

# Winners of 2023 AWIEF Awards announced

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The Africa Women Innovation and Entrepreneurship Forum (AWIEF) has announced the winners of the 2023 AWIEF Awards during a glamorous awards ceremony that took place on Friday night in Kigali, Rwanda.



Many inspirational and outstanding African women entrepreneurs excelled this year in creating opportunities and positively impacting lives and communities, driving growth for Africa. Out of the 24 powerful women founders and entrepreneurs selected in September as top finalists by an international and independent panel of judges, eight winners were announced at the awards ceremony that took place at Kigali Convention Centre, Kigali. The 24 top finalists represented women founders operating in a diverse range of sectors from 14 African countries: Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

The AWIEF Awards ceremony and gala dinner was a culmination of a highly successful two-day AWIEF2023 Conference that attracted more than 500 delegates from over 50 countries, 41 of them African countries.



Each year the AWIEF Awards recognise, honour, and celebrate outstanding women entrepreneurs and business owners in Africa and across industry sectors, for their economic performance and contribution to Africa's growth and social development.

This year's event unveiled the inaugural AWIEF Lifetime Leadership Award. This award was bestowed on Fatma Samoura, Fifa secretary general, in recognition of her outstanding leadership and contributions to the world of sports. It was also a tribute to her inspiring impact and accomplishments on a global scale, as the first non-European, the first African and first-ever female to lead Fifa as secretary general in its 116-year history.



"What an honour to receive the inaugural AWIEF Lifetime Leadership Award. This award is not just for me, but all the people who have dedicated their lives to our game and helped us transform women's football over the last few years. They have created a beautiful legacy – a Fifa that is focused on football and is respected by international organisations, and a sport that captures the hearts and minds of boys and girls around the world and brings them joy and happiness," said Samoura.

"We have given more girls and women the chance to play football, even in countries where it would have been considered almost impossible only a few years ago."

Going further in her acceptance speech, Samoura urged women to "invest in African football" as it offers a huge untapped potential.

She said: "Then of course, you women need to invest in football. I will be retiring peacefully in my beautiful country Senegal if at least I got a phone call, by the next Women's World Cup from many of you saying: 'Madam, because we saw you in Rwanda and decided to invest in football, today we are club owners.' So, the ball is in your court, make it happen because you have many talents."

"Remember one thing: football is the future for Africa, football is the future for building peace across the world. Football is a universal message, football is something that transmits love, that gives mind, that also transcends borders and brings people together."

Irene Ochem, AWIEF founder and CEO, in her AWIEF Awards 2023 ceremony and gala dinner opening remarks said: "Fatma Samoura has shown exceptional leadership in such a male-dominated sector as sports, and in particular, football. She is an inspirational role model for us other women, and we are truly excited about honouring and celebrating her tonight."



## WINNERS



### YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR AWARD

**SALAMBA DIENE**

CEO  
Biosene Sarl  
SENEGAL



### TECH ENTREPRENEUR AWARD

**KIDIST TESFAYE**

Founder & CEO  
YeneHealth  
ETHIOPIA



### AGRI ENTREPRENEUR AWARD

**NONOPA TENZA**

Founder & MD  
Kevinot Farming  
SOUTH AFRICA



### ENERGY ENTREPRENEUR AWARD

**IFEOMA MALO**

CEO  
Clean Technology Hub  
NIGERIA



### CREATIVE INDUSTRY AWARD

**YASMINA BELAHSEN**

Founder  
MayaDigital  
MOROCCO



### SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR AWARD

**MUNDIH NOELAR NJOHJAM**

Medical doctor  
Epilepsy Awareness, Aid and  
Research Association  
Cameroon



### EMPOWERMENT AWARD

**ZULFAT MUKARUBEGA**

Founder  
University of Tourism, Technology and  
Business Studies  
Rwanda



### LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

**DALIA IBRAHIM**

CEO  
Nahdet Misr Publishing House  
EGYPT

The winners of AWIEF Awards 2023 are:

#### Young Entrepreneur Award

Salamba Diene, CEO, Biosene Sarl, Senegal

#### Tech Entrepreneur Award

Kidist Tesfaye, founder and CEO, YeneHealth, Ethiopia

#### Agri Entrepreneur Award

Nonopa Tenza, founder and MD, Kevinot Farming, South Africa

#### Energy Entrepreneur Award

Ifeoma Malo, co-founder and CEO, Clean Technology Hub, Nigeria

#### Creative Entrepreneur Award

Yasmina Belahsen, founder, MayaDigital, Morocco

#### Social Entrepreneur Award

Mundih Noelar Njohjam, medical doctor, Epilepsy Awareness, Aid & Research Association, Cameroon

#### Empowerment Award

Zulfat Makarubega, founder, University of Tourism, Technology & Business Studies, Rwanda



## Lifetime Achievement Award

Dalia Ibrahim, CEO, Nahdet Misr Publishing House, Egypt

Ecobank was AWIEF Awards 2023 sponsor for the Empowerment Award category.

▪ **Registrations now open for AWIEF2024. Get 30% off selected tickets** 8 Mar 2024

▪ **AWIEF and Victoria's Secret partner to launch Growth Accelerator in Nigeria - Call for applications** 22 Feb 2024

▪ **AWIEF Growth Accelerator for South Africa in partnership with Nedbank - Call for applications** 8 Feb 2024

▪ **Winners of 2023 AWIEF Awards announced** 14 Nov 2023

▪ **FIFA Secretary General Fatma Samoura to receive inaugural AWIEF Lifetime Leadership Award** 2 Nov 2023

### AWIEF



AWIEF is an award-winning, pan-African women's economic empowerment organisation that promotes and supports women business leadership and innovation through high impact development programmes and our annual AWIEF Conference and Awards.

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