business must be a legal entity registered and operating in at least one of the 55 African countries
- ✓ Previous winners of WAYA Awards and other competitions run by AGRA are not eligible

The DEADLINE for Application is **Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup>, May 2023.**

**BEGIN APPLICATION**

### THE SPONSORS



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## EDITORIAL

# Women Empowerment: **Much Room for Improvement**

**W**omen in developing nations are slowly making progress towards gender equality by overcoming mindboggling challenges that still include female circumcision, increased human trafficking, entrenched discrimination based on stereotypes, early marriages and even fewer educational opportunities.

Thus, the creation of UN Women in July 2010 was a major step towards attainment of Gender Equality, and Women Empowerment including helping them meet their basic needs in what is already a highly competitive “global village” driven by rapidly evolving technologies or innovations.

This aligns with the theme of 2023 International Women’s Day (IWD2023) marked on 8<sup>th</sup> March

*“DigitALL: Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality.”* It highlights the need for inclusive and transformative technology and digital education.

According to UN Secretary-General António Guterres women today make up under a third of the workforce in science, technology, engineering, and math. When women are underrepresented in developing new technologies, discrimination may be baked in from the start. He emphasized that investing in women uplifts all people, communities, and countries.”

Even more the theme is closely aligned with the priority theme for the 67<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW-67) held at the UN headquarters in New York, US from 6<sup>th</sup> to 17 March 2023.

The CSW-67 priority theme is *“Innovation, Technological Change and Education in the Digital Age for Achieving Gender Equality and the Empowerment of All Women and Girls.”*

In Africa, both the CSW-67 and the IWD2023 themes should serve as a timely reminder that there is need to

focus on socio-economic development based on homegrown innovations and technologies.

There is much to be done to attain a more inclusive world. UN Women has also called on governments, activists and the private sector to increase their efforts in shaping a safer, more inclusive and more equitable digital world for all.

Thus paradigm shift is needed to harness the potential of technology and innovation to accelerate progress on the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Worldwide, women cabinet ministers are below 25 percent. They mainly lead on policy areas related to gender equality and women’s rights, while men still dominate economic, defence, energy, and other powerful portfolios.

Women in top political leadership jobs worldwide represent only 11.3 per cent of countries’ Heads of State, and 9.8 per cent of countries’ Heads of Government. The new data also shows that the global proportion of Members of Parliament who are women is at 26.5 per cent compared to 25.5 per cent in 2021.

A gender-responsive approach to innovation, technology and digital education can increase the awareness of women and girls regarding their rights and civic engagement.

Advancements in digital technology offer immense opportunities to address development and humanitarian challenges, and to achieve the 2030 Agenda’s Sustainable Development Goals.

# Gender Equality in the Digital World

By Sima Bahous - UN Under Secretary General and Executive Director UN-Women



Photo: UN Photo/Evan Schneider.

Women and girls have just as much right to access the digital world and prosper in it as men and boys. Their creativity, knowledge and perspectives can shape a future where technology contributes to transforming social norms, amplifying women's voices, pushing forward against online harassment, preventing the perpetuation of algorithmic biases, and distributing the benefits of digitalization as the great equalizer to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

All over the world, women's and girls' movements are defiant and steadfast in the face of regressive gender norms and pushback against their rights. Activists are raising their powerful voices for inclusion, and an end to violence and to discrimination in education, the workplace and in legislation.

On International Women's Day we honour and celebrate them, adding our committed support to their energy and drive.

Goal Five is at the heart of the 2030 Agenda. It is the powerful multiplier, the smart investment and the prerequisite to get the Sustainable Development Goals as a whole back on track.

Technology and innovation are game changers in this. The advantages brought by meaningful connectivity and equal access to digital skills and services are particularly important for low- and middle-income countries – where most of the world's population growth will be - and for the women and girls in those countries, most of all older women, migrants, women living in rural areas and those with disabilities.

These are the same women for whom the gaps in access and illiteracy in digital skills are the most acute. We must not let them face a new kind of discrimination and enter a new kind of poverty.

The gaps and detoxify the online world for those entering it. With the right decisions by government and industry and the collaborative efforts of civil society, closing the gender digital divide could become the fast lane to progress as technology accelerates.

This will also take a sharp rise in accountability for technology outcomes and a strong and effective approach to online violence, including safeguards and expanded legal frameworks to address unregulated behaviour and standards in ICTs.

It will take determined measures to provide the necessary skills and learning, especially in the STEM subjects -Science, Technology, Engineering and Math,

that will pave the way to the leadership of women and girls as technology creators, promoters and decision-makers.

Our vision of equality, of what our world could be, for all of us, can and will include the equal enjoyment of the fruits of technology and innovation without fear of violence or abuse of any sort.

Women and girls must be able to engage, create, learn and work, safely and productively either online or offline, making the most of all the opportunities in every sphere of life and at every stage of it, in education, in the economy, in society and in politics. (UN WOMEN)

Champion for Youth and Gender Empowerment.

Ms. Sima Sami Bahous became UN Women's third Executive Director on 30th September 2021. A champion for women and girls, gender equality, and youth empowerment, as well as a keen advocate for quality education, poverty alleviation, and inclusive

governance.

Ms. Bahous has brought to the position more than 35 years of leadership experience at the grassroots, national, regional, and international levels, coupled with expertise in advancing women's empowerment and rights, addressing discrimination and violence, and promoting sustainable socio-economic development towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

**On International Women's Day we honour and celebrate them, adding our committed support to their energy and drive.**

Ms. Bahous has served as Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations in New York. Prior to this position, she served as Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Arab States at the United Nations Development Programme from 2012 to 2016 and Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the Social Development Sector at the League of Arab States, from 2008 to 2012.

She has also served in two

ministerial posts in Jordan as President of the Higher Media Council from 2005 to 2008 and as Adviser to King Abdullah II from 2003 to 2005. She was Media Adviser and Director of Communication for the Royal Hashemite Court from 2001 to 2003, Acting Executive Director for the King Hussein Foundation from 2000 to 2001 and Executive Director of the Noor Al Hussein Foundation from 1998 to 2001. She also worked for UNICEF and with a number of United Nations and civil society organizations, and taught development and communication studies at different universities in Jordan.

Ms. Bahous holds a PhD in mass communication and development from Indiana University, United States, a Master of Arts in literature and drama from Essex University, United Kingdom, and a Bachelor of Arts in English literature from Jordan University. She is fluent in Arabic and English, and proficient in French.

# ADEA: Role of Women in Nurturing Children while Leveraging Innovation and Technology

The world commemorated the impact, value-addition and the role of women in nurturing children while leveraging innovation and technology.

For #IWD2023, the global community is drawing attention to the need for all to #EmbraceEquity under this year's theme of *#DigitALL: Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality*. It is to highlight the expanding role of innovative technology in promoting gender equality and meeting the health and developmental needs of women and girls.

Education in Africa is on a recovery path, especially following the COVID-19 pandemic that reduced access to learning for many young Africans, especially women and girls.

Technology and innovation are at the heart of this recovery and ADEA recognises the role of technology in its vision for education in Africa. We believe that technology is a tool to democratize access and improve the relevance and quality of education and learning, especially for pro-poor households that depend on learning to grow.

Technology is also the essence of our desire to nurture an improved learning system that trains Africans to create value.

Through technology, ADEA believes we can grow a new type of workforce; a new crop of experts in Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, Machine Learning, Software Engineering, Business Analysis, UI/UX, and Network Administration who will leverage their new knowledge to catalyse Africa's growth.

To give added impetus to our belief in the role of technology, ADEA has, working with our partners, completed several studies and initiatives towards deepening the role of technology, especially as it gives more access to women and girls.

For example, we have partnered with the Lego Foundation to roll out activities that promote Play-based STEM education; this includes a situational assessment of Play-Based STEM uptake in eight African countries.

We have worked with the Islamic Development Bank and the African Development Bank Group to implement a study on ICT in Education. The report for this study will be launched in Senegal this June 2023. ADEA is also working with the Mastercard Foundation to promote EdTech, working with youths, including young girls.

ADEA featured on EdTech Mondays on CNBC Africa, where our Executive Secretary discussed the linkage between technology and learning. Our initiative on Remote Education Benchmarking Toolkit is another way we are providing policy direction on the use of technology in education to countries in Africa leveraging technology to deliver learning, especially to vulnerable groups.

ADEA believes strongly in giving voice, access and equity to women and we know that technology and innovation is key in this regard, hence our unreserved support for policies and programmes that are technology driven. We join local, regional, continental and global partners to commemorate this day. Women and girls are at the core of what we do and promoting equity and balance will ensure that we realise a progressive and prosperous Africa. (Statement from ADEA)

# Global Landscapes 2023 List of 16 Women- Six from Africa- Restoring the Earth

*The Global Landscapes Forum announces its 4th annual list of climate leaders from around the world for International Women's Day*

BONN, Germany- As humanity lurches from one crisis to another, women worldwide are building solutions to one of the gravest threats of all: climate change. To mark the United Nations' International Women's Day (IWD), observed on 8 March, the Global Landscapes Forum (GLF) is honoring 16 women on the frontline of the climate and biodiversity crises.

These outstanding women are the faces of innovation in science, technology, art, public policy, sustainable business, environmental activism, journalism, litigation, climate finance, international climate treaty negotiations, and grassroots ecosystem restoration, across the globe.

"Working as an African woman scientist was a shock: in the late 1990s and early 2000s, I saw no one who looked like me at my level of leadership or above," says Éliane Ubalijoro, Executive Director at Sustainability in the Digital Age, incoming CEO of CIFOR-ICRAF and one of the '16 Women Restoring the Earth'.

"Indigenous women play a key role in transmitting the traditional knowledge, values and practices that allow our communities to protect, and sustainably use, natural resources. We definitely need more of those women in international climate and environmental forums," expresses Pasang Dolma Sherpa, Executive director of the Center for Indigenous Peoples' Research & Development (CIPRED) and another of the '16 Women Restoring the Earth'.

**Through unique bios, quotes, photos, and stories, this year's campaign tells why these are the GLF's '16 Women Restoring the Earth' 2023:**

- The Strategist: ANDREA MEZA MURILLO, UNCCD's Deputy Executive Secretary and former Minister of Energy and Environment for the Government of Costa Rica
- The Connector: ANNETTE PENSEL, Executive Director, Global Coffee Platform (Germany)
- The Investor: AYESHA KHAN, Regional Director, Acumen Pakistan –expert in sustainable finance for climate
- The Steward: CAMILLE RIVERA, Co-founder and Director of Oceanus Conservation, GLFx Mindanao chapter Coordinator, and Restoration Steward 2021 (Philippines)
- The Investigator: EDILMA PRADA, investigative journalist, Pulitzer fellow and founder and director of the independent media organization Agenda Propia (Colombia)
- The Leader: ÉLIANE UBALIJORO, Incoming CEO, CIFOR-ICRAF and Executive Director, Sustainability in the Digital Age (Rwanda)
- The Educator: EVA MAKANDI, Founder, Light On A Hill (LOAH), and Forest Restoration Steward 2022 (Kenya)
- The Activist: INEZA GRACE, Coordinator, Loss and Damage Youth Coalition (Rwanda)
- The Artist: INNA MODJA, visual artist, musician, UNCCD Land Ambassador, and CEO and Co-Founder of Code Green (Mali)
- The Policymaker: IRYNA STAVCHUK, Ukraine Program Manager at the European Climate Foundation and former Deputy Minister for the Ukrainian government.
- The Philanthropist: MARIA AMALIA SOUZA, Co-Founder and Strategic Development Director, Casa Socio-Environmental Fund (Brazil)
- The Storyteller: MOKY MAKURA, TV presenter, producer, author and Executive Director of Africa No Filter (Nigeria)
- The Defender: PASANG DOLMA SHERPA, Executive Director, Center for Indigenous Peoples' Research & Development (CIPRED) (Nepal)
- The Advocate: SYEDA RIZWANA HASAN, environmental lawyer, chief executive of the Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA)
- The Entrepreneur: VIOLET AMOABENG, Founder and CEO, Skin Gourmet (Ghana)
- The Financier: YURIKO BACKES, Minister of Finance, Luxembourg

# IDRC: Evidence-based Solutions Fundamental in Overcoming Entrenched Barriers Impeding Women's Advancement



By Dr. Kathryn Touré

**E**vidence-based solutions are fundamental to overcoming the long-standing, systemic and deeply entrenched barriers that impede the advancement of women and girls.

IDRC-supported research is playing a critical role in improving the lives of women and girls, including through improved food security, education, health, economic opportunities and digital innovation. Important progress has been made, but much more work remains to be done, and IDRC is working with partners across the Global South to achieve gender-transformative change. Our *March 2023 Newsletter*, marking *International Women's Day and the 67th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women* we highlight the many ways that research we support is helping to advance gender equality and build stronger, healthier, more equitable and more prosperous families, communities and countries.

Follow our social media accounts to learn more about how IDRC-supported research contributes to enhance the lives of women, girls and their communities.

Dr Kathryn Traore is the Regional Director, Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO), International Development Research Centre *Source IDRC March 2023 Newsletter*

## IDRC: Championing Gender Equality through Research

**A**s the world commemorated the International Women's Day on March 8 under the theme, DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) took the opportunity to highlight its work in advancing gender equality through research.

In the last five years, IDRC has invested over CAD82 million in gender-transformative research that addresses gender inequality and the underlying power dynamics that perpetuate inequalities. This includes support to 122 projects in more than 60 countries.

In the 2021-2022 financial year alone, IDRC invested in 38 gender-transformative projects with funding support totalling more than CAD39 million.

Presently, the organization has renewed its funding of the Centre of Excellence for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems (CRVS systems) through the end of 2025.

Now housed at the UNFPA, this Centre of Excellence continues to advocate for strong CRVS systems as an important step toward global gender equality.

This project aims to promote gender equality with dedicated fellowship opportunities to develop the careers of young female CRVS and gender scientists.

It will also enable development of guidelines on how CRVS can enhance gender equality and reproductive, maternal and newborn health as well as expand the capacity of institutions in the Global South to address the intersectionality of women's legal identity, their ability to claim their rights, and their reproductive health and well-being.

The Growth and Economic Opportunities for Women (GrOW) – East Africa initiative commissioned an evidence review to analyze the integration of gender in the public procurement systems and processes of five countries – Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda and Ethiopia.

The review examines the measures taken by each

country to achieve that gender integration and the challenges of adopting gender-responsive procurement approaches. It also proposes recommendations to overcome these barriers.

The evidence review identifies the following five types of barriers hindering women's full integration into procurement systems: structural and systemic; legal and policy-related; cultural and societal; financial; and corruption-related.

According to the review, there remains much to be done to ensure full participation of women-owned businesses in procurement processes.

Among recommendations to overcome barriers include simplifying the procurement process, legislating anti-discrimination laws, removing financial guarantee requirements, providing ethical training and incentives for public officials, and many more.

The review aims to inform discussions on how to promote women's entry into public procurement.

Besides, research on women's unpaid care work, soft-skills development for job readiness and entry into non-traditional economic sectors, GrOW – East Africa supports several projects related to gender-responsive procurement.

A new publication on the relationship between the care economy and global efforts to transition to clean energy, commissioned by IDRC and developed by Kate Grantham, founder and executive director of FemDev Consulting, identifies the existing research and evidence linking women's economic empowerment, care

**In the 2021-2022 financial year alone, IDRC invested in 38 gender-transformative projects with funding support totalling more than CAD39 million.**

work and clean energy.

The publication outlines the role of women in clean energy development, the barriers to women's employment and entrepreneurship in this sector and the impact of clean energy technologies on care work.

It also highlights existing policies and solutions that can turn the transition to clean energy into an opportunity to address gender inequalities, especially in the care economy. In addition, the report highlights the perils of inaction.

SheVax+, a regional livestock vaccine initiative in East Africa, was launched in 2019 with support from IDRC, Global Affairs Canada and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation through the Livestock Vaccine Innovation Fund (LVIF).

To encourage greater vaccination uptake among women and support their long-term livelihood prospects, the initiative established a multi-pronged approach to develop a women-centred livestock vaccine private sector delivery system.

The project creates entrepreneurial opportunities

for women by providing them with a valuable source of income and the capability to move into vaccine distribution and manufacturing.

Across Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda, women animal health service providers make USD50-300 per month (approx. CAD69-412) depending on the country's economy and labour rates.

In education, the initiative and its partners, are disseminating information to women on where to access vaccines and veterinary services.

This is being achieved with tools such as vaccination calendars (more than 1,200 have been distributed in English, Swahili, and Kinyarwanda), educational comic books in English and Kinyarwanda, and animated videos.

IDRC-supported researchers shared knowledge and findings at the Canada-hosted 2023 FemParl Middle East and North Africa conference in Jordan in February.

Launched in 2018, FemParl brings women politicians and leaders from across the region together and stems

from Canada's commitment to gender equality and empowerment and the belief that women belong everywhere decisions are being made.

This year's conference focused on forms of technology-facilitated violence that face women in the public sphere. The issue is only starting to be understood and there is a distinct lack of statistically significant research on the digital experiences of women in the Global South.

There is also a poor understanding of how mis- and dis-information affects women in their public life.

Additionally, IDRC has been supporting research to improve understanding of digital gender-based violence since 2016.

A global IDRC-supported survey found that women in Jordan, Algeria, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are impacted by digital violence at a rate of 77% compared to 66% for men, with Facebook identified as the platform where most of the violence and harassment occurs.

# Women Leading Top Science Institutions

Dr. Peggy Oti-Boateng: Executive Director African Academy of Sciences



**Photo credit: African Academy of Science**

**D**r. Peggy Oti-Boateng is a Ghanaian biochemist with more than 30 years of contribution to international development, science policy and capacity building in the basic sciences and engineering.

Having been appointed as the Executive Director of the African Academy of Sciences on November 2022, she brings along a wealth of experience to take the AAS to higher heights.

She holds a PhD degree in Food Science and Technology obtained from the University of Adelaide, South Australia, and a BSc degree, with

specialization in Biochemistry, from the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Kumasi, Ghana.

In the past, she has been responsible for projects and programmes relating to science policy and basic sciences at the multi-sectoral regional office in Harare, Zimbabwe.

She was the regional thematic adviser for Africa for the formulation of policies and capacity building in science, technology and innovation. She also served as focal point for the African Ministerial Conference on Science and Technology and was the Head of the Sciences Sector for the Southern African Development Community. She had additional responsibilities in the area of water sciences, ecology and inter-sectionality.

Dr. Oti-Boateng has previously held many positions at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), including Director of the Division of Science Policy and Capacity Building, Natural Sciences Sector as well as the Senior Science Advisor for Natural Sciences Sector in Paris, France. She served as the Senior Programme Specialist for Science and Technology and Head of the Science Unit at the Regional Office for Southern Africa in Zimbabwe and the Regional Office for Science in Africa, Nairobi, Kenya.

She has also held other positions at the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) in Kumasi, Ghana as well as the South Australian Department for Employment.

# Women Leading Top Science Institutions

**Dr. Segenet Kelemu: Director General & CEO International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology**



**Photo credit: icipe**

**D**r. Segenet Kelemu, is the Director General & CEO of the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (icipe) Nairobi, Kenya since November 2013.

She is the fourth Chief Executive Officer, and the first woman to lead icipe.

icipe is the only research institution in Africa working primarily on insects and other arthropods, with an aim of ensuring better food security, health, and livelihoods, by producing world-class knowledge and then developing solutions that are environmentally friendly, accessible, affordable, and easy-to-use by communities.

After more than 25 years in the United States of America and Latin America applying cutting-edge science that saw her garner numerous professional and state honors for an exceptional career as a scientist, Dr Kelemu, returned from the diaspora in 2007 to contribute to Africa's development.

Dr. Kelemu has used her role as CEO of a research Centre to create a more equitable workplace for all. For instance, Participation by women in icipe's graduate programs and internships is now 48% and 56%, respectively, according to her article published in Nature Human Behavior on August, 2022.

She believes greater gender equality can be achieved by educating more girls, creating woman-friendly

workplaces, and empowering women through female-friendly technologies and products.

Consequently, she wrote this has attracted more funders targeting women researchers and funding research that can positively affect women and disadvantaged communities, like modern beekeeping, push-pull technology, and farming insects for food and animal feeds, all of which use female-friendly or gender-neutral technology to empower women.

In addition, through her leadership, icipe has made concerted efforts in creating productive employment for young people in Africa as stated in [icipe @50 report](#).

Most significantly, in 2016, the Centre commenced a partnership with the MasterCard Foundation through a five-year project known as the Young Entrepreneurs in Silk and Honey (YESH), which spawned jobs for 12,500 young men and women in Ethiopia.

This success led to the launch of the More Young Entrepreneurs in Silk and Honey (MOYESH) project, with support from the Mastercard Foundation and the Ethiopia Jobs Creation Commission (JCC).

The initiative aims to see 100,000 young men and women in Ethiopia secure dignified and fulfilling work along honey and silk value chains over the next five years.

In response to neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), icipe has developed a cost-effective sampling framework for better understanding of the risk pathways and vulnerabilities related to Rift Valley Fever, including vectors, pathogens and livelihoods, in the context of climate change and agro-environmental transformations.

Other NTDs the Centre has intensified efforts towards control and elimination include: Leishmaniasis, jiggers, Dengue fever, Yellow fever, and schistosomiasis.

Through a collaboration with Wageningen University, Netherlands, a solar-powered mosquito trapping system (SMoT), baited with a synthetic odour blend that mimics human odour was developed.

She is a 2014 L'Oréal-UNESCO Laureate for Women in Science Awards, and one of the top 100 most influential African women featured in the May 2014

Edition of Forbes Africa.

Dr. Kelemu was also listed among the 10 most influential African women in agriculture by the Journal of Gender, Agriculture and Food Security.

In January 2018, she was recognized by Bill Gates, as one of five 'Heroes in the Field' who are using their talents to fight poverty, hunger and disease, and providing opportunities for the next generation. The 'heroes in the field' have been featured in a Time magazine article guest edited by Mr. Gates; a short video that he has narrated; on his blog on the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and through a series of tweets from Mr. Gates

In April 2018, the Women Economic Forum awarded Dr Kelemu their highest award "Woman of the Decade in Natural and Sustainable Ecosystems" for outstanding leadership. In 2018, she has been featured in The CEO Magazine, Australia, as one of the six exceptional leaders from around the world, breaking ground and shattering the glass ceiling.

She has also received other awards and recognitions including the TWAS Prize for Agricultural Sciences (2011) and an Honorary Doctorate from Tel Aviv University for her professional contributions to society (2015). She serves in various Boards, advisory panels in major global initiatives and has served in international juries of key science awards.

## Honouring Women Empowering their Communities in Kenya

The Alliance for Science and The Network for African Women Environmentalists (NAWE) are hosting an event in honor of women who empower their communities across the 47 counties in Kenya, for locally-led climate action.

Kenya is amongst the leading countries on African continent embracing biotechnology and applying frontier innovations to increase productivity and improve food systems. Since women are at the frontlines of agriculture and face head on the challenges of climate change, the event will firstly celebrate a group of incredible dynamic Kenyan women who are positively impacting lives in their communities. The world cannot prosper if women suffer.

The negative effects of climate events are already felt in many areas, including agriculture and food security, biodiversity and ecosystems, water resources, human health, human settlements, migration patterns, energy, transport, and industry.

Empowering women needs a holistic approach. It goes beyond one day or one celebration and is sustainable when women develop vibrant ecosystems that will allow them to grow and thrive. In our communities, various women have taken an initiative in engaging in resilient activities to improve their livelihoods and those of the community. Many of these women, some from marginalized communities lack opportunities to amplify their engagements to the public. In celebration of International Women's Day and Month 2023,

Dr Sheila Ochugboju, the Director of Alliance of Science says: "This event also acts as a soft launch for the first NAWE publication titled *Roots of Resilience: Wangari Maathai and the Revival of Karura Forest*, which tells the story of the late Nobel Laureate Prof Wangari Maathai.

"Prof Wangari had a passionate commitment to conserve and revive Karura Forest, and saved the valuable yet threatened ecosystem from encroachment."

She was a pioneer in promoting the popular understanding about the importance of preserving city forests, and creating green spaces within cities for future generations to enjoy. This coffee table book will be launched on June 6th 2023, World Environment Day, as a milestone to the historic Climate Action Summit in Nairobi 4-6th September, 2023.

# OPPORTUNITIES

## CALL FOR PROPOSALS FOR TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION CHALLENGE AWARD (TICA)



The African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS) under the *Technological Innovation Development in Africa to Enhance Employability, Entrepreneurship and Job Creation (TIDE) project*, invites eligible applicants; entrepreneurs and innovators to submit their proposals to use their technologies for scaling or commercialization with the target to create new jobs especially for the youth. The research and innovation projects' lifespan is **12 months**. Each project will be required to have a budget ranging between **US\$5,000** and **US\$10,000** depending on the scope and scale of the proposed project which must be well justified. The following eligibility criteria apply:

- The applicant must be a consortium or partnership between a **private sector and research/university establishments**. The lead entity must have a legal status in the country of operation.
- Applicants must come from any of the following Afreximbank countries: Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Uganda, and Zimbabwe
- Applications from individual persons will **NOT** be accepted. Only applications with affiliations to a legal entity will be accepted and must have at least two partners drawn from the private sector and research/university.
- The grant cannot be used to undertake a new research study but to scale or commercialize an existing innovation/technology into a business opportunity with the target to create jobs, especially for young people.

Applicants are required to duly fill out the application template and submit it to [procurement@atpsnet.org](mailto:procurement@atpsnet.org) with a copy to [executivedirector@atpsnet.org](mailto:executivedirector@atpsnet.org) on or before **2359hrs EAT 10<sup>th</sup> April 2023**.

For more information on the Call for Proposals click on the link below: [Call for Proposals for technological innovations in Africa](#)

# OPPORTUNITIES

## News Release

## DECADE OF CELEBRATING AFRICAN ENGINEERING: APPLICATIONS OPEN FOR THE 2024 AFRICA PRIZE FOR ENGINEERING INNOVATION

- **Entrepreneurs with engineering solutions in sub-Saharan Africa invited to apply for the Africa Prize for Engineering Innovation**
- **The 2024 prize will mark a decade of support for innovators enhancing economic, environmental and social development in Africa**

The Royal Academy of Engineering has opened applications for the 2024 Africa Prize for Engineering Innovation as the programme approaches its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Africa Prize supports ambitious entrepreneurs and innovators developing local and scalable solutions to everyday challenges on the continent.

The Africa Prize will welcome its tenth cohort in November 2023. Since 2014, the programme has supported more than 130 entrepreneurs across 20 African countries with a rigorous business training programme and lifelong support through the Africa Prize alumni network. More than 70% of the alumni's engineering and technology businesses now generate revenue. Between them the Africa Prize alumni have raised more than USD 14 million in grants and equity

funding, and created more than 3,600 jobs, almost half of them for women.

The Africa Prize is now looking for the next 16 promising innovators with engineering technologies to improve lives, launching applications today at the 10th Sankalp Africa Summit in Nairobi, Kenya – an event that showcases the entrepreneurial ecosystem working towards sustainable development in Africa.

The aim of the Africa Prize is to support the crucial role that engineers play in addressing societal challenges including access to power, food and water security, adapting to climate change, and improving telecommunications, education, financial services, healthcare and other public infrastructure. With applications from 37 African nations to date, and shortlisted candidates from 20 nations, the Africa Prize continues to nurture the wealth of diverse engineering talent across sub-Saharan Africa.

The winner of the Africa Prize receives £25,000 and three runners-up are each awarded £10,000. Up to 16 shortlisted applicants receive a unique package of support over eight months to help them accelerate their businesses, including comprehensive and tailored business training, sector specific engineering mentoring, communications support, pitching opportunities and access to the Academy's network of high profile, experienced engineers and business experts in the UK and across Africa.

The Academy's judges, mentors and expert reviewers have provided over 2,500 hours of support over the last ten years, valued at almost USD 1.5 million, and the alumni continue to contribute directly to the UN Sustainable Development Goals as their enterprises scale.

"The Africa Prize boosted my success as an African entrepreneur by helping me grow, providing training and international mentoring support to my water solution for Tanzania," said inaugural winner Professor Askwar Hilonga, who created the NanoFilter system. "The Prize changed my life, and the future of thousands of Tanzanians who now have access to safe drinking water."

"African entrepreneurial ecosystems have historically been centred around stronger economies, making it harder for startups from smaller countries to achieve success," said Meredith Ettridge, Associate Director, International, at the Royal Academy of Engineering. "The Africa Prize is providing opportunities and access to expert networks in countries which have previously been overlooked."

The Africa Prize today counts Ivorian, Togolese, Sierra Leonean and Gambian innovators among its alumni. While the programme provides support in English, it has steadily seen more participation from French-speaking African regions over its ten-year history, with two Francophone African winners to date.

"Supporting African engineering innovators means supporting disruptive but appropriate technologies. Africa Prize alumni have typically created something that is based on engineering and suitable to local users. Appropriate technologies can only come from innovators who understand their own environment and communities, local perspective, and that's what we are supporting," said Ettridge.

### **Spotlight – Kenya**

The Africa Prize 2022 winner, Kenyan Norah Magero, created Vaccibox, a solar-powered mobile fridge to store and transport

temperature-sensitive medicines. Designed during Covid, Magero's innovation is an example of an engineering solution that provides a tangible benefit to society.

"Winning the Africa Prize gave me so much validation as an African entrepreneur," said Magero. "As a business, we have received much more visibility for our work that has accelerated our technological offering rapidly. It has enabled more partnerships and exposed us to the global stage of impact investors. To other engineers and entrepreneurs considering applying, they should definitely opt in because they will be one step away from uncovering growth beyond imagination. That's what we all want, growth!"

#### **Spotlight – Uganda**

The Africa Prize 2018 winner, Ugandan Brian Gitta, created Matibabu, a reusable malaria detection device which clips onto the user's finger. Of the 400,000 malaria-related global deaths, 90% occur in sub-Saharan Africa, killing more children under the age of five in the region than HIV. Gitta's innovation is an example of an engineering solution that provides a tangible to society.

"The team and I were humbled and grateful to receive this prestigious award from the Royal Academy of Engineering," said Gitta. "It has had a tremendous impact on our work, and has enabled us to accelerate our partnerships and the development of our innovative malaria detection technology, the Matiscope. The recognition and support we received through this programme helped us to scale up our efforts by improving the device and deploying

our disease surveillance platform to over 100 health facilities in Uganda."

#### **Spotlight – Nigeria**

Nigerian finance specialist, Faith Adesemowo, was one of the four finalists selected in 2021. Her business, Social Lender, was established to provide access to formal and informal financial services to farmers, traders, artisans, young professionals, small business owners, and students. Users can access the platform through the internet, SMS, USSD, apps, or partner bank ATMs.

"Great ideas have been birthed as a result of the Africa Prize, and the support was phenomenal," said Adesemowo. "I heartily encourage engineers out there to do their very best to become a part of the programme. Simply put, the Africa Prize is worth your time!"

#### **Spotlight – Ghana**

Charlette N'Guessan, born in Côte d'Ivoire and working in Ghana, was the first woman to win the Prize in 2020, created BACE API, which uses facial recognition and artificial intelligence to verify identities remotely. The software can be integrated into existing applications and is aimed at financial institutions and other industries reliant on identify verification for service delivery. N'Guessan's innovation is an example of an engineering solution that provides a tangible benefit to society.

"I am proud to be the first African woman to win the Prize, it is one of my greatest achievements as a female tech entrepreneur." Said N'Guessan. "It opened our business up to many opportunities and provided exposure for our solution to the local and international market. I am happy to

see the Africa Prize has inspired many young woman innovators to break down barriers, and I encourage all African innovators – especially woman engineers – to apply. This experience taught me to be open to collaboration and to embrace growth. We thank the Royal Academy of Engineering for trusting and investing in innovative solutions developed by Africans, for Africa.”

African entrepreneurs from all engineering disciplines, and with an innovation that can provide scalable solutions to local challenges, are invited to enter the tenth round of the Africa Prize. Applications are now open to individuals or small teams living and working in sub-Saharan Africa. Submitted innovations should have a social, economic or environmental benefit, and should be at an early stage of development, with the potential for upscaling and commercialisation. The Prize is open to hardware and software innovations, as well as innovative processes and systems.

The deadline for applications is 25 July 2023 (4pm BST). Visit the ‘How to Apply’ guide on the Africa Prize website and submit applications through the online grants system.

### Notes for Editors

1. **The Africa Prize for Engineering Innovation**, founded by the Royal Academy of Engineering in 2014, is Africa’s biggest prize dedicated to developing African innovators, and assisting them to maximise their impact. It awards crucial commercialisation support to ambitious African innovators developing scalable engineering solutions to address local challenges,

demonstrating the importance of engineering as an enabler of improved quality of life and economic development.

An eight-month period of tailored training and mentoring culminates in a showcase event where a winner is selected to receive £25,000, along with three runners-up who are each awarded £10,000. The 12 remaining shortlisted candidates also compete for the public’s vote for the One-to-Watch award of £5,000.

Judges, mentors and expert reviewers for the Africa Prize for Engineering Innovation have provided over 2,500 hours of support to entrepreneurs since the prize was established – this equates to a value of over USD 1,419,007 in support.

The Africa Prize has been generously supported by the UK Government, The Ezrah Charitable Trust and The Shell Centenary Scholarship Fund.

2. **The Royal Academy of Engineering** is harnessing the power of engineering to build a sustainable society and an inclusive economy that works for everyone.

In collaboration with our Fellows and partners, we’re growing talent and developing skills for the future, driving innovation and building global partnerships, and influencing policy and engaging the public.

Together we’re working to tackle the greatest challenges of our age.



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