



# e-newsletter

Issue 6 : January – April 2020

Improving lives through sustainable bioinnovations

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## Bridging gender gap in African bioeconomy

BioInnovate Africa Fellowship offers women scientists opportunity to contribute to the development of an African bioeconomy. Fellows work closely with BioInnovate Africa project implementing partners on a wide range of innovative biological based products including healthy foods, industrial enzymes, biopesticides, biofertilizers, insect-based proteins, phytochemicals, as well as working on bioeconomy strategies.

To continue building these efforts, a third call for the fellowship for women scientists was sent out to BioInnovate Africa partners in April 2020 to nominate candidates. The fellowship will run from July 2020 to June 2021. A total of 12 women scientists are currently participating in their fellowship for four-to-six months at the BioInnovate Africa project implementing partners in Burundi, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Ethiopia.

Click [here](#) to view profiles of the BioInnovate Africa

women fellows.

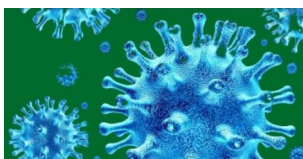


Clementine Namazzi, a BioInnovate Africa fellow from Uganda, conducts her fellowship research study under the project on [fungal biopesticides for safe pest control](#).

## ALSO IN THIS REPORTING PERIOD: WEBSITE STORIES



[Achieving zero malaria](#)



**Coronavirus / COVID-19**

[BioInnovate Africa Network responds to COVID-19](#)



[Women promoting bioeconomy in eastern Africa](#)

## Conference on Africa's employment perspective towards 2040

In February 2020, Dr Julius Ecuru, head of BioInnovate Africa at *icipe*, attended the Africa's employment perspectives towards 2040 conference that was held in Bonn, Germany and organised by the German Development Institute/Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE). At the conference, Dr Ecuru participated in a panel discussion on 'New opportunities in the bio-economy'. Using the example of BioInnovate Africa, he asserted that an innovation-driven bioeconomy is the more sustainable growth pathway for Sub-Saharan Africa, given its rich biological resource, rapid urbanization and a growing number of entrepreneurial scientists in the continent. The conference recognised that the workforce in Africa is growing rapidly, but only a small fraction gets employed in productive and decent conditions. According to Dr Ecuru, "Increasing investment in scientists to add

economic and social value to biological resources in a sustainable way, does not only diversify the economy and create jobs by linking smallholder farming communities to markets, but also ensures clean and healthy living conditions."



Participants of the conference on Africa's employment perspective towards 2040

## BioInnovate Africa joins ANDE, contributing to support services to small and growing businesses

BioInnovate Africa is pleased to announce it is now a member of the [Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs \(ANDE\)](#), a global network of organisations that propel entrepreneurship in emerging markets. The membership began on 19 March 2020.

As a member, BioInnovate Africa has access to resources on innovation capacity building and entrepreneurship. BioInnovate Africa will also participate in ANDE activities that provide critical financial, educational, and business support services to [small and growing businesses \(SGBs\)](#) based on the conviction that SGBs create jobs, stimulate long-term economic

growth, and produce environmental and social benefits. By joining ANDE, BioInnovate Africa has the opportunity to engage with other innovation ecosystem actors such as social and impact investors, incubators and accelerators, and potential funders among others.



**Aspen Network  
of Development  
Entrepreneurs**



## Lemelson Foundation pays visit to BioInnovate Africa

The [Lemelson Foundation](#) Executive Director, Dr Carol Dahl, accompanied by Program Officer Ms Maggie Flanagan, visited BioInnovate Africa on 3 March 2020 at the *icipe* Duduville Campus in Nairobi. They paid a courtesy call to *icipe* Director General, Dr Segenet Kelemu. Dr Dahl and Ms Flanagan were pleased to learn about *icipe*'s accomplishments, especially the leading role it plays in insect science for development globally. From the discussions, it was evident that building innovation ecosystems that support small and growing businesses in eastern Africa was critical to realise the growth ambitions of the continent. According to Dr Dahl, "This is exactly what BioInnovate Africa is doing to create sustainable and innovative businesses of tomorrow."



Pictured left: Ms Maggie Flanagan (left), Lemelson Foundation Program Officer; *icipe* Director General, Dr Segenet Kelemu (centre); Dr Carol Dahl (second right), Lemelson Foundation Executive Director; Dr Julius Ecuru (right), Head of BioInnovate Africa at *icipe*; during a courtesy call to *icipe* Director General's office.

## Chalmers University of Technology pays visit to BioInnovate Africa

On 13 March 2020, faculty members of [Chalmers University of Technology \(CUT\)](#), Sweden, Dr Kristina Henricson-Briggs and Dr Helene Ahlborg; and a team from the African Center of Excellence in Energy for Sustainable Development (ACE-ESD), Rwanda, Dr Charles Kabiri, Mr Pascal Nyiringango, and Mr Nathan Taremwa paid a visit to BioInnovate Africa at the *icipe* Duduville Campus in Nairobi. To the team, BioInnovate Africa was one of few, if not the only regional network, that is actively engaging scientists, businesspeople and governments to co-create innovative products for specific niche markets. Dr Kristina, in a presentation she made during the visit, stated that the new model of entrepreneurship education in universities, is not necessarily to create entrepreneurs, rather, it is to inculcate entrepreneurial thinking and practice in every undertaking, be it in business, research or teaching.



Dr Kristina Henricson-Briggs of Chalmers University of Technology (CUT), Sweden, makes a presentation on new models of entrepreneurship and innovation in a university setting, during a visit to BioInnovate Africa at *icipe*.



Mr Pascal Nyiringango (left), Dr Kristina Henricson-Briggs (second left), Dr Charles Kabiri (centre), Dr Helene Ahlborg (third right), Mr Nathan Taremwa (second right), Dr Julius Ecuru (right), during a visit to BioInnovate Africa at *icipe*.

## Seventh BioInnovate Africa Programme Advisory Committee meeting

On 16 April 2020, BioInnovate Africa held its seventh Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting virtually. PAC recognised the disruption in social life caused by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic and expressed its solidarity with the eastern Africa community and the rest of the world to prevent and control the spread of the disease. Efforts to combat the pandemic are relying heavily on the contribution of science. In PAC's view, the situation underscores the importance of investing in initiatives, like BioInnovate Africa, which advance bioscience and innovation to solve social, health and environmental problems in a sustainable way. With the PAC's support, BioInnovate Africa will expand its portfolio of health innovations by continuing to explore more biological based ideas and inventions that could also be relevant for disease prevention, treatment and control.



Pictured left: The PAC pictured with BioInnovate Africa Programme Management Office at *icipe* during the 7th PAC meeting held virtually.

## BioInnovate Africa new PAC member

BioInnovate Africa is pleased to welcome Dr Silas Obukosia to its Programme Advisory Committee (PAC). His appointment, which took place in March 2020, connects BioInnovate Africa with continental initiatives through the African Union Development

Agency-New Partnership for Africa's Development (AUDA-NEPAD). Dr Obukosia brings to the PAC perspectives on science and innovation policy in Africa. Click [here](#) to view his full profile.



Pictured left: Dr Silas Obukosia