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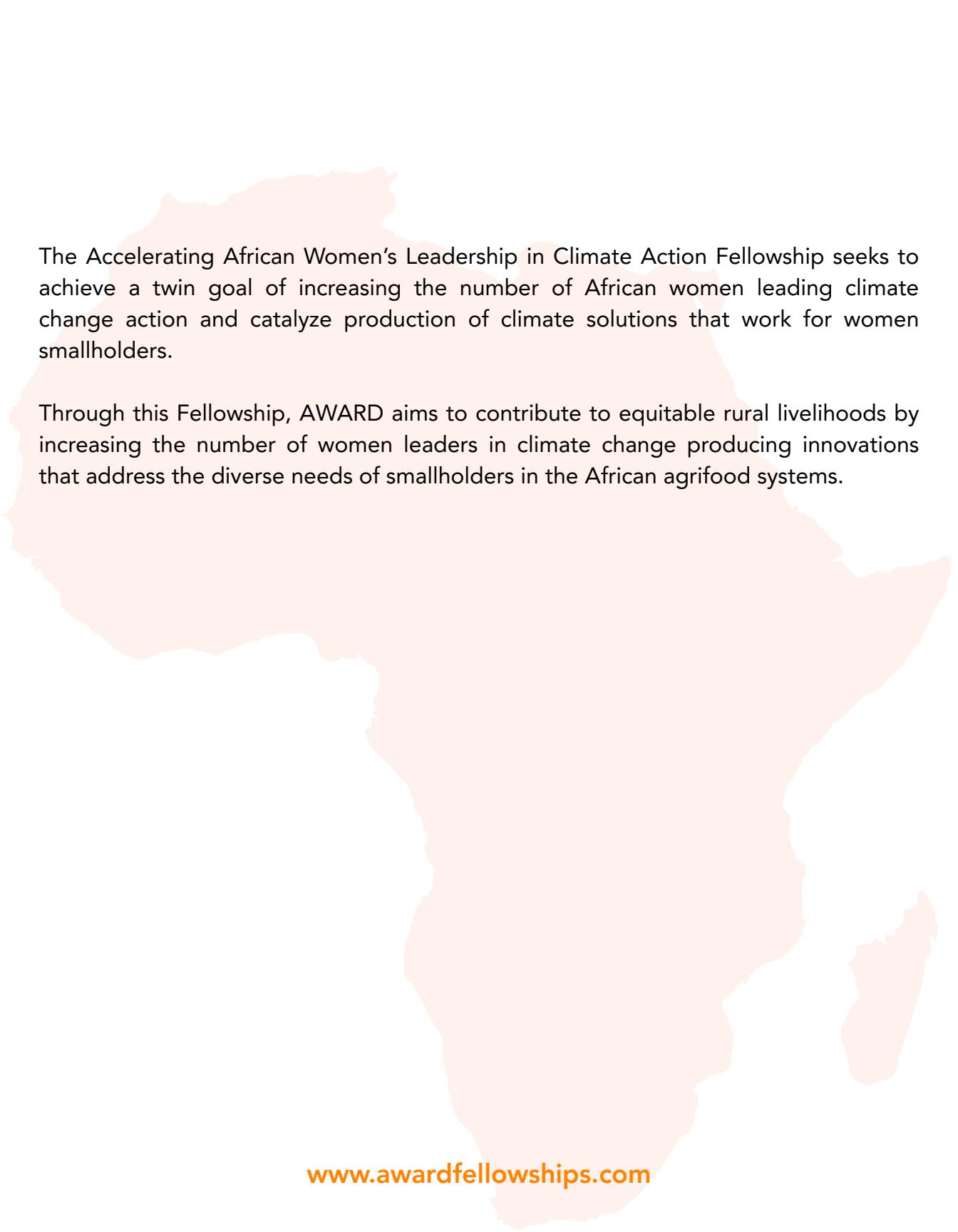
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Accelerating African Women's Leadership in Climate Action Fellowship

Fellows' booklet



The Accelerating African Women's Leadership in Climate Action Fellowship seeks to achieve a twin goal of increasing the number of African women leading climate change action and catalyze production of climate solutions that work for women smallholders.

Through this Fellowship, AWARD aims to contribute to equitable rural livelihoods by increasing the number of women leaders in climate change producing innovations that address the diverse needs of smallholders in the African agrifood systems.



Cohort 2 AWARD Climate Action Fellows Profiles

BENIN



Esther Laurelle,
Postdoctoral Fellow,
University of Abomey-Calavi



Esther Laurelle holds a PhD in Microbiology from the University of Abomey-Calavi (2019). Her research focuses on bacterial resistance to antibiotics and the impact of climate change on the evolution of infectious disease pathogens, with a particular emphasis on high-risk areas. She is currently a postdoctoral fellow working on an IDRC-funded project to develop an early warning system for diarrhoeal diseases around Lake Nokoué. This interdisciplinary initiative integrates microbiology, sociology, and oceanography to enhance community resilience, particularly for women and children, by improving disease preparedness and response in vulnerable populations facing increasing climate and health challenges.



Firdaus Alidou,
Co-Manager,
AgriTech WANGARA Ltd



Firdaus Alidou is the co-manager of AgriTech WANGARA Ltd, a Beninese start-up advancing sustainable agriculture and resilient value chains in the face of climate change. The company develops innovative solutions, including WANGARAPP, a digital platform that enhances smallholder farmers' access to reliable information on markets and sustainable practices, particularly for rural women. As an environmental microbiologist, Firdaus leverages her expertise in soil microorganisms to promote carbon sequestration and enhance ecosystem health. Her work bridges science, technology, and social impact, driving climate adaptation, women's empowerment, and inclusive agricultural transformation across West Africa.



Mireille Gloria,
Teacher,
Ministry of Secondary and
Technical Education and
Vocational Training



Mireille Gloria's work focuses on how artificial intelligence can strengthen agricultural resilience against plant diseases. Her research centers on developing deep learning models, particularly convolutional neural networks, for the early detection of pepper diseases such as anthracnose and Tomato Yellow Leaf Curl Virus. She models how weather conditions influence disease severity by integrating field image analysis with climate data. Positioned at the intersection of agriculture, climate, and AI, Mireille's work aims to develop practical digital tools that support farmers in managing crop health more effectively, thereby advancing food security and sustainable agricultural systems across Africa.



Faridah Dosso,
Associate Researcher,
Research Laboratory on
Innovation for Agricultural
Development (LRIDA)



Faridah Dosso is a researcher specializing in climate change adaptation, with a focus on sustainable land management (SLM) and gender mainstreaming. She leads innovative projects that integrate participatory role-playing, multi-stakeholder workshops, and educational assessments to evaluate how farmers and livestock keepers understand and adopt agroecological practices. Her work also examines how SLM innovations disseminate within rural communities, with a focus on securing land tenure and enhancing women's access to land.



Tété Pérugine Akoton,
Wetland Ecosystems
Manager,
Rescue for Nature



Tété Pérugine is responsible for wetland ecosystems at Secours à la Nature / Rescue for Nature in Benin and is a PhD candidate in natural resource planning and management. Her work focuses on mangrove conservation and sustainable management, which are vital for climate change adaptation. She leads projects that integrate research, community engagement, and advocacy, including a gender-inclusive pilot at Ramsar Site 1017. This project has restored over seven hectares of mangroves, enhanced women's leadership, and increased awareness among women and youth on sustainable environmental governance.



Épouse Houhialo Bonou-Zin,
Agro-economist,
University of Parakou



Épouse Houhialo is an agro-economist specializing in environmental economics, with expertise in assessing the externalities of agricultural practices and promoting sustainable production systems. She works to identify approaches that enhance productivity and competitiveness while safeguarding the well-being of smallholder farmers. At the University of Parakou, she serves as an assistant at the Economic and Social Dynamics Research and Analysis Laboratory (LARDES), where she teaches microeconomics and mentors students. Her research explores production systems, climate change adaptation, and the adoption of agricultural innovations, with a strong focus on supporting rural communities and vulnerable populations.



Jesugnon Fifamè Murielle,
Researcher,
University of Parakou



Jesugnon Fifamè is an agronomist specializing in biodiversity monitoring and conservation. Her work focuses on protecting forests, promoting agroforestry and sustainable farming practices that boost productivity while reducing deforestation. Jesugnon's work covers safeguarding endangered woody species, developing fast-growing trees with strong carbon sequestration capacity, and promoting underutilized species with high potential. Jesugnon Fifamè fosters environmentally sound solutions that enhance rural livelihoods through her research, teaching, and farmer support initiatives.

Sandrine Houéffa Abalo,
Research Assistant,
Université d'Abomey-Calavi,
Benin



Sandrine Houéffa is a Research Assistant at the Applied Ecology Laboratory, Université d'Abomey-Calavi in Benin. Her research explores the impact of climate on agricultural production, risk perception and modelling, and food security in Benin's coastal areas. In particular, she analyzes the differentiated effects of climate change on women, including their nutritional status and coping strategies. Her work aims to generate sustainable, community-driven solutions that strengthen resilience and promote equitable responses to climate and environmental challenges.



Cohort 2 AWARD Climate Action Fellows bios

CAMEROON



Jolie Claire Noudem,
Project manager,
Women and Community
Action for Sustainable
Development in Cameroon



Jolie Claire is a Project Manager at Women and Community Action for Sustainable Development (FACDDUC) in Cameroon, where she leads a socio-economic empowerment and networking program for women's associations in the country's north. With expertise in environmental geography and impact studies, her work centers on climate resilience, women's land tenure security, and participatory governance of natural resources. She is also the founder of EndoFarms, a digital platform that leverages women farmers' indigenous knowledge to strengthen climate resilience, drive local innovation, and advance the economic empowerment of rural communities.



Lucrèce Megnitsop Namekong,
Gender Lead,
Association for Supporting the
Self-Empowerment of Women of
Boumba and Ngoko (AAFEBEN)



Lucrèce Megnitsop leads gender initiatives at the Association for Supporting the Self-Empowerment of Women of Boumba and Ngoko (AAFEBEN). She is dedicated to strengthening forest communities by promoting non-timber forest products, sustainable cocoa production, and income-generating activities. Her work integrates gender inclusion and advocacy, strongly focusing on empowering women and indigenous peoples. With extensive experience in community outreach, project management, and monitoring, Lucrèce collaborates with various partners, including GIZ, FTNS, WWF, and local ministries, to foster sustainable livelihoods and advance gender equity in natural resource management.



Estelle Marie Chancelle Ewoule Lobé,
Project Coordinator,
Internally Displaced Persons and
Environmental Migrants in Africa
(APADIME)



Estelle Marie's work focuses on combating forest and wildlife crime while safeguarding biodiversity and the rights of local communities. She works with local actors and public authorities to design sustainable ecosystem conservation strategies that balance protection with community needs. She is passionate about climate action and leads initiatives that raise awareness and mobilize communities to reduce environmental vulnerability. Her work also focuses on strengthening the economic resilience of local populations by advancing inclusive, grassroots initiatives that provide sustainable alternatives to illegal practices.



Sabiatou Ngandom Mfokou,
Trainer,
Formation Agropastorale et Rurale
du Cameroun (FARCAM)



Sabiatou Ngandom works with Agropastoral and Rural Training in Cameroon (FARCAM), a network advancing agricultural and rural training in Cameroon. Her focus is on strengthening the resilience to climate change of rural communities, and of women in particular, by adopting agro-ecological approaches and promoting green value chains. She leads hands-on training courses on composting and local processing techniques, such as solar drying, and supports women's cooperatives in producing and marketing ecological.



Cladelle Tido,
Program Director,
African Environmental Network
(AEN)



Cladelle Tido is an environmental management specialist with expertise in land governance, biodiversity conservation, and ecosystem restoration. She holds a Master's degree in Environmental Management from the Université de Dschang and is certified in land conflict management, cartography, remote sensing, and reserve or protected area management. She has contributed to projects on mangrove restoration, climate adaptation, and community resilience with organizations including the African Environmental Network, CED, CWCS, and YVE Cameroon. An active member of international networks, Cladelle advocates for inclusive environmental governance, with a strong focus on empowering women and youth in sustainable natural resource management.



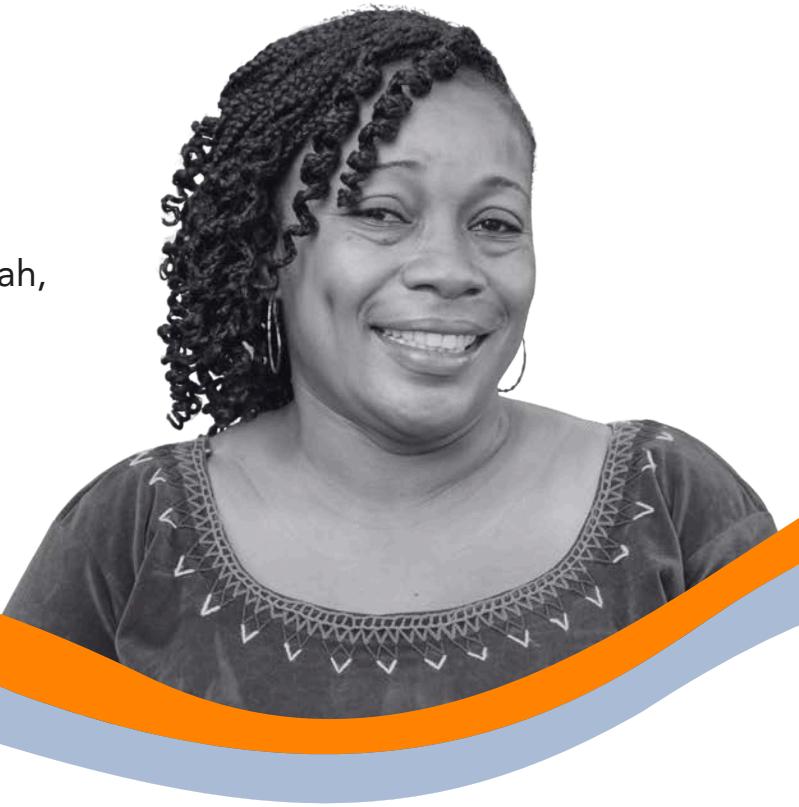
Léa Rosine Djoussi Nde,
Research Assistant,
betterSoil for a better world



Léa Rosine is a soil ecologist specializing in agronomy and agri-food systems. Her research examines microarthropod dynamics in tropical agroecological zones, focusing on Cameroon's Guinean savannah. She explores how agricultural practices, including chemical fertilizers and organic amendments, shape the diversity and abundance of these key soil organisms. Her doctoral work demonstrated that organic soil improvers enhance fertility and resilience. She is currently working with a German organization to advance regenerative farming approaches, integrating compost, biochar, and agroforestry, to foster sustainable, climate-smart, and inclusive agriculture supporting productivity and ecosystem health.



Gehfonguh Sharlot Ennih Fosah,
Researcher,
Meridian University Buea



Gehfonguh Sharlot is a researcher specializing in the intersection of climate science, epidemiology, and public health. Her work examines how climate variability and change influence the spread of diseases in Africa, from climate-sensitive ones like malaria, dengue, and cholera to others such as Ebola, Lassa fever, and meningitis. Using epidemiological modeling, climate analysis, and machine learning, she designs early warning systems that integrate environmental and health data. Committed to mentoring and global collaboration, Gehfonguh strives to translate research into practical solutions, strengthening the resilience of African communities against emerging and recurring health crises.

Wore Deele Denise,
Field agent,
Effort for the Environment
(EFES)



Wore Deele is training to be an environmental engineer specialising in sustainable resource management and the fight against climate change. She works with EFES as a field agent, contributing to both community initiatives and technical projects. Her work focuses on improving access to safe drinking water and promoting renewable energy in Cameroon's Far North Region. Currently, she is developing a terracotta water filter for rural households and piloting an ecological coal and biochar project. Passionate about inclusivity, Wore integrates gender perspectives into her work by equipping women and young people with sustainable skills for resilient communities.



Marguerite Dawaya,
Project coordinator,
Humanitarian Associations
for Sustainable Development
(AHDeID)



Marguerite Dawaya is the founder of the Humanitarian Associations for Sustainable Development (AHDeID), a Cameroonian organization driving inclusive climate solutions. Passionate about empowering women and strengthening community resilience, Marguerite leads projects on ecosystem-based adaptation, soil restoration, and sustainable resource management. She also promotes innovative approaches, such as converting organic waste into maggot production, which enhances food security while advancing the circular economy.



Ngum Che Julien,
Chief Executive Officer,
Organization for the Empowerment
of the Marginalized (ORGEM)



Ngum Che Julien researches the heightened vulnerability of internally displaced women in Cameroon to food insecurity and gender-based violence, emphasizing how climate displacement and environmental degradation worsen these challenges. Her work highlights the link between climate change and forced displacement and the disproportionate impact it has on women and girls, particularly in English-speaking conflict zones. Passionate about advancing gender-sensitive solutions, she challenges narratives that portray women as passive victims, instead positioning them as active agents of change. She promotes women's empowerment and resilience through innovative data and evidence, driving inclusive responses to climate and humanitarian crises.



Nchong Yvonne Etchutakang,
Research Scientist,
Institute of Agricultural Research for
Development (IRAD), Cameroon



Yvonne Etchutakang is a researcher in post-harvest technologies, specialising in rural food production systems. Her research explores seafood processing and preservation, focusing on sustainable techniques adapted to local contexts. Her goal is to use innovation to add value to existing seafood products and develop new products based on local agricultural raw materials. Yvonne also designs and improves equipment and processing methods tailored for small-scale rural processors. Through her research, she aims to promote affordable, high-quality production systems that strengthen rural livelihoods and contribute meaningfully to food security and sustainable agricultural development.



Cohort 2 AWARD Climate Action Fellows bios

GHANA



Sarah Okorno,
Climate Researcher,
Freelance



Sarah Okorno is a climate scientist with expertise in meteorology, climate diplomacy, and water policy. She has worked extensively with smallholder farmers to co-develop adaptation strategies that strengthen livelihoods under changing climate conditions. At the Global Center on Adaptation, she led a rapid climate risk assessment of Accra, collaborating with local authorities and households to inform city adaptation planning. She ensures local knowledge shapes global policy through research, communications, and advocacy, driving resilience and adaptation in vulnerable regions worldwide.



Deborah Darko,
Senior Research Scientist,
Council for Scientific and Industrial
Research-Water Research Institute



Deborah Darko is a Climate and Water Scientist whose research explores hydrology, climate extremes, adaptation, and ecosystem services. She develops decision-support tools, including hydrological and climate models, to assess water availability, variability, and risks from floods and droughts. Her work integrates nature-based solutions, artificial intelligence, and the water–energy–food nexus to advance climate resilience and food security. She also collaborates with policymakers, water managers, and communities to co-design inclusive adaptation strategies. Deborah aims to support equitable, climate-resilient development and strengthen water and food security for vulnerable populations across Africa.

Veronica Fempomaa Siaw,
Lecturer,
Kwame Nkrumah University of
Science and Technology



Veronica Fempomaa Siaw is an Entomologist and Lecturer whose research focuses on climate-resilient pest and vector management, particularly how climate variability affects insect population dynamics. Her current work examines fall armyworm infestations in Ghana's maize systems, where she monitors outbreaks, tests eco-friendly biopesticides, and develops farmer-centered recommendations to reduce pesticide reliance and strengthen food security. Veronica also teaches and supervises students in entomology, nurturing future scientists in sustainable pest management. As co-lead of a Royal Society project, she trains maize farmers, especially women, on climate-smart practices, advancing gender-responsive capacity building and climate adaptation in agriculture.



Aline Mwintome Naawa,
Technical Advisor,
Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)



Aline Mwintome Naawa works at the intersection of climate change, disaster risk management, and rural development, advancing practical solutions that strengthen livelihoods and resilience. With expertise in sustainable agriculture, natural resource management, and community adaptation, she currently serves as a Technical Advisor on a GIZ–EU project. In this role, she designs and implements climate-smart agriculture, agribusiness, and social cohesion interventions, ensuring women and youth remain central to project benefits. Aline also facilitates training, stakeholder dialogue, and policy engagement, bridging research and practice to deliver inclusive, climate-resilient strategies that safeguard communities and ecosystems.



Pearl Nutifafa Yakanu,
Lecturer,
Ho Technical University



Pearl Nutifafa Yakanu specializes in Agricultural Machinery Engineering, developing innovative mechanization solutions for smallholder farmers. Her work focuses on climate-smart agriculture, emphasizing soil conservation, efficient irrigation, and resilient cropping systems. She is leading research on tigernut mechanization, designing affordable harvesters to boost productivity, reduce drudgery, and empower women farmers in Ghana. With rising demand for tigernut in the food and beverage industries, her innovations target post-harvest efficiency and income generation. Pearl also promotes cassava as a climate-smart crop, advancing mechanization along its value chain to enhance food security, sustainability, and rural livelihoods.

Mawuse Adzo Siabi,
Lecturer,
University for Development Studies



Mawuse Adzo Siabi is a researcher working on advancing sustainable livestock systems through innovative feed solutions. Her work focuses on Desmanthus, a drought-tolerant legume with high potential to improve animal nutrition, reduce dependence on costly imports, and enhance climate resilience. She investigates its nutritional value and suitability for poultry and small ruminants while promoting its role in soil fertility, biodiversity, and emissions reduction. Beyond research, she champions agribusiness opportunities around alternative feeds, empowering women and youth through training and market linkages.



Doris Brago Akomea,
Head, Compliance and Institutional
Development Desk,
Ministry of Finance



Doris Brago Akomea is a Principal Budget Analyst at Ghana's Ministry of Finance, where she designs, appraises, and oversees public investment projects, including Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs). She leads the Compliance and Institutional Development Desk at the PPP Office, driving regulatory reforms, ensuring compliance with the PPP Act, and strengthening institutional capacity. As the Environmental and Social Safeguards focal point, Doris integrates sustainability and social impact into public investment processes.



Sandra Ama Kaburi,
Lecturer,
Cape Coast Technical University



Sandra Ama Kaburi is a Lecturer at Cape Coast Technical University, Ghana, teaching postharvest technology, food processing, preservation, and meat and poultry technology courses. Her research focuses on postharvest technology, food safety, and sustainable food systems, with expertise in climate change adaptation, mycotoxin control, food quality and preservation, nutritional profiling, and sustainable waste management.



Dorothy Kamasa,
Founder and Executive Director,
Centre for Women and Food
Security-Ghana (CeWaFS-Ghana)



Dorothy Kamasa is the Founder and Executive Director of the Centre for Women and Food Security–Ghana (CeWaFS-Ghana). Her work is at the nexus of climate change adaptation, gender equity, and sustainable food systems. She leads programs supporting over 13,000 smallholder women farmers to adopt climate-smart practices, including solar irrigation, low-emission farming, and agroecology. She co-develops localized adaptation strategies through participatory research and advocates for gender-responsive climate policies. Dorothy also trains grassroots women leaders in climate risk monitoring and spearheads reforestation initiatives. Her current research examines inclusive climate governance, focusing on gender, land tenure, and indigenous knowledge integration.



Cohort 2 AWARD Climate Action Fellows bios

KENYA



Paskalia Nafula Shikuku,
Research Assistant,
Comitato Internazionale per lo
Sviluppo dei Popoli (CISP)



Paskalia Nafula Shikuku works with the Building Insurance Mechanisms Adaptation (BIMA) project at CISP, a CLARE-funded initiative bridging research and practice to strengthen community resilience to climate change. She supports fieldwork, research, and documentation, gaining hands-on experience in climate adaptation programming, social and behavior change, and stakeholder engagement. Paskalia is passionate about advancing inclusive, evidence-based, and locally relevant solutions for climate resilience, health, and social development. She is currently pursuing a Master's in Economics, Cooperation, and Human Development at Kenyatta University, in partnership with the University of Pavia, focusing her research on governance and health in Nairobi.

Jenniffer Wamaitha,
Group Sustainability &
Communications Manager,
CKL Africa Limited



Jenniffer Wamaitha is the Group Sustainability & Communications Manager at CKL Africa Ltd, where she leads climate adaptation and mitigation efforts across five companies in East Africa. She develops and implements a group-wide sustainability strategy aligned with global frameworks, oversees carbon accounting and reporting, and integrates climate considerations into business operations. Jenniffer champions agricultural resilience through soil health, efficient input use, and sustainable pest management, benefiting smallholder farmers, especially women. She also drives green financing, energy efficiency, and circular economy initiatives while managing key partnerships, stakeholder engagement, and sustainability communications across the region.



Juliet Furaha Karisa,
Senior Research Scientist,
Kenya Marine and Fisheries
Research Institute



Juliet Furaha Karisa is a Senior Marine Research Scientist at the Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI) with over 15 years of expertise in coral reef ecology, restoration, and conservation. She researches reef resilience under climate change, leading studies on coral monitoring, habitat mapping, and ocean accounts to inform adaptive management and policy in Kenya and the Western Indian Ocean. Passionate about inclusive conservation, she champions community-led reef restoration, empowering women, youth, and coastal fishers to build sustainable livelihoods. As co-chair of the ICRI Coral Reef Restoration Committee, she bridges science, policy, and local knowledge for resilient oceans.



Alice Anyango Onyango,
Lecturer,
Maseno University



Alice Anyango Onyango develops protocols to simplify greenhouse gas (GHG) data collection from livestock systems in sub-Saharan Africa, supporting national inventories in line with Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) requirements. Working with International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) and Kenya's State Department for Livestock, she refines GHG emission factors from livestock and waste sectors to inform Kenya's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action (NAMA). Alice's research promotes climate-smart agropastoral farming for resilient smallholder farmers, especially women. At the sub-national level, she advances waste valorization and circular economy integration with county governments.



Geraldine Kaari Nthigah,
Project Manager,
Cooperative for American Relief
Everywhere (CARE) International



Geraldine Kaari Nthigah is a public health nutritionist with over 12 years of experience leading development and humanitarian programs in East Africa. She works at the intersection of policy, advocacy, and practice to strengthen food systems, advance climate and gender-responsive solutions, and improve nutrition for vulnerable communities. She has spearheaded county-level policy integration, expanded women's leadership in agriculture, and fostered sustainable partnerships. Geraldine also leads a community initiative in Turkana supporting child nutrition in arid regions.



Salome Owuonda,
Executive Director,
Africa Centre for Sustainable and
Inclusive Development (Africa CSID)



Salome Owuonda is the Executive Director of the Africa Centre for Sustainable and Inclusive Development (Africa CSID). She champions climate action at the nexus of food systems, gender, livelihoods, and peacebuilding. Her work advances community-led solutions in agroecology, zero-waste circular farming, and nature-based adaptation, while empowering women, youth, and children as change agents. Salome actively contributes to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations and African climate diplomacy, ensuring grassroots voices shape global action. She also consults grassroots and international organizations on gender integration in development, driving inclusive, resilient, and equitable futures across Africa.



Susan Sagina Adongo,
Community engagement and
project Lead,
Flux Carbon Kenya



Susan Sagina Adongo is an environmental scientist advancing regenerative agriculture and climate resilience. At Flux Carbon, she led Africa's first field deployment of Enhanced Rock Weathering (ERW) to restore soils, improve smallholder yields, and remove atmospheric CO₂ in western Kenya. She is pursuing a PhD at Maseno University, co-developing a scalable ERW adoption model with farmers, researchers, and policymakers. Her work integrates soil science, GIS mapping, and socio-economic analysis to guide climate-smart agriculture. Susan also consults on marine spatial planning and the World Bank's Sustainable Ocean Plan, promoting gender-responsive, nature-positive solutions for resilient food and blue economies.



Cohort 2 AWARD Climate Action Fellows bios

MALAWI

Florence Kamwana Ngwira,
Agriculture Research Scientist
(Agronomist),
Department of Agriculture Research
Services (DARS)



Ngwira Kamwana is an agronomist specializing in sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture. She focuses on climate-smart agriculture, sustainable intensification of mixed farming systems, and crop improvement for smallholder farmers. She coordinates crop-livestock integration trials to enhance productivity and resource efficiency, while leading evaluations of legumes such as cowpea, lablab, pigeonpea, and soybean for their climate adaptability, yield, and resilience. With expertise in field experiment design, data analysis, and technical reporting, she provides evidence-based recommendations to farmers and stakeholders. She also mentors junior staff, builds farmer capacity, and fosters partnerships to scale innovations that strengthen productivity, climate resilience, and livelihoods.



Tikhala Harmony Chakalamba,
Adjunct Lecturer,
Mzuzu University



Harmony Tikhala Chakalamba supports academic activities through teaching assistance, assessments, and student co-supervision, while actively mentoring learners in their research and development. Her research focuses on climate change adaptation in northern Malawi, examining how changing climatic conditions impact fish catch and the livelihoods of fishing communities in Karonga District. She explores community perceptions of climate impacts on aquatic ecosystems and evaluates adaptation strategies for sustainability and resilience. With a strong interest in gender dimensions of adaptation, Harmony highlights the unique challenges faced by women in the fisheries sector and promotes inclusive, environmentally sound approaches to climate resilience.

Tamala Mataka,
Climate Change Projects
Coordinator,
Centre for Environmental
Policy and Advocacy.



Tamala Mataka is a Climate Change Projects Coordinator at the Centre for Environmental Policy and Advocacy, where she advances environmental sustainability through research and policy advocacy. She coordinates the Promoting Organic Systems of Soil Improvement to Build a Lasting Economy project, which promotes climate-smart agricultural practices such as composting, intercropping, mulching, and zero-tillage. Her work includes advocating for the integration of organic inputs into Malawi's Affordable Inputs Programme, generating evidence on the benefits of compost for soil fertility, and championing gender and social inclusion by supporting women in compost value chains and empowering smallholder farmers.



Manasseh Samantha Matemba,
Environmental Project Officer,
Mpatamanga Hydropower
Limited.



Manasseh Samantha Matemba serves as an Environmental Project Officer at Mpatamanga Hydropower Limited, where she leads ecological monitoring and biodiversity safeguards for a 358.5 MW clean energy project on the Shire River in Malawi. She specializes in freshwater ecosystem conservation, biodiversity offsets, and climate-resilient strategies, strongly emphasizing gender-responsive planning. Her expertise includes baseline surveys, habitat assessments, and stakeholder engagement with local communities.



Tamara Eunice Nyirenda,
Research Analyst,
PlanAdapt Collaborative gUG .



Tamara Eunice Nyirenda is a climate change specialist whose work focuses on understanding risks and translating them into actionable adaptation and resilient strategies. She is a Research Analyst at PlanAdapt Collaborative gUG, where she supports the CLARE Capacity Strengthening Hub through project communications, co-design, and facilitation of key offerings such as seasonal schools and working groups. Salome also undertakes consultancies and research in Malawi, centering on rural livelihoods, watershed management, and participatory action research. Her work aims to strengthen the integration of climate risk evidence into agriculture, water, and irrigation priorities within district development plans.



Precious Chikondi Maenje,
Research Fellow,
Ministry of Natural Resources
and Climate Change.



Precious Chikondi Maenje is a Research Fellow at Malawi's Department of Forestry under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Climate Change. She specializes in forestry and natural resource management, focusing on climate change impacts on forest ecosystems. Her expertise includes analyzing forest fire dynamics using satellite data, linking patterns with climate variability, and supporting sustainable forestry initiatives. She contributes to policy development, stakeholder engagement, and capacity building, while promoting climate-smart forest management. Precious' work strengthens adaptation strategies, fosters sustainable biomass use, and enhances the resilience of communities vulnerable to forest-related climate risks.



Lisa Mwale Lusungu,
Managing Director,
Lweya Honey.



Lisa Mwale Lusungu is working on precision agriculture by pioneering the use of drone technology for early detection of pests and diseases in sugarcane estates. She applies multispectral and hyperspectral imaging, combined with deep learning, to capture subtle physiological changes in crops before they are visible to the naked eye. Her work enables timely interventions, reduces pesticide reliance, and improves crop productivity. By integrating artificial intelligence, remote sensing, and data-driven decision-making, Lisa promotes climate-smart agriculture, enhances sustainability, and lowers production costs.



Chisomo Bridget Maliwa,
New Business Consultant,
National Association of Small
and Medium Enterprises
(NASME).



Chisomo Bridget Maliwa is a Business Consultant with the National Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (NASME), specializing in value addition and market readiness for agro-processing enterprises. She supports entrepreneurs and cooperatives in improving product quality, food safety, and sustainability for local and export markets. She designs and delivers training on Good Manufacturing Practices, food processing, and product diversification while leading community sessions for women, youth, and farmers on high-value food production. With a research background in indigenous vegetables and nutrition, Chisomo is passionate about advancing sustainable food systems, climate resilience, and improved livelihoods in Malawi and beyond.



Sichinga Ivy Ligowe,
Lecturer,
Mzuzu University.



Sichinga Ivy Ligowe is a crop agronomist with over 15 years of experience advancing climate-resilient and nutrition-sensitive farming in Sub-Saharan Africa. She specializes in sustainable intensification, soil health management, and gender-responsive climate adaptation. Her research on climate-smart agriculture—including conservation farming, integrated soil fertility, and maize-legume systems—has boosted yields, improved soil health, and reduced erosion. She also leads geo-nutrition studies linking soil quality, crop nutrients, and human health. Committed to women's empowerment, she integrates participatory approaches that expand farmers' access to resources. Through collaborations with global research institutions, she translates science into scalable solutions for food and nutrition security.



Emma Kumwenda,
Economist (Intern),
Ministry of Finance, Economic
Planning and Development.



Emma Kumwenda is pursuing a Master of Science in Agricultural and Applied Economics at LUANAR. Her research evaluates the impact of Nutrition Education and Cash Transfers on health, nutrition, and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) behaviors among vulnerable populations in Malawi, applying quasi-experimental methods to generate evidence on dietary diversity, child health, and household wellbeing. Passionate about inclusive and gender-responsive development, Emma aims to design and evaluate interventions that strengthen food security, health, and livelihoods while promoting resilience and sustainable development.



Tamandani Mervis Kamuyanja,
Lecturer,
Mzuzu University



Tamandani Mervis Kamuyanja is a Lecturer at Mzuzu University specializing in climate change adaptation, sustainable agriculture, and water resources management. Her work integrates gender and social inclusion into climate solutions, with research focused on groundwater sustainability, land restoration, and climate-resilient farming practices that benefit smallholder farmers, especially women. As a lecturer, she also mentors' students, supervises research, and contributes to curriculum development that addresses emerging climate challenges. Tamandani aims to advance gender-responsive innovations that strengthen resilience and food security in Africa.



Miriam Mercy Kaphiri,
Programs Coordinator,
Njira Impact



Miriam Mercy Kaphiri's work focuses on sustainable development through community-based initiatives in rural Malawi, emphasizing climate resilience and youth empowerment. She designs and implements grassroots programs integrating environmental education, livelihood support, and policy advocacy. Her research examines the intersection of climate adaptation and socio-economic equity, amplifying marginalized voices in decision-making. Miriam collaborates with local stakeholders and co-creates culturally relevant and scalable solutions, including adopting sustainable agriculture and renewable energy.



Cohort 2 AWARD Climate Action Fellows bios

SENEGAL



Astou Diop,
Project Officer,
Active Citizens for Social Justice
(CAJUST)



Astou Diop leads Justice and Gender Equity projects at Active Citizens for Social Justice (CAJUST). She designs and coordinates initiatives that advance social justice, reduce inequalities, and foster the inclusion of vulnerable groups, especially women and girls. Passionate about human rights, she works to embed gender perspectives into local policies and practices. Astou collaborates with local communities impacted by climate change and natural resource exploitation, supporting their resilience and meaningful participation.



Mariam Sall,
Marketing and Sales Manager,
ONG 3D (Démocratie, Droits Humains,
Développement)



Mariam Sall is a Development Officer with over eight years of professional experience in food security, nutrition, and climate change adaptation. She has extensive expertise in managing, monitoring, and evaluating agricultural development initiatives designed to build resilience among vulnerable communities. Her work focuses on advancing sustainable agriculture, agro-processing, and rural entrepreneurship. Passionate about participatory approaches, Mariam actively promotes women's and youth's engagement in development processes and supports mobilizing local resources.



Habibatou Ibrahima Thiam,
Researcher,
Initiative Prospective Agricole et Rurale
(IPAR)



Habibatou Ibrahima is an agricultural economist at Initiative Prospective Agricole et Rurale (IPAR) who specializes in integrating climate change into agricultural policies and practices. She contributes to strategic initiatives, with a strong focus on assessing the vulnerability of farming systems and households to climate risks. Her research also examines land degradation and its implications for agricultural productivity and resilience. Passionate about advancing sustainable solutions, Habibatou is committed to producing knowledge and practical approaches that strengthen adaptation and enhance the long-term sustainability of agriculture in the face of climate change.



Wendkouni Inès Elodie Zongo,
Agricultural Economist,
Laboratoire de Recherche en
Économie de Saint-Louis
(LARES)



Wendkouni Inès is an agricultural economist specializing in analyzing the intersection of agriculture, climate change, and economic sustainability. She is pursuing a PhD at the Laboratoire de Recherche en Économie de Saint-Louis (LARES), Senegal, where she is researching climate change, farm adaptation strategies, and the economic resilience of Burkina Faso's agriculture. She holds a Master's in Agricultural Economics, Natural Resources and the Environment (EARNE) and a Bachelor's in Economics and Management from Aube Nouvelle University.

Moussou Kéba Cissoko,
Design Engineer,
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Moussou Kéba is a research engineer in weed science at the Senegalese Institute of Agricultural Research (ISRA), specializing in weed flora and its effects on crop performance. Her work centers on resilient crops and agroecological innovations that strengthen agricultural productivity under climate change. Passionate about traditional grains, she champions fonio (*Digitaria exilis*) for its high nutritional value and climate resilience, advocating for its integration into farming systems and policies. A dedicated young scientist, Moussou combines rigorous research with field-based insights to promote innovation, training, and inclusive knowledge sharing to support sustainable agriculture and empower farming communities.



African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD) envisions transformative change toward gender-responsive solutions that will catalyze lasting impact for equitable agri-food systems for women and men smallholders. We are investing in women's leadership to foster equality in Agricultural Research for Development (AR4D), equipping AR4D professionals to integrate gender in their work, strengthening institutions to adopt gender-responsive policies and practices, and impacting the enabling environment to enhance gender responsiveness.

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