

**MAWAZO
INSTITUTE**
WOMEN LEADING RESEARCH IN AFRICA



Annual Report

20

24

23

22

21





At a moment when all seemed like it wasn't moving forward, my Mawazo peer group members were a great motivation. Though it took long, I finally was able to submit a paper in early 2023 and it's finally out!

*Dr. Pauline Orondo (Kenya)
2021 Mawazo Fellow*



motivation

Table of contents

4	Letter from the CEO
5	About Mawazo
6	Calendar of Activities
8	Inside the Programmes
	Meet the Class of 2023
12	Inside the Programme
	We made it: Meet the 2023 PhD Graduands!
21	Strategic Partnerships
22	The Pioneering Astronomer
24	Press Coverage
26	Good Governance and Accountability:
	Our Board
	Our Team
30	Mind Matters: Mawazo's Wellness Break
32	Message from the Board Chair
33	Financial Report
34	Funders
35	How to Get Involved

Letter from the CEO



Dear Friend of Mawazo,

If 2022 was our graduation year, then 2023 was our year of **growth and expansion**

- all grounded and guided by our new Strategic Plan. We started the year by launching our first continent-wide Call for Applications for our Fellowship Programme, drawing an impressive 2,000-plus applications from every region of Africa (of which 927 were from eligible applicants). Furthermore, the high quality of the applications made the selection of our new cohort of 40 women researchers much more difficult. This did, however, remind us of the importance, relevance, and need for the work we do at Mawazo. Our final 40 Fellows represent 16 different African nations – you can find out more about them on pages 8 to 11.

Our understanding of our role, and that of African women researchers, has also grown and expanded. Numerous encounters and conversations with other organisations and movements looking to drive positive change in Africa led us to recognise our role in

influencing societal change beyond the technical. This led to a candid conversation on the International Day of Women and Girls in Science, celebrated on 11 February every year, where we hosted an online discussion on the role of African women researchers in African Feminist movement building. The discussion, primarily led and attended by our 2018 and 2021 Mawazo Fellows highlighted how we – Mawazo as well as the women we serve – have the power and duty to be changemakers in our respective fields and beyond, pushing for equality and opportunities for all.

2023 also saw us grow and expand our understanding of the worlds that African women researchers exist in. We delved into understanding the research trends on our continent, leading to the development of our “Emerging Research Trends” report, that supported how we selected the 40 Fellows and also informed the content of our public and policy engagement activities. We went on to host two major public engagement events, under the umbrella of the Mawazo Ideas Nights, with the integral involvement of the women researchers we work with, and the inaugural Mawazo Ideas CoLab, designed to help the women we serve move their PhD research projects from ideas to reality.

To ensure that we are best equipped to support the transition of research into reality, Mawazo has grown and expanded its strategic partnerships work into its own robust docket. Strong industry and ecosystem partnerships are critical to how we can support African women researchers to become thought leaders and changemakers. Through this work, Mawazo’s network of African women researchers received access to funding, training, and platforms. This has made their work more visible, including greater press coverage than ever before, and we have connected them – in real time – to players in industry and the policy space. This is Mawazo’s first concrete venture into moving the big ideas and voices of African women researchers into action, ensuring that they are truly shaping the future of the continent and the world.

And so, I thank you, dear reader. Thank you for joining us in supporting these phenomenal women, and as you read on to discover how Mawazo experienced growth and expansion in 2023, we hope you feel encouraged and inspired to be a part – however big or small – of this movement for a brighter and better world.

With love and gratitude,

Dr. Fiona Wanjiku Moejes
CEO
Mawazo Institute

About Mawazo



The Mawazo Institute is a **women-led African** organisation

In Kiswahili, “**mawazo**” means “**ideas**” and our **Mission** is to Support **early-career female scholars** and thought leaders in **Africa** to strengthen their research, policy influence and public engagement.

Our **Vision** is A world in which the voices and ideas of early-career African women **shape the future of the continent** and the world.

Mawazo believes that (1) African women conducting PhDs are driven, creative, analytical and critical thinkers, and (2) as African women they bring a unique (and often forgotten) perspective and voice to research and development. We believe that they hold the key to driving innovative, holistic, sustainable development on the continent and beyond.

By equipping early-career African women researchers with essential non-technical skills, mentorship, and funding support (**Mawazo Fellowship Programme**), and using public engagement as well as strategic communications and partnerships with both academic and non-academic partners (**Mawazo Voices Programme**), we create and facilitate opportunities for them to become thought-leaders and change-makers in critical fields and sectors.



Respect

We treat everyone with respect and dignity.



Purpose

We are bold and ambitious. We work hard and with conviction in pursuit of meaningful impact.



Excellence

We raise the standard through creativity, innovation, and rigour. We are dedicated to ongoing learning and impact.



Integrity

We are principled, transparent, and consistent in all we do.



Collaboration

We are collaborative and partnership-driven—as a team and within our ecosystem.



Independence

Our scholars and fellows set their own research agendas and their findings are not influenced by funders or others.

These principles serve as a foundation for our actions, both on an individual level and within the organization. Aligned with these principles, we are dedicated to cultivating an environment that promotes inclusivity, diversity, equality, and a sense of belonging.

Calendar of Activities



The Mawazo Fellowship Programme

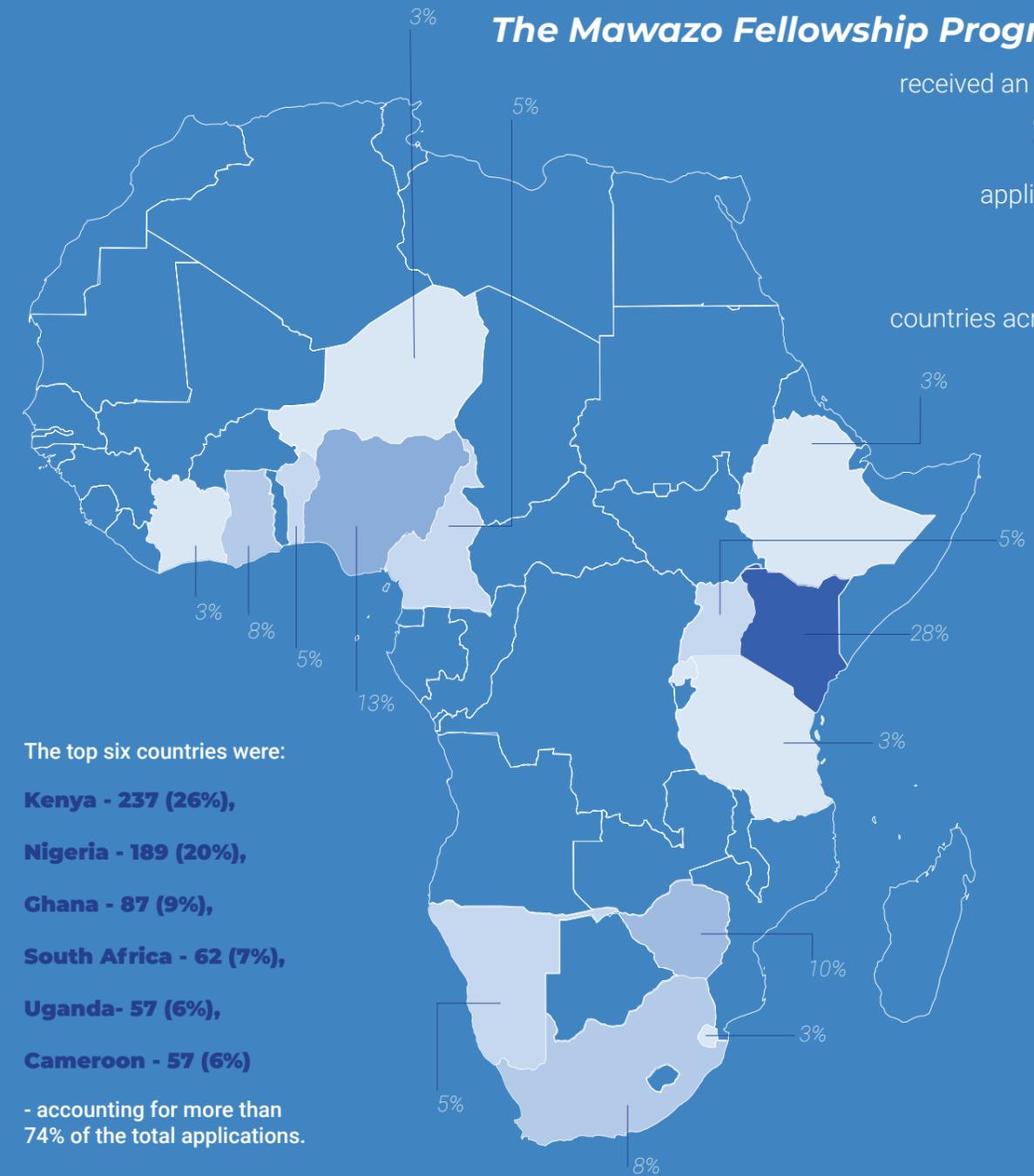
received an impressive

927

applicants from

28

countries across Africa.



The top six countries were:

Kenya - 237 (26%),

Nigeria - 189 (20%),

Ghana - 87 (9%),

South Africa - 62 (7%),

Uganda - 57 (6%),

Cameroon - 57 (6%)

- accounting for more than 74% of the total applications.



"The Mawazo Fellowship training has provided me with valuable skills, resources, and networking opportunities that have enhanced my research methodologies and expanded my knowledge base"

Tahi Souand Peace Gloria (BEN)
2023 Mawazo Fellow



Meet the Class of 2023

Unveiling Our 2023 Mawazo Fellows!

We are excited to introduce our third cohort of Mawazo Fellows year 2023/2024.

We are doubly excited to announce that unlike previous cohorts which mainly comprised Fellows from the East African region, for 2023/2024, our Fellows are selected from all over the African continent. The cohort consists of 40 Mawazo Fellows, who are current PhD candidates at universities, representing sixteen (16) African nations. Each is pursuing innovative local research in a range of fields including Agriculture; Technology; Climate Change; Engineering; Gender and Governance; Business, Entrepreneurship and Economics; Health; and Education.

These women Fellows join a growing network of previous Mawazo Institute Fellows (current Alumni), and a larger network of women in research, scholarship and innovation, building upon this critical mass of emergent and established voices on the continent. By supporting the professional development of African women in the knowledge sector, we can amplify the voices and contributions of these women, and therefore contribute to the continent's development.

The Mawazo Fellowship is one of the Programmes of the Mawazo Institute that provides professional development through a range of online courses and free resources created and curated by the Mawazo Team, with early-career African researchers in mind, as well as critical support of scholars on their path-to-PhD, and beyond.

Find out more about each of our 40 Mawazo Fellows and details about their research below.

Agriculture and Food Security



AIZA AINYAKOU-SANGA Ivory Coast, Contribution to the recovery of waste from poultry slaughterhouses in the district of Abidjan



AUNE ANGOBE Namibia, Investigation of facultative Crassulacean Acid Metabolism (CAM) photosynthetic adaptation in Southern African species as a novel agricultural production system in drier climates



DARLINE DIZE Cameroon, Novel antitrypanosomal diaminoquinazoline analogues from repurposing the Medicines for Malaria Venture Open Access Pathogen Box library



RREHEMAH GWOKYALYA Uganda, The role of bacterial symbionts in mediating bi-trophic interactions between host- and parasitoids in invasive fruit flies



SOUAND PEACE GLORIA TAHI Benin, Optimization of machine learning techniques performances in maize yield prediction under several controlled weather and fertilisation patterns

Climate Change, Natural Resources, and Environment



AISSATOU SITTA Niger, Assessment of Sub-seasonal to Seasonal Operational Climatic Forecast Methods and Skills over Sahelian Region



FELICIA IKPOKONTE Nigeria, The environmental legal framework and resolution of environmental disputes in the Nigerian petroleum sector



JACINTA KINYUNZU Kenya, A 2000 year record of Indian ocean SST and implications for adaptation to climate extremes in Eastern and southern Africa



JOSEPHINE MWAFUKA Zimbabwe, Spatio-temporal dynamics of sedimentfluxes in Tugwi-Mukosi: A large inland dam in Zimbabwe



LYDIA SENANU Ghana, The use of modified ceramic water filters to remove arsenic and mercury from surface mining water



LULEKA DLAMINI South Africa, Assessing climate-smart agricultural options for rain-fed small-scale farmers in data- limited areas of South Africa: The integration of remote sensing and crop models



NANCHIN KAZEH Nigeria, Implications of climate and anthropogenic land-use change on bird species composition and distribution in Nigeria



MA-LYSE NEMA Rwanda, Characterization and Modelling of Landslides and Risk Evaluation in the Kivu Catchment of Rwanda



NQOBIZITHA NDEBELE Zimbabwe, Development of a high efficiency antifouling nanocomposite polymer membrane for water treatment.



STELLAH OIRERE Kenya, Modification of macadamia shells to cellulose acetate for production of biodegradable plastic packaging



THANDILE GULE Eswatini, Sustainable water management of aquatic ecosystems of Addis Ababa city, Ethiopia in the face of urban expansion, climate and demographic changes

Education and Pedagogy



MIRIAM LAISER Tanzania, Assessing educational support systems for children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) within inclusive settings in selected regions in Tanzania

Energy and Engineering



FIREHIWOT DIRES GIRMA Ethiopia, Hydropower Generation and Operation Planning for Ethiopia



KEMI JEGEDE Namibia, Integrated renewable energy and resource network optimisation for off-grid energy supply to rural communities



LETTA NTULI South Africa, Fabrication, Characterization and Techno-economic Analysis (TEA) of low-cost, sustainable, non-invasive, and anti-microbial sweat-glucose sensors

Gender, Rights and Governance



ESTHER MUNIRA GIMONO Uganda, Assessment of sexual reproductive health rights of deaf women and girls in Uganda



LILIAN MULATI Kenya, Structural Violence And Encampment Policy In Kenya: The Case Of Urban Refugees In Nairobi Metropolitan Region

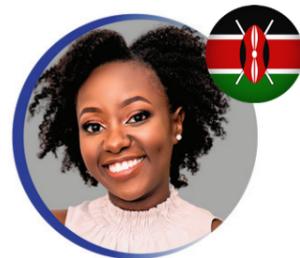
Information and Technology



AMINATA DEMBELE Mali, A Novel Model for Detecting Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) Attack in Software-Defined Networking Using Artificial Intelligence Techniques.



DORCAS MWIGERERI Kenya, An Ensemble Approach based on Numerical Weather Prediction and Random Forest for Solar Energy Forecasting



GLORIA NZOMO Kenya, An Agent-Based Framework for Data Fusion, Situation Analysis, and Decision Support Towards Precision Health



IYANU ADEGUN Nigeria, Development of an ensemble deep learning model for predicting lassa fever outbreak



MERCY MULWA Kenya, Explainable Machine Learning Approach on Sensor Based Human Gait Analysis for Assistive Device Model Prediction and 3-D Design



PROSSY NAMUWULYA Uganda, Assessing the aetiology of measles disease and measles-like illness in Uganda

Life and Health Sciences



ADEDOYIN ADEBOYE Nigeria, An Integrated Multi-omics Approach to Understanding Schistosomiasis Associated Bladder Pathology and Tumorigenesis



CAROLINE OCHIENG Kenya, Molecular characterization and transmission dynamics of Chikungunya and Dengue viruses in Kenya, 2011-2022



CELIA MOFFAT JOEL MATYANGA Zimbabwe, The Effect of African Potato (*Hypoxis hemerocallidea*) on the Pharmacokinetics of Tenofovir and Lamivudine



CLARISSE HOUNEFA Relative performance of model selection criteria based on Kullback's Symmetric Divergence in survival analysis with applications using genetic data



LOISE JOSEPH Kenya, Urine high-risk human papillomavirus testing as an alternative cervical screening method in Kenya



LOVETH OYEWO Nigeria, Prevalence, antibiotic resistance, virulence gene profile, and source tracking of *Listeria monocytogenes* strains



MARY AGORIWO Ghana, Towards strengthening rehabilitation for persons with Parkinson's disease: A multiphase mixed method study in the southern sector of Ghana



VANESSA NONO NINKEH Cameroon, Molecular characterization and genetic diversity of isoniazid-resistant strains of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* clinical isolates in Cameroon

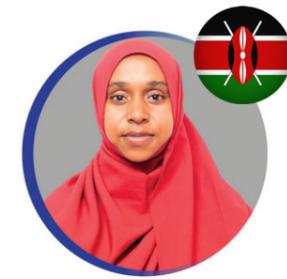


SALOME HEYMANN Ghana, The Effect of Nutrition on Chronic Inflammation and Severity of Autism Spectrum Disorder among Diagnosed Children in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana



EMMA TAONA MUDHULI Zimbabwe, The impact of non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor plasma levels and human milk oligosaccharide content on the gut microbiota of HIV exposed infants

Mathematics and Physical Sciences



JOHRA ALI Kenya, Iron and steel industry slag as heterogeneous catalyst in transesterification of waste cooking oil to Biodiesel



LINEO MXAKAZA South Africa, Platinum based 2D metal dichalcogenides (PtSe₂, PtTe₂) decorated with N-doped graphene quantum dots for photo-electrocatalytic hydrogen evolution reaction (HER)

Inside the Programmes

Mawazo Fellowship: The New Cohort



“The findings from this research activity have amplified the impact and visibility of my research efforts and expanded the possibility of securing additional funding and enabling timely completion of my project. It has also facilitated meaningful engagement with stakeholders for the formulation and implementation of intervention strategies within affected communities.”

Adedoyin Adebayo, Nigeria (2023 Mawazo Fellow)

The MFP received an impressive 927 applicants from 28 countries across Africa. The top six countries were Kenya - 237(26%), Nigeria -189 (20%), Ghana - 87 (9%), South Africa - 62 (7%), Uganda - 57 (6%), Cameroon - 57 (6%) - accounting for more than 74% of the total applications.

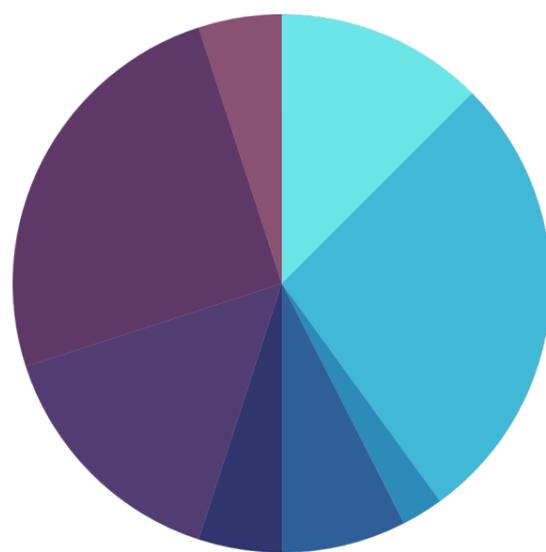
Rigorous selection process

After verifying that every application met all the required criteria, we then began an internal review, focusing on the innovation and problem-solving propositions in each, thus reducing the number of applications from the original 2,200 down to under 500. Each application was thereafter classified into its commensurate discipline, before our pool of expert reviewers in our network (each with PhDs and a decade plus experience in the disciplines), were called in to assess the strength of the applications. Each application was blind-reviewed twice, reducing their number to below 200. The last hurdle was a final internal review, based on the video submissions of the applicants, among other criteria, that allowed us to settle on the final 45, five of whom were put on a waiting list in case some of the selected 40 failed to take up the Fellowship.

As for the selection criteria, the Emerging Trends in Research internal study report was used to determine the nine disciplinary categories that applicants had to focus on. Further, we relied on our expert reviewers and their research experience to sift through the diverse applications to determine the strength of each, based on the innovation and problem-solving criteria we had spelled out in the application form. Finally, we applied the ‘Mawazo Factor’- essentially Mawazo’s collective internal expertise based on each team members’ individual experience and intuition – to determine the final 40 applicants.

In the end, 40 applicants from 15 African countries were selected as shown on the map.

Those selected represented the following thematic areas:



- 5 Agriculture and Food Security
- 11 Climate Change, Natural Resources and the Environment
- 1 Education and Pedagogy
- 3 Energy and Engineering
- 2 Gender, Rights and Governance
- 6 Information and Technology
- 10 Life and Health Sciences
- 2 Mathematics and Physical Sciences

In the reporting period, the 2023 Fellows underwent the following five courses;

1. Leadership
2. Budgeting & Financial Management
3. Ethics In Research
4. Publishing & Grant Writing
5. Intellectual Property

The overall course completion rate for the five courses was an amazing 95%!

Inside the Programmes

Mawazo Fellowship: Fellows Fund

The Mawazo Fellows Fund grants up to

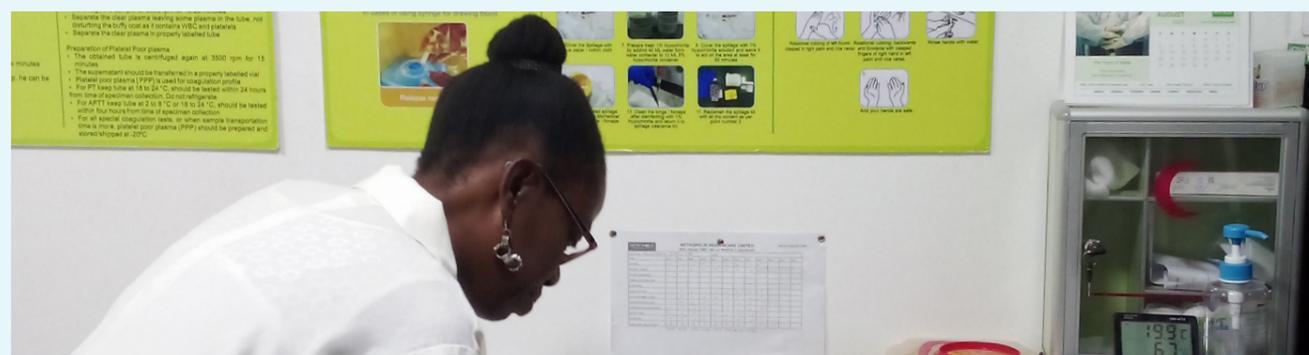
US\$2,500

to current Mawazo Fellows to support their research activities.

Supported activities under the grant include laboratory tests, fieldwork, conference travel, specialized training, research translation endeavors, and cross-sector collaborations, which may involve placements at non-academic institutions.

The Fellows Fund has 4 cycles and each cycle starts with a call for applications to Mawazo Fellows. Once the call for applications closes, the review of the applications is conducted by a committee. 22 of the 40 2023 Mawazo Fellows qualified for the Fellows Fund with a total of USD 40,533 being disbursed. The following is a breakdown of the nationalities of the 2023 Fellows Fund recipients.

The following is a breakdown of the nationalities of the 2023 Fellows Fund Recipients.



Inside the Programmes

Mawazo Fellowship: The Fellows Fund In Action



Loise Nthambi, Kenya

Loise, from the University of Nairobi is researching the possibility of urine testing for the high-risk human papilloma virus as an alternative cervical screening method in Kenya. She received a grant totalling \$2,470 to support her data collection activities.

Loise used the funds to pay for high-risk HPV testing of 223 samples (111 cervical and 112 urine) using a Gene-expert assay at the Machakos Cancer Center molecular lab. The results obtained from the HPV testing in both samples (urine and cervical) have provided data that will be analysed to address objective one of her PhD work and work toward a manuscript for publication. Since she is required to have at least two publications for her PhD, this is a major first step milestone.

HPV Testing

Iyanu Pelumi Adegun, Nigeria

Iyanu's research project at the Federal University of Technology is titled 'Development of an Ensemble Deep Learning Model for Predicting Lassa Fever Outbreak.' The 34-year-old received a grant of \$1,146 to attend a conference.

She used the funds to attend The Deep Learning Indaba 2023 conference with the theme: "Yebetumi – we can" that took place at the Cedi Conference Center (CCC), University of Ghana, Accra, from Sunday, 3rd September to Saturday 9th September 2023. The Deep Learning Indaba is an annual conference focused on fostering machine learning and artificial intelligence in Africa.

Attending the conference was beneficial for Iyanu as it provided a platform to present the findings of her current PhD research at the Poster Sessions where she received useful feedback and comments from fellow researchers. It also provided her with the exposure to the latest trends, tools, methodologies, and best practices in the field of AI and its applications to health, climate change and SDG goals. She also networked with other like-minded individuals from across the continent.

Deep Learning Conference



Stella Oirere, Kenya

The 40-year-old University of Nairobi student is working on a research project titled 'Modification of macadamia shells to cellulose acetate for production of biodegradable plastic packaging.' Her project benefited from a \$2,190 grant from the Mawazo Fellows Fund that went to supporting the collection of samples.

Stella's project objective is to develop biodegradable packaging materials for industrial use in the agro-processing industry from Macadamia nutshells. She utilised the funds to collect and prepare macadamia shells i.e. sorting, washing, drying and milling. She collected the shells from Sasini Nuts Factory in Kiambu County and transported them to the Technical University of Kenya Laboratory for further processing.

The cellulose will be extracted from the shells, followed by an acetylation reaction. The resulting cellulose acetate will then be used to mould bioplastics using food-grade plasticizers to make packaging materials. The production and use of biodegradable plastics will replace non-biodegradable packaging materials which are a huge contributor to environmental pollution.

The collection, transportation and preparation of the macadamia shells are the initial stages towards achieving objective one of Stella's PhD research works on the extraction of cellulose from macadamia shells.

Macadamia Shells Processing

Loveth Oyewo, Nigeria

The University of Lagos student's research project is on "the Prevalence, antibiotic resistance, virulence gene profile, and source tracking of *Listeria monocytogenes* strains isolated from three types of vegetables; Lettuce, Carrot, and Cabbage in Lagos, Nigeria".

Loveth utilised her \$2,200 from the Fund to conduct Antibiotic Susceptibility Testing where she managed to evaluate antimicrobial susceptibility using the Kirby-Bauer disk diffusion method in accordance with the Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute, CLSI of 2018.

The data collected through this activity will help her to further her research objectives and delve deeper into the genetic and molecular mechanisms of antibiotic resistance in the isolates. It will also provide a more comprehensive understanding of the risks associated with *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination in the studied vegetables and help in devising strategies for source tracking, prevention, and intervention. Sharing the findings of her research through publications and presentations will go a long way in enhancing her academic and professional portfolio.

"The support from the Fund has significantly enhanced my practical laboratory skills, enabling me to be more proficient in executing complex microbiological assays while gaining in-depth knowledge of Antibiotic Resistance patterns among *Listeria monocytogenes* strains. It has also deepened my grasp of the mechanisms behind antibiotic resistance, essential for any microbiologist's academic and professional growth. I believe the research activity has contributed to food safety through better understanding of antibiotic resistance and virulence profiles hence the development of better food safety practices, which is an important contribution to public health."

Antibiotic Testing



Inside the Programmes

Mawazo Voices: Public Engagement



“I was so excited to attend “Mawazo Ideas Night: What does African Freedom look like?” I have learnt that we are a small community of researchers on this continent, and that as we struggle in our small areas of specialisation, we need each and every one of us in our different disciplines to come together and achieve solutions towards our issues in Africa.”

Jacinta Kinyunzu 2023 Mawazo Fellow

In 2023, the Mawazo Voices Programme marked several high-profile initiatives. These included two editions of the Mawazo Ideas Night, a recurring public event that offers local researchers, scholars and other inquisitive minds an informal and engaging platform to present their ideas to the public. In May we explored ‘What Does African Freedom Look Like’ in honour of Africa Day, during which we also introduced a new format to gamify the research process to make it more inclusive and collaborative. In December, we celebrated World AIDS Day by exploring ‘Innovations in HIV/AIDS’ and Dr. Marilyn Ronoh, a 2018 Mawazo Fellow, presented her big idea on a multilingual chatbot that seeks to reduce new HIV infections among the youth.

In the lead up to World AIDS Day, we also launched a new concept under Mawazo Ideas, the Mawazo Ideas CoLab, our in-house incubator. The inaugural week-long event saw us working with several of our Partners to inspire and educate our Fellows and Alumni on how to move their PhD research outcomes from idea to reality. Through the Nairobi Ideas CoLab, we introduced our Connects Network to venture studios, policy designers, think tank analysts, climate change innovators, among other industry experts, to provide support services to move from ideation to realization.



Inside the Programmes

Mawazo Voices: Connects Fund in Action

The Mawazo Connects Fund aims to support early career African women researchers in their post-fellowship (Mawazo Fellowship) and post-PhD research activities.

It has had an amazing impact on the Connects Network by heightening interest for active participation in the alumni network.

A total of 17 women received \$39,637 in 2023 to fund various activities including conference travel, specialised training, creation or advancement of post-research products such as prototypes, drug protocols, or socio-cultural or scientific projects, policy and public engagement as well as support cross-sector collaborations. We document below testimonials of four beneficiaries and the impactful outcomes from the funding to their projects.

A total of 17 women received
US\$39,637



Examples of activities funded:

- ✓ **Conference Travel**
- ✓ **Specialised Training**
- ✓ **Creation Or Advancement of Post-Research Products**
 - Prototypes
 - Drug Protocols
 - Scientific Projects
 - Policy and Public Engagement
- ✓ **Support Cross-Sector Collaborations**



Inside the Programmes

Mawazo Voices: Connects Fund in Action



Sahra Ahmed Koshin (Somalia) received \$2,500 for an outreach activity to organise a one-day conference for Somali women in research, higher education, and academia in Nairobi. They also presented the findings of a study independently conducted at the Somali Gender Hub on 'Challenges and opportunities for Somali women in research, scholarly publishing and dissemination in the Somali regions. The event brought together over 90 participants both in person and online, to discuss the challenges and opportunities for women in the higher education sector. It was the first attempt to combine the experiences and expertise of both early career and established Somali women researchers and academics. The conference provided an opportunity to reflect on the progress of women in higher education, to share experiences, perspectives, and responses to the challenges, and also look to the future.

Outreach for Somali women in research



Dr. Peace Uwambaye (Rwanda) utilised \$2500 from the Mawazo Connects Fund to run a public engagement workshop, and disseminate her findings. In late August 2023, she organised a road show in Kigali to promote oral hygiene. The event was attended by stakeholders from district hospitals, dental professional associations, academia, and the Rwanda Biomedical Center. Following the event, residents were offered free oral health screening. The two events had a significant impact in promoting oral hygiene in Kigali. By engaging stakeholders from various sectors, Dr. Peace was able to create awareness about the importance of oral hygiene and its impact on overall health. The free oral health screening provided an opportunity for residents to identify any oral health issues and seek early treatment.

Oral Health workshop and screening



A disbursement of \$2,800 by the Fund to **Linnet Mwangi (Kenya)** facilitated community training to improve knowledge attitude and practices of pastoralists regarding transmission and AMR of mycobacteria in the rural areas of Mlango, Ngarendare, and Burat. This was a follow up to her PhD research to obtain baseline data on Knowledge Attitudes and Practices (KAP) regarding transmission and AMR (antimicrobial resistance) of mycobacteria. KAP was assessed using a questionnaire specifically designed for this purpose via face to face interviews and focus group discussions with the participants. One day was used to train the field assistants and research assistant. And 3 days were used to conduct FGDs and community training on AMR. The trainings included practices leading to transmission of mycobacteria, practices leading to antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and mitigation practices for transmission and AMR of mycobacteria.

Community training for Pastoralists



For **Desta Gebeyehu (Ethiopia)**, the \$2,500 boost by the Connects Fund went into research-to-commercialisation efforts. Desta used the funds to register her prototype and establish a training centre for exploring novel ways of bioenergy and organic fertiliser production from solid wastes. The project aims to create new paradigms towards circular economy by linking production of briquette, biofertilizers and animal feeds to a sustainable environment through composting of organic wastes using Black Soldier Fly (BSF). The funding enabled her to begin the process of establishing her project's prototype and register it as a company as well as training 30 beneficiaries to better understand the social, economic and environmental importance of the project. also provide a more comprehensive understanding of the risks associated with *Listeria monocytogenes* contamination in the studied vegetables and help in devising strategies for source tracking, prevention, and intervention. Sharing the findings of her research through publications and presentations will go a long way in enhancing her academic and professional portfolio.

"The support from the Fund has significantly enhanced my practical laboratory skills, enabling me to be more proficient in executing complex microbiological assays while gaining in-depth knowledge of Antibiotic Resistance patterns among *Listeria monocytogenes* strains. It has also deepened my grasp of the mechanisms behind antibiotic resistance, essential for any microbiologist's academic and professional growth. I believe the research activity has contributed to food safety through better understanding of antibiotic resistance and virulence profiles hence the development of better food safety practices, which is an important contribution to public health."

Registering a fertiliser production prototype

Meet the 2023 Graduands: “Where are they now?”

After hard work, but commendable determination, three of our Alumni graduated with their PhDs in 2023. They join 11 African women researchers who now have their Doctorates in the Mawazo Connects network.



Dr. Jacqueline Owigo, PhD in International Relations from United States International University – Africa

2018 Mawazo Fellow Dr. Jacqueline Owigo was working at the British High Commission in Kenya as a Social Development Advisor in 2023. Her role entailed bringing research into policy and programmes, to improve outcomes for women and others with marginalised status.

Completing her PhD was immensely meaningful for Dr. Owigo, as her research focused on work that is very dear to her heart, namely the experiences of Somali women refugee returnees. Mawazo was instrumental in her journey by not only funding her research, but also in connecting her with likeminded women researchers from varied disciplines, who provided support in pointing her towards different research tools, literature, and resources.

“My whole PhD journey took a global community to help me finish it. I have benefited from training by Mawazo on research uptake strategies: including writing policy briefs and stakeholders engagement and capacity building,” she says with a gratitude forged from perspective.



Dr. Judith Koskey, PhD in Environmental Science at Egerton University

2018 Mawazo Fellow Dr. Judith Koskey worked as an Environmental Consultant and part time lecturer at Egerton University’s Nairobi Campus. Her research is on the assessment of catchment disturbance on vegetation diversity, water quality and macroinvertebrate abundance and diversity in Njoro and Kamweti rivers in Kenya. She was born and raised in the Njoro River watershed area in the Rift Valley and is therefore passionate about using her research to help preserve this critical natural resource for the welfare of her community and for future generations.

The conclusion of her PhD journey in October 2023, was a momentous event for Dr. Koskey especially since during her long drawn out experience, she admits to having considered quitting the programme, and leaving academia altogether. That she persevered despite those moments of doubt, speaks to her determination and inspirational tenacity.

She credits Mawazo’s support through the years as a source of strength to motivate her to continue working hard and graduating with her PhD. “The generosity of the Mawazo team has not only impacted my academic journey but also my personal life. It has reminded me of the importance of giving back to others and inspired me to pay it forward in the future,” she says.



Dr. Pauline Orondo, PhD in Molecular Biology and Bioinformatics at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology

Dr. Pauline Orondo, a 2021 Mawazo Fellow, worked as a molecular entomologist, specifically a malaria vector larval ecologist, studying various larval ecologies that support malaria vector breeding. She looks forward to doing more work understanding larval breeding site composition, both biotic and abiotic factors, and ultimately how different ecological factors affect malaria vector larval composition and density.

For Dr. Orondo, graduating with a PhD, which examined how habitat conditions affect malaria vectors, was her greatest achievement of 2023. Though the journey was sometimes tough, she is struck by the significance of now being part of an elite group of researchers who contribute to scientific knowledge. The PhD also signifies growth in her career and future opportunities.

Mawazo is and will always remain close to her heart: “This organisation opened doors I never imagined. The grants they gave me supported my PhD completion as I was able to undertake additional research, produce a scientific peer reviewed paper and attend conferences. Mawazo has provided a huge stepping stone in my scientific career.”

Strategic Partnerships

In 2023, the Mawazo Institute formalised its approach to partnerships by establishing the Strategic Partnerships Department. Through this department, Mawazo will increase the research influence of its fellows and alumni and build partnerships to support them in using their research innovations and interventions for impact.

Starting strongly, we established four partnerships by formalising four Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) in 2023. The first MOU of the year was with [Persistent Energy](#), a venture builder specialising in climate impact investing. The second MOU was with [NAWI Collective](#), a community of African feminists in the political economy. We signed the third MOU with [Shortlist](#), a recruiting firm that creates employment opportunities for women in the climate sector through its Shortlist Futures program. The final MOU of the year was signed with [Innovations Poverty Action](#), a non-profit research and policy firm that uses research to solve global poverty.

Over the year, we engaged with existing partners through various initiatives and events. In March, the [Mercatus Center](#) of George Mason University provided USD 5,000 grants to five alumni to pursue transformative research projects via its Emergent Ventures Fund. [Viktoria Ventures](#) ran an accelerator program in April that introduced 15 alumni with research innovations to the exciting world of research-to-commercialisation.

The Africa Climate Summit 2023 held in September saw four fellows participate as delegates, whereas the Strategic Partnerships Lead and the Communications Lead attended the launch of the **African Energy Futures Initiative** and the [Africa Women’s Leadership Network](#) (AWLN) and UN Women’s Women in Climate Change dinner, respectively. We also engaged in various other activities and workshops during the summit, including the [Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet](#) (GEAPP) Africa Climate Summit dinner and the [Delta40](#) networking event focused on “Amplifying Inclusive Innovation Across Africa”.

During the same month, we participated in the [Women Who Build Africa](#) (WWBA) Assembly, where our CEO, Dr Fiona Moejes, led a workshop on “Navigating the Path to Product Success: Research, Validation, and Growth Strategies”. Additionally, we attended the [Mozilla Foundation’s](#) MozFest House Nairobi, a gathering that highlighted the emerging issues around trustworthy AI and a healthy internet in Africa. Outside the partner events, the Mawazo Institute hosted an in-house stakeholder workshop on its Emerging Trends Sector Briefs Report that brought together partners such as IPA, NAWI, MasterCard, and RISA FCDO to lend their voices in enhancing the report.

We participated in the [Unearthodox](#) October Learning Festival in October, where the CEO discussed “Implementing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity for Conservation.” In November, we delivered a training session focusing on “Operational Efficiency for Startups” to participants of the [Fishbowl Challenge](#).

We concluded the year on a high note by hosting the first Mawazo CoLab on Research to Realisation. The event featured talks by industry experts such as Cassandra Kiereini from Shortlist discussing Climate Careers, Carol Masila-Maiko from Persistent. Energy providing insights on Legal Considerations for Startups, Kitawa Wemo from Mama Ventures sharing knowledge on Investor Readiness for Startups, and Liz Lenjo from MyIP Legal Studio focusing on Intellectual Property Rights for Research.

Mawazo will increase the research influence of its fellows and alumni and build partnerships to support them in using their research innovations and interventions for impact.



Elaine Mungai Strategic Partnerships Lead

Spotlight Interview

“Space knowledge can change the lives of people in Africa,”

Dr. Cynthia Ange Umuhire 2021 Mawazo Fellow

Dr. Umuhire was our first Mawazo Fellow from Rwanda, and our first researcher in the Space Sciences field. To date, she remains the sole Rwandan to obtain a PhD in Space Sciences, and become part of an elite group of researchers on the continent in her field.

Dr. Umuhire’s life philosophy is built around scientific discovery and tangible planning for a better tomorrow. As a child, she peppered everyone in her life with questions. In high school, she found herself pouring over Physics books at every opportunity. Though she didn’t know it at the time, her questions about gravity, satellites and even rockets could all be answered through Astronomy.

Now as an astronomer, she firmly believes that solutions to many challenges that plague development in African countries can be found in studying geomagnetic storms. To put it simply, Dr. Umuhire’s research study focuses on geo-effective phenomena from the Sun’s corona, the outermost part of the Sun’s atmosphere. As a space science analyst, she is using her new knowledge to solve challenges related to weather and climate predictions for disaster management, improving agricultural yields for food security, predicting pandemics, and improving GPS functions and operations used by companies and institutions. Dr. Umuhire’s research has become critical to the newly established Rwanda Space Agency (RSA)

The budding scholar who also trained at the prestigious National Aeronautics and Space Administration-Goddard Space Flight Center (NASA-GSFC) in the U.S.A. has authored and co-authored 6 papers since 2020. They include a paper in the Solar Physics Journal titled “Properties of High-Frequency Type II Solar Radio Bursts and their Relation to the High-Frequency Associated Coronal Mass Ejections”, and the co-authored “The shock driving capability of a CME inferred from multi-wavelengths observations” paper submitted in the Sun and Geosphere Journal.

But being a pioneer also presented some challenges for Dr. Umuhire. Frequently, she found herself being called to solve problems as the only astronomer on staff. While this may have given her the advantage of exposure to varied projects within the Space Agency, it also challenged her time management skills. The reality of her life while completing her PhD has been about balancing her work, home life, and research outputs. It is an act that Dr. Umuhire identifies as uniquely gendered, but credits Mawazo for being instrumental at the beginning of her research journey as well as giving her a voice and a way to communicate.



The Mawazo Fellow’s Fund granted her the opportunity to attend two conferences, during one of which she was a panellist, in Spain, and virtually attend a conference in Canada. As part of the Mawazo Connects network, Dr. Umuhire received funding that she invested in starting a company in Rwanda called the STEM Opportunities Consultancy HUB, dedicated to increasing the number of girls in Rwanda who are pursuing STEM at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. She believes that for Africa, change lies in education. “I believe that life’s standards can change, but we have to do it. We have to be the voices of others, and we have to improve the lives of others.”

Dr. Umuhire was one of 20 African researchers awarded the L’Oréal-UNESCO for Women in Science sub-Saharan Africa Young Talents Awards in 2022. In 2023, she was honoured at the Grace Hopper Abie Awards in the U.S.A. as a Student of Vision Winner. For Dr. Umuhire, though her PhD journey has ended, “the research never ends”. She remains someone to watch, whose burgeoning career, while already impressive, is just hitting its stride.

The Pioneering Astronomer

2023 Press Coverage

Daily Nation: How Dr Mutono Nyamai is reshaping the future of public health using data - March 2023

The Daily Nation profiled 2021 Mawazo Alumna Dr. Mutono Nyamai on how her work as a data scientist is reshaping the future of the public health sector. Within the interview Dr. Mutono credited the Mawazo Institute as encouraging her to incorporate a gender lens in her work, while allowing her to network with other women researchers in various fields.

Capital FM News: UK launches new Women and Girls strategy on International Women's Day - March 2023

The Mawazo Institute partnered with the British High Commission to host an event centered on women in science for International Women's Day and Capital News covered the event. This year's theme was: 'DigitALL: Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality', and Mawazo spotlighted the work of some of our Alumni in this field. CEO Dr. Fiona Moejes was also the moderator of a fireside chat that included Safaricom CEO Peter Ndegwa, Standard Chartered CEO Kariuki Ngari, EABL CEO Jane Karuku, and British Chamber of Commerce Chairperson Sonal Tejpar.

Standard Media: Seal the 'leaky pipe' to increase number of women researchers - March 2023

The Standard published an OpEd by the Mawazo Institute's Communications Lead Carolyne Tunnen addressing academia's 'leaky pipeline', where women's participation rate decreases rapidly the further up the education ladder we go. After outlining how African feminist movement building is an important solution, Tunnen centers the Mawazo Institute as an organization focused on sealing the leaks.

Nation Media: Experts - How to bridge the digital Gender Gap - May 2023

On May 25th 2023, Africa Day, the Mawazo Institute hosted a night of collective thinking, the latest of our Nairobi Ideas Night titled: "What does African freedom look like?" At the event, several solutions were explored in answer to Kenya's various development issues, including increased incorporation of technology. The Nation Media, in attendance of the event, cites several of the participants including Mawazo DOP Dr. Caroline Mose in addressing bridging the digital Gender Gap.



In 2023, the Mawazo Institute garnered significant media attention for the impactful work being carried out by our Fellows and Alumni. The following are some of the notable news articles that featured Mawazo:

Standard Media: Reality of competency-based curriculum and place of child's needs - August 2023

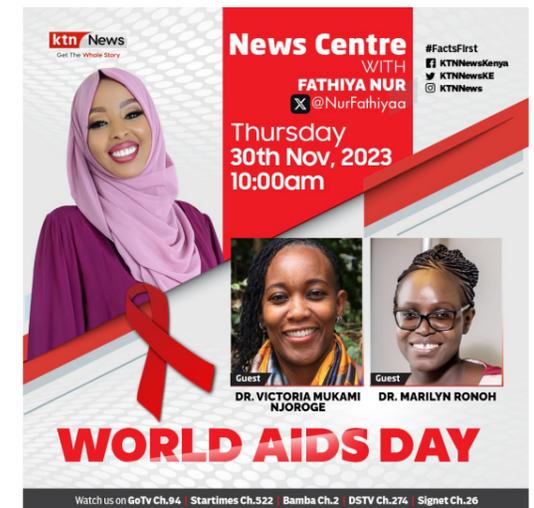
The Standard ran a collaborative opinion piece by 2021 Mawazo Fellow, Dr. Janet Surum and Communications Officer Naliaka Odera. The piece highlighted Dr. Janet's work and her findings on the academic resilience of students in Turkana County, considering all challenges they face and the factors that motivate the students to excel in school despite the inequities they may face especially with the newly introduced Competence Based Curriculum.

Standard Media: What students need to complete grueling PhD journey in Kenya - October 2023

The Standard ran an opinion piece by 2021 Mawazo Fellow, Kavengi Kitonga. Kavengi highlighted the various challenges and external pressures faced by a PhD student and the various coping mechanisms she found that assisted her throughout her journey. The uplifting and encouraging article is a must read for the struggling PhD student and offers insight on how to approach one's PhD journey in a holistic and self-fulfilling manner.

KTN News: News Centre - November 2023

Mawazo Alumni Dr. Marilyn Ronoh and Dr. Victoria Mukami were interviewed on KTN News at 10 am about their HIV Chatbot. There are many affected by HIV & AIDS, and their brainchild looks to ease the burden by making information on the disease, preventative measures and solutions more available to anyone with an internet connection. Their project aims at developing a multi-lingual chatbot and will seek to reduce new HIV infections among adolescents and young adults.



TV 47: Food Security in Kenya - October 2023

Judy Ngina, 2021 Mawazo Fellow, appeared on a panel discussion on food security in Kenya hosted on the Morning Café by TV47. Discussions highlighted the dire situation on food security in the country especially in the ASAL regions with panelists giving possible solutions to the issues facing food production with Judy highlighting the impacts of agriculture on climate change and possible solutions to mitigate negative climate change ie carbon emission.

KTN News: Eradicating HIV & AIDS - December 2023

Mawazo Alumni Dr. Marilyn Ronoh was interviewed by KTN News at 10 am as an expert panelist on HIV & AIDS testing among the youth. The panel also consisted of a youth representative who had tested Dr. Marilyn's HIV chatbot. The segment focused on the means of increasing HIV & AIDS testing among the youth and the funding of youth friendly initiatives for HIV & AIDS in Kenya. The conversation was able to bring out the gaps that "Beshte", the chatbot, would fill in this unique space and the need for support in such endeavors by government agencies.



Good Governance and Accountability: Our Board



Kim-Andrée Potvin

A native of Canada, Kim has over 20 years of experience in finance in various C-level roles in asset management, private banking and fund administration services in Europe (France, Luxembourg, Switzerland) with expertise in ESG & impact investing. Kim is currently serving as the COO of Swiss private bank, Bonhôte. Prior to this role, she was serving as Chief Operating Officer and Partner at Bamboo Capital Partners. Preceding her tenure at Bamboo Capital Partners, she held the position of Chief Operating Officer at Swiss Private Bank Landolt & Cie. And for over 15 years at BNP Paribas, in roles such as Chief Operating Officer in Switzerland, Head of Asset and Fund Services in Luxembourg, and Head of Internal Audit Benelux. A dedicated conservationist, humanitarian and advisor to entrepreneurs in Europe and Africa, she is involved in numerous Boards on these continents. Energetic and spontaneous by nature, Kim appreciates evolving environments where the status quo can be challenged. She is enthusiastic, practical and enjoys working in varied teams that strive to innovate. On the academics' side, she has a bachelor's degree in commerce (Finance and International Business) from McGill University as well as a Master's Degree in Business (International Business) from Sherbrooke University in Canada. She is fluent in French and English.



Dr. Ruth Levine

Dr. Ruth Levine is the Vice President of Just Societies and Chief Learning Officer at The David & Lucile Packard Foundation. She oversees the Foundation's work to build just and equitable societies and leads the Foundation's commitment to learning and impact. Prior to joining the Foundation, Ruth was the CEO of IDinsight, a mission-driven global advisory, data analytics, and research organization that helps global development leaders in governments, multilateral agencies, foundations, and innovative non-profit organizations in Asia and Africa to maximize their social impact. Ruth is a development economist with more than three decades of experience working on the design and implementation of policies and programs related to global health and education, social protection, gender equality, and labor markets. She is an expert on the use of data and evidence for decision-making and was a policy fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University for the 2019-2020 academic year. Prior to her fellowship at Stanford, Ruth led the Global Development and Population Program at the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation between 2011 and 2019, overseeing a total of approximately \$1 billion in philanthropic grantmaking. Previously, she was a deputy assistant administrator in the Bureau of Policy, Planning and Learning at the U.S. Agency for International Development. In that role, Ruth led the development of the agency's evaluation policy and co-led an initiative to streamline performance measurement. Ruth spent nearly a decade at the Center for Global Development as a senior fellow and as the Center's first vice president for programs and operations. Earlier in her career, she designed and evaluated health and education projects at the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank. She holds a doctoral degree jointly in economics and demography from Johns Hopkins University and a B.S. from Cornell University.



Cosmas Mulumba

Cosmas is a Public Sector/International Development specialist with over ten years of experience in Financial and Grants management, Institutional strengthening, Capacity building and Project management. He has worked with African governments in Kenya, Malawi, Burundi and Ethiopia – and the International community in various sectors including Health, Security, Education, Research, Private Sector Development amongst others. He is experienced working with African Regional Governments and agencies including AU and COMESA, World Bank, USAID, DFID, DANIDA, Wellcome Trust, KfW amongst others. He has previously worked as a senior manager in Advisory Services at PwC, Kenya where he worked with development partners and governments to facilitate smarter investments and adoption of strong financial governance. He is passionate about solving socio-economic problems through lean and effective interventions such as technology. He holds a Bsc in Statistics from the University of Nairobi, Certified Public Accountant CPA(K), a member of the Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Kenya (ICPAK).



Kyle Polite

Originally from Galesburg, Illinois, Kyle Polite is the current Executive Director of Development at the University of New South Wales in Sydney Australia. He is a passionate, innovative, and inclusive leader with over twenty years of international fundraising and management experience across five continents. Kyle has previously held senior philanthropy roles at San Francisco Opera, Dartmouth College (his alma mater), the University of Sydney, and Stanford University. He is a past board member of the Performing Arts Workshop in San Francisco, California, the Dartmouth Alumni Association of Silicon Valley, the Association of Fundraising Professionals International, and the New York Regional Economic Development Council.



Prof. Marion Wanjiku Mutugi, EBS

Prof. Marion Wanjiku Mutugi, EBS, is a professor of genetics with a PhD from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. The dynamic scholar, trainer, manager who is widely published in medical genetics as well as bioethics, has a personal motto; "What's worth doing, is worth doing well". Her current focus is the ethical application of research findings and advances in science for the promotion and protection of human rights. Prof Mutugi who has worked in various public and private research institutions and universities is currently a Commissioner with the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR). She previously served as the Vice Chancellor of Amref International University (AMIU); and prior to that was the Deputy Vice Chancellor in Charge of Planning, Research and Development at the University of Kabianga. Before then, she was the Director, Institute of Tropical Medicine and Infectious Diseases (ITROMID) at the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT). She is an accomplished trainer through whose hands many biomedical and health professionals in the region have passed. In addition, Prof Mutugi has been involved in many international and national government activities in various agencies, institutions, committees and task forces. In 2011, the President of the Republic of Kenya awarded the mother of two adult children with the "Elder of the Order of the Burning Spear (E.B.S.)" in recognition of her service to the nation.



Christina Nduba-Banja

Christina is an advocate based in Nairobi who is experienced in advising on a broad range of commercial matters with a particular focus on mergers and advising private equity firms on acquisitions and investments in companies in Kenya. She specialises in assisting local and international clients set up business operations in Kenya within the regulatory framework while mitigating legal risks. She also has experience in Kenyan property law, real estate and joint ventures. She joined Coulson Harney as an Associate in January 2014 and was promoted to a Senior Associate in March 2015. Coulson Harney is a top tier full-service law firm based in Nairobi, Kenya and is part of Bowmans Law, a premier Pan-African law firm with six offices in four African countries and over 400 specialised lawyers. She holds an LLB from the University of South Africa, and a postgraduate diploma in Law from the Kenya School of Law.



Daniele Ressler

Daniele Ressler is a senior nonprofit leader based in Nairobi, Kenya, with 13 years of experience in international development and research. Her 'north star' is operational excellence and impactful social change informed by data and research – particularly in scaling organizations. Daniele is Impact Director of Lwala Community Alliance, an NGO delivering community-based health services in Migori County, Kenya, where she directs Lwala's global finances, grants, and legal compliance; as well its monitoring, evaluation, and research activities. Additionally, Daniele brings a wealth of practical knowledge within the research and policy realm: leadership roles overseeing impact evaluations/RCTs at Innovations for Poverty Action in Kenya and Uganda, as Director of Operations and Country Director, respectively; and management of post-conflict research initiatives at James Madison University's Center for International Stabilization and Recovery. She holds an MSc in International Development from the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies, and an MPA from James Madison University.



Astrid Haas

Astrid is an independent urban economist, based in Hong Kong, working across research and practice, supporting cities in Africa, the Middle East and Asia with questions of strategy related to financing and funding. She also has appointments as an Adjunct Professor at the School of Cities, University of Toronto; Research Associate at the African Centre for Cities at the University of Cape Town and ODI; as well as an Extraordinary Lecturer at the African Tax Institute, University of Pretoria. She holds an MSc in Public Financial Management from SOAS, University of London and an MA in International Economics and International Development from Johns Hopkins University. In 2016, she was nominated by the University of Cape Town as one of Africa's Young Leaders and in 2020 she received the Johns Hopkins Outstanding Recent Graduate award for her leadership and work on urbanisation. For more information, please see: www.urbanasti.com

Good Governance and Accountability: Our Team



Dr Fiona Wanjiku Moejes
Chief Executive Officer



Dr Caroline Mose
Director of Programmes



Elizabeth Ngala
Director of Finance



Ray Wanjiru
Software Engineering and
Technology Lead



Elaine Mungai
Strategic Partnerships Lead



Carolyn Tunnen
Communications Lead



Ashley Muthaka
Director of Operations



Damaris Ndua
Fellowship Programme Lead



Dorsila Ogola
Fellowship Programme Associate



Naliaka Odera
Communications Officer



Angela Mwangi
Graphic Designer



Alvin Wandabwa
Strategic Communications
Associate



Patrick Atandi
Monitoring, Evaluation and
Learning Lead



Eva Wanjiru
HR & Admin Associate



Mark Kimani
Finance and Grants Associate



Rose Kairu
Software Engineering Associate



Shirley Irungu
Data Insight Associate



Silvia Mwendia
Programme Officer



Aisha Mugo
Research Officer

Mawazo's wellness break



The Mawazo Institute introduced a mid-year Wellness Break in the 2023 work year. The post Covid-19 world has brought to the forefront the need for mental health supportive spaces in the workplace. Mawazo's CEO, Dr. Fiona Moejes, and the Director of Operations, Ashley Muthaka, had candid conversations on how to address the general well-being of the staff.

The senior leadership then instituted a three week slow down. August was appropriate for Mawazo, as our partners are also on their summer break and thus we are able to continue our work but on a lighter schedule. The break allows staff to recharge with measures such as no external meetings, reduced internal meetings, and no reporting being done.

We asked the team members how they spent their wellness break and what it meant for them:

Dr. Fiona Moejes (CEO): Our wellness break came just after I found out that I was expecting a baby. Having the wellness break provided much-needed grace during those pesky first weeks of pregnancy. I was able to use this time to look after myself (physically and mentally) without the guilt that sometimes comes from this.

Dr. Caroline Mose (DOP): What I personally appreciated about the downtime was having more time to look inward, slow down a little, focus on our Fellows and Alumni, and get some breathing room to re-look at some areas that required attention. Coming during the school holidays also allowed me to get more quality time with the Offspring.

Ashley Muthaka (DOO): I was able to take a step back, reflect and take stock of the first half of the year. It definitely impacted my work positively for the last half of the year as I came back re-energized ready to tackle my goals and close off the year on a high with the entire team.

Elizabeth Ngala (DOF): I spent the August slowdown re-energizing and rejuvenating, but also took time to spend time with my Mum which meant I could connect with her without the interruptions of meetings and work-related phone calls. This meant a lot to me as she is experiencing mid-stage dementia.

Elaine Mungai (Strategic Partnerships Lead): I enjoyed the time to help me transition properly to the strategic partnerships docket. I had time to think of my framework as this new desk was being established and of what I wanted to work towards.

Patrick Atandi (MEL Lead): The calming ambiance of Nairobi's parks, provided a therapeutic escape, relieving stress and infusing my creative energies with a local flair. Engaging in outdoor activities within the city not only revitalized my body but also brought forth a more positive mindset in my work.

Carolyn Tunnen (Comms Lead): The break allowed me to rest, refresh and refocus. I travelled upcountry, away

from my normal city life and enjoyed the beauty, peace and tranquility of nature, surrounded by family. I came back, well rested, recharged, and hit the road running!

Naliaka Odera (Comms Officer): The break allowed me to slow down and tap into creative hobbies like painting and writing for fun.

Angela Mwangi (Graphic Designer): It has been a game-changer for me. Taking a step back, indulging in activities I love, and catching up on much-needed rest not only lowers stress levels but also fuels my creativity.

Shirley Irungu (Data and Insight Associate): The break allowed me to reorganise my priorities, test my boundaries, and focus on recovery in the present moment.

Eva Wanjiru (HR Associate): I spent quality time with my kids, who were also on school break at the time, caught up with family and friends, and, most importantly, rested intentionally.

Dorsila Ogola (Fellowship Programme Associate): It is a chance to step away daily for a few hours to reconnect with nature, loved ones, and myself. To recharge and be able to take stock.

Damaris Ndua (Fellowship Programme Lead): It provided me with the space and time to immerse myself fully in my new role at Mawazo, allowing for a smooth transition and adjustment period.

Mark Kimani (Finance and Grants Associate): We had just concluded our rigorous US and Kenyan audits so it came as a great relief and time to reflect and take stock of all the activities for the half year.

Silvia Mwendia (Programme Officer): I appreciated the reflection it gave me about my own relationship with work.

Message from the Board Chair



The Mawazo Institute's team was eagerly anticipating accelerating and increasing our **impact** in 2023, following yet another year of accomplishments and notable milestones in 2022.

In early 2023 we successfully launched our third Call for Applications for the acclaimed Mawazo Fellowship Programme which received an impressive response from women researchers that we selected. More than 2000 applications were received from the African continent! We are now proud to go beyond the East African region by supporting 40 brilliant women from 16 African countries researching on critical issues ranging from agriculture and climate change, to health and education, as well as technology, engineering, entrepreneurship, and economics.

The Board is also very focused on ensuring that our Fellows and Alumni's research is used to further development in various sectors, both public and private. To this end, we launched the Mawazo Connects Fund in 2023 to further support the public and policy engagement of our Alumni through notable prototypes, drug protocols, as well as cross-sector collaborations.

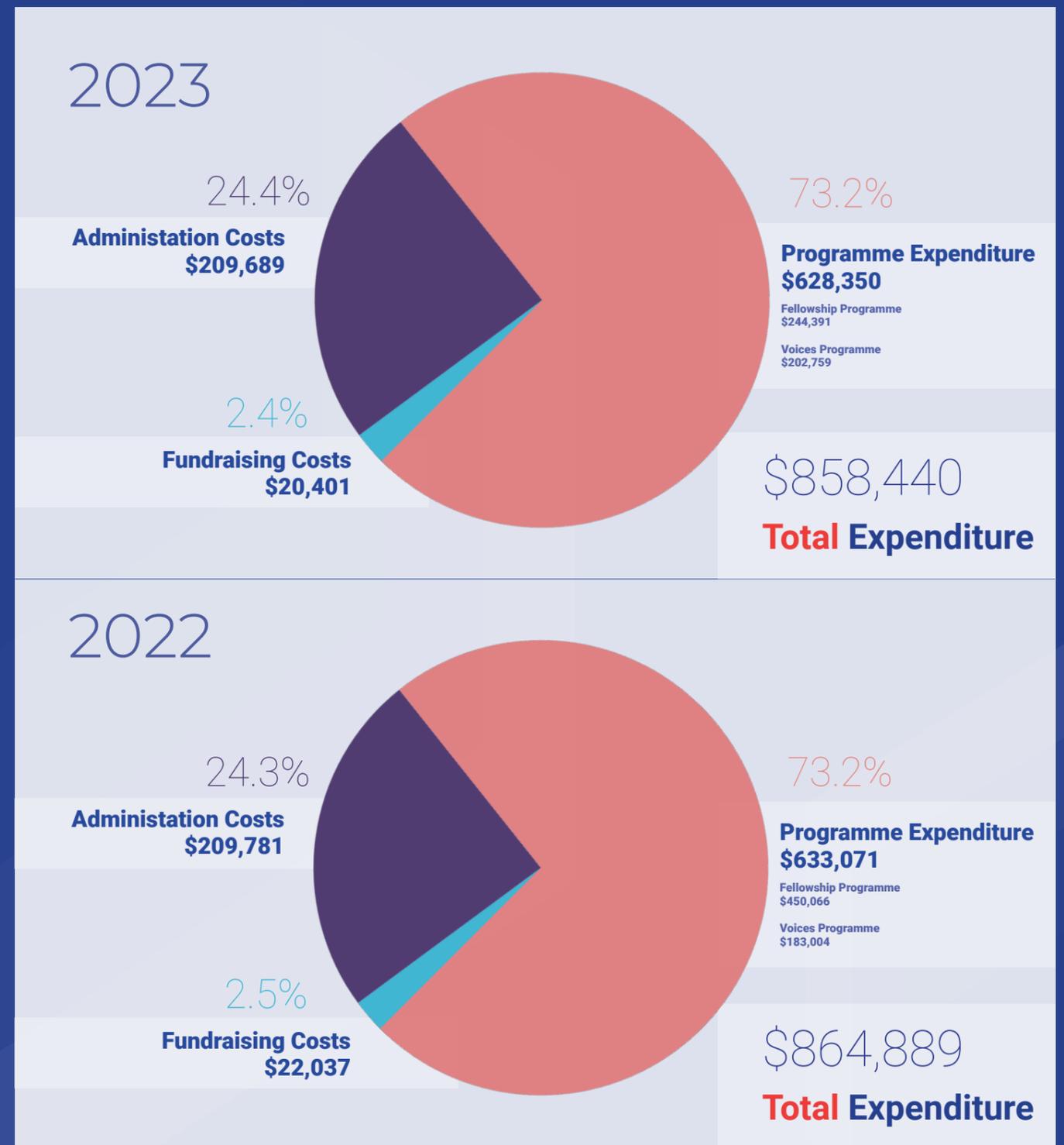
At Mawazo, we believe in encouraging women in Africa to follow their dreams using their unique skills and talents. Our Fellows and Alumni stand as testament to what happens when women embody boldness in their areas of expertise. If we can provide inspiration and spark interest, we will have achieved our mission.

We are therefore proud to renew our commitment to all our engaged stakeholders that support us in making all of this possible: donors, partners, Fellows and staff. We are looking forward to continued impactful results!

Kim-Andrée Potvin
Board Chair
Mawazo Institute

Financial Report

Annual expenditure for the past two years of Mawazo's programmes and operations are summarized below:



Funders and Partners

List of 2023 Funders



Hear From our Donors!

"The Mastercard Foundation was drawn to Mawazo Institute's vision to provide context and gender responsive support to female early career researchers and thought leaders at the forefront of pressing development issues in East Africa. In line with the Foundation's Young Africa Works strategy, the Foundation strongly believes that African women are a critical part of Africa's socio-economic transformation and access to quality education and economic opportunities is an enabler of African women fulfilling this transformative potential."



**Dr Chizoba Imoka, Lead, Research System
Strengthening at Mastercard Foundation.**



"For the Hewlett Foundation, the motivation for supporting Mawazo stems from its work as a women-led African organization supporting early-career women researchers to find local solutions to global development challenges. The grant supports the Mawazo Voices program to create pathways and pipelines that give African women researchers the tools to conduct impactful and quality research and prepare them for knowledge translation."

Jennifer Joel, Programme Fellow, Gender, Equity and Governance, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

How to Engage with Mawazo

By supporting the Mawazo Institute, you'll be supporting the next generation of women driving research for development in Africa. Your support will help us to provide a range of resources to the promising young women we support.

Individuals

To donate by check, please mail your contribution to:
Mawazo Institute 1440 W Taylor St PMB 4094 Chicago, IL 60607 USA.

The Mawazo Institute is registered 501(c)(3) non-profit in the US. All donations are tax deductible for US donors.

To donate by Card, Paypal or M-changa log in to: mawazoinstitute.org/donate-to-us

Strategic Partners

Mawazo is always looking to partner with organisations and institutions with complementary values and visions. Partners can represent any sector, including, but not limited to: (1) communication and media partners (e.g., newspapers, radio channels, science magazines); (2) civil society partners (including local and international NGOs); (3) industry partners (including impact investors); (4) research and innovation partners; (5) government and public policy actors; and (6) universities and higher education institutions.

As a partner, we shall work together to ensure that African women researchers and their big ideas are influencing a range of sectors where solutions are developed to address critical societal issues on the continent and beyond.

Donors

The Mawazo Institute has been fortunate enough to have had support from a range of international donors and philanthropic organisations. We are always looking to forge new relationships with other donors and philanthropic organisations whose strategies align with Mawazo's mission and vision.

Please reach out to Mawazo through contact@mawazoinstitute.org to speak with a member of our team and see how you can join us and support our journey to create a sustainable and holistic future built by the big ideas of African women researchers.





Kofisi Riverside Square, 10th floor,
West Wing, Riverside Drive, Nairobi, Kenya

www.mawazoinstitute.org
@MawazoInstitute

+254 703 041 088
+254 (0) 203 673 088