

New Project Aims to Promote African Women's Leadership in Climate Action

African Women in Agricultural Research and Development announces fellowship for women climate professionals in Benin, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi and Senegal

NAIROBI, KENYA, July 10, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A new fellowship has opened applications for African women professionals who work at the nexus of gender, climate change, and agrifood systems as part of an initiative to support gender equality in climate change adaptation for African smallholder farmers.

[Accelerating African Women's Leadership in Climate Action](#) is a career development fellowship that aims to increase both the number of African women leading climate action and the development of climate solutions designed to address the needs of women and men smallholders.

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*Dr. Susan Kaaria, director of
AWARD*



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Women remain a minority among those making high-level decisions in environmental policy fields, holding only [15 per cent](#) of 712 environmental sector minister positions as of 2020. At the same time, gender inequalities in access to resources, opportunities, and decision-making power at the farm level typically leave women smallholders especially vulnerable to climate change with fewer tools at their disposal for adaptation.

The new fellowship, managed by African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD), is open

to women climate change professionals in Benin, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, and

Senegal, some of the countries most impacted by climate change yet most dependent on small-scale agriculture.

“Yawning gender gaps throughout African agrifood systems are compounded by climate change, and yet women are also powerful, under-utilised agents of change,” said Dr. Susan Kaaria, director of AWARD.

“We’re excited about the potential for this fellowship to grow a pool of African women climate change professionals, who can become effective leaders and forces for change, developing innovations for women smallholders to better cope with climate change.”



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The new Fellowship is under the Climate Adaptation and Resilience (CLARE) programme, a £110 million framework research programme aiming to enable socially inclusive and sustainable action to build resilience to climate change and natural hazards. CLARE is primarily funded by the UK Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) as part of International Climate Finance. Canada’s International Development Research Centre (IDRC) contributes 15 per cent of funding to the research pillar and serves as the main delivery partner, supporting projects and collaboration across the programme.

The fellowship is targeting 300 participants in total. This includes 100 women climate change professionals who will be supported through immersive training and mentoring to advance their technical capacity, leadership, networking, and outreach skills. Each Fellow will be paired with a mentor with extensive experience in climate action, and they will further nominate a junior scientist, a mentee to maximise the reach of the initiative.

The fellowship will leverage AWARD’s long experience in designing and delivering successful career development and leadership programs. A recent external evaluation showed more than 95 per cent of beneficiaries found AWARD’s programs and support met their needs in terms of advancing their career progression goals and 70 per cent stated that the training strengthened their leadership skills. More than half went on to take up leadership positions.

Manuela Di Mauro and Bruce Currie-Alder, CLARE co-leads from FCDO and IDRC, said: “By investing in AWARD’s new fellowship, CLARE is building on lessons from years of previous programming supporting climate change adaptation. AWARD will play a critical role in ensuring that more African women are championing climate leadership and innovation.”

The AWARD Climate Fellows will be selected based on an assessment of their expertise, knowledge gaps and contributions to climate adaptation. More information about the application process is available [online](#).

The call for applications will be open from July 10 until September 10, 2024.

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