



Knowledge for Better Livelihoods

From the Editor's Desk

The past quarter has been full of exciting moments for ACTS to share and engage on our impactful work. We took part in the SGCI All Partners Forum and STISA 2034 Advocacy Meeting in Ghana, where important conversations were held on the future of science and innovation in Africa. Back home, we officially launched the ACTS Artificial Intelligence Institute, a big step in strengthening our position in driving the continent's research and practice for responsible AI in this technological frontier that is transforming societies.

We participated in the Kenya National Research Festival 2025, which focused on Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security, where we shared our work with fellow researchers and other stakeholders. In Mombasa, the Blue Empowerment Project took part in the Agricultural Society of Kenya (ASK) show to showcase how we are promoting sustainable aquaculture and seaweed farming along the coast. Additionally, The Calestous Juma Legacy Series was relaunched, continuing to honor his vision of harnessing science, technology and innovation for sustainable development.

We also featured in several learning spaces, including workshops on clean energy entrepreneurship, the second RIM Project Symposium and the DigiKen - Digital Platforms Kenya workshop which continues to strengthen digital skills capacities of women, youth and marginalized groups.

As we step into the last quarter of the year, we look forward to continue sharing knowledge, building partnerships and supporting work that makes a lasting difference in our continent and beyond.

Fiona Makayoto

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SGCI All Partners Forum and STISA 2034 Advocacy Meeting



SGCI All Partners Forum and STISA 2034 Advocacy Meeting (15 -19) September 2025

The 2025 Science Granting Councils Initiative (SGCI) All Partners Forum and Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA) 2034 Advocacy Meeting took place in Accra, Ghana from 15 to 19 September. The forum brought together science granting councils, funders, technical agencies and partners to reflect on a decade of progress and chart the next steps for Africa's science, technology and innovation (STI) agenda. It also reviewed achievements and lessons from SGCI Phase 2, which strengthened the capacity of councils to design and monitor research programmes and implement policies informed by robust STI indicators.

Since its launch in 2015, SGCI has supported 17 councils across sub-Saharan Africa, enhancing research management, regional collaboration and gender inclusion. This year's Forum marked a milestone, inviting participants to share lessons, stories of change, and align efforts with continental priorities under STISA 2034. Two new members, Togo and Angola, were welcomed into the Initiative.

Moderated by Ibrahim Asante, the opening session included remarks from Santiago Alba-Corral, Vice-President for Programs and Partnerships at the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), reaffirming their commitment to SGCI as a pathway for science-led development in Africa and the keynote address delivered by Hon. Yusif Sulemana, Deputy Minister for Lands and Natural Resources, Ghana emphasizing the role of science, innovation and partnerships in advancing national and continental development goals.



ACTS Executive Director, Prof. Tom Ogada, speaking during the forum.

The Forum brought together stakeholders to share experiences from SGCI-2, exploring public-private partnerships, advancing gender equality, digitalizing grants management and promoting research excellence. Councils showcased their achievements in a poster exhibition, highlighting stories of change.

Additionally the discussions emphasized the importance of collaboration, inclusive policies and evidence-based approaches in strengthening Africa's science, technology, and innovation ecosystem. The week concluded with a strong commitment to supporting research councils, fostering partnerships, and driving innovation that benefits the continent.

For more information visit: [Science Granting Councils Initiative](#)

ACTS Artificial Intelligence Institute Officially Launched

Launch of the ACTS AI Institute

Theme: Charting the Path Towards an African-Centered Artificial Intelligence Future
 15th July, 2025 | 2:00 – 5:00 PM EAT | Location: Zoom > bit.ly/4ezcr0y

Guest Speakers

- Dr. Laurent Bocherereu**
Minister-Counselor, European Union Delegation to the African Union
- Amb. Prof. Bitange Ndiriro**
Kenya's Ambassador to the Kingdom of Belgium
- Gillian Dowie**
Senior Program Specialist, Education and Science, International Development Research Centre (IDRC)
- Dr. Winston Ojenge**
Principal Research Fellow, African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS)
- Prof. Berhanu M. Abegaz**
Emeritus Professor, Department of Chemistry, AAU, FAAS, FTWAS, FEAS
- Prof. Brando Okole**
Head of Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI), AUDA-NEPAD
- Dr. Veerle Vandeweerd**
Managing Partner, Platform for Transformative Technologies
- Prof. Tom Peter Migun Ogada**
Executive Director, African Centre for Technology Studies
- Dr. Devotha Nyambo**
Senior Lecturer and Researcher, Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology
- Prof. Divine Fuh**
Director, HUMA - Institute for Humanities in Africa

Register here [QR Code]

ACTS AI launch speakers

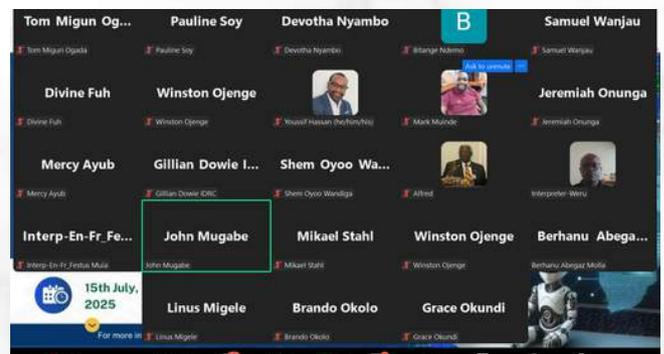
The ACTS Artificial Intelligence Institute (ACAII), formerly the Digital Economy Programme, was first unveiled in January 2025 during the GC meeting and officially launched on 15th July 2025. The Institute represents ACTS' commitment to advancing Africa's capacity in artificial intelligence, positioning the continent to harness AI for sustainable development, innovation and inclusive growth.

ACAII focuses on supporting evidence-based AI policymaking, fostering collaboration between researchers, governments, and industry and promoting responsible AI practices. The Institute will provide training and capacity-building programs, facilitate applied research and generate insights to help African countries adopt AI solutions that address social, economic and environmental challenges.

For the region, ACAII offers a platform for African countries to collaborate on AI research and innovation, share best practices and develop solutions tailored to local needs. At the continental level, the Institute strengthens Africa's voice in shaping AI policies, ensuring the continent benefits from emerging technologies while addressing risks like inequality, bias and digital exclusion.

ACAII positions Africa as a contributor to the international AI knowledge ecosystem, offering unique perspectives and innovations that can inform global AI governance, ethical frameworks and development strategies.

The official launch included presentations on ACAII's mandate, programs, and strategic priorities alongside discussions on the ethical and inclusive deployment of AI.



ACTS launches the ACTS AI Institute on July 15, 2025

Learn more about the Institute's vision and initiatives. here: [ACAII Explainer Video](#)

ACTS @ Kenya National Research Festival 2025



ACTS@KNRF2025

From 18 - 22 August, National Research Fund (Kenya) (NRF) in partnership with Egerton University hosted the 2025 Kenya National Research Festival at Egerton University, Njoro, under the theme “Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security: Empowering Communities through Research, Science, Technology and Innovation.”

As part of our participation, we had three programmes represented: Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security (AFNS), Climate Resilient Economies (CRE) and Science, Technology, Innovation, Knowledge and Society (STIKS).

- Dr. Benard Simiyu from the CRE Programme delivered a keynote address on building resilience to changing weather conditions through climate-smart agriculture, highlighting pathways for strengthening adaptive capacities in farming systems.
- Dr. Catherine Kilelu joined the panel on improving food productivity, diversity, quality and nutrition by strengthening food systems, sharing insights from the VALORISE and SPOKE projects on promoting innovation, value addition and inclusive agri-food markets.
- Dr. Kevin Ouko, STIKS Programme, participated in the discussion on accelerating and upscaling agricultural technologies and digital innovations for sustainable agriculture, emphasizing the role of data, digital tools, and knowledge systems in driving agricultural transformation through the RIM Project.
- Christine Nderitu, representing the GeckoCIR project, participated in a panel on diversifying benefits from waste products through circular economy.

In addition, the ACTS team showcased our work through an interactive booth featuring research findings, project successes and policy insights. Over 100 guests stopped by the booth to learn about ACTS's contributions to science and development, including the Principal Secretary for Higher Education, Shaukat Abdulrazak, who praised the Centre's role in promoting research and innovation.



Dr. Benard Simiyu delivers a key note address during the festival

The festival was lively and engaging, creating opportunities for researchers, students and institutions to share ideas and build partnerships. The engagement also highlighted the importance of linking research to policy and practice to achieve meaningful impact for communities and the broader region.

We continue to champion for practical, evidence-based solutions that strengthen food systems and promote sustainable agriculture across Kenya and the region.



ACTS STIKS Programme@KNRF2025

Shaping Kenya's Sustainable Energy Future



JET Policy Dialogue participants

The Just Energy Transition (JET) Project seeks to move economies from fossil fuels to clean energy in a fair, inclusive and sustainable way. In Kenya, it offers opportunities to create jobs, support small and medium enterprises and strengthen communities. ACTS together with partners including the Institute for Economic Justice, the Africa Centre for Energy Policy, the Congress of South African Trade Unions, and the International Development Research Centre convened the JET National Policy Dialogue in Nairobi.

The dialogue began with opening and introductory remarks from ACTS Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Impact Director, Dr. Joel Onyango, and Institute for Economic Justice Researcher, Jezri Krinsky.



Participants engaged in discussions during the dialogue



JET Policy Dialogue panelists

The dialogue included a panel discussion, offering diverse perspectives from labour, women in renewable energy, government and human rights. Panelists included Eng. Samatr Osman from the Rural Electrification and Renewable Energy Corporation, Liz Mubari of Women in Renewable Energy, and Wycliffe Amakobe from the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions. The session was moderated by Charles G. Ofori from the Africa Centre for Energy Policy.

One key message from the discussion was the importance of gender equality in the energy sector.

“There is a need to remove barriers such as workplace harassment while supporting women-led initiatives and fostering respect through continuous sensitization.” -Liz Mubari

Research from Kenya, Ghana and South Africa shows that localized approaches are key to strengthening small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and promoting decent work. Building on this insight, participants co-created Kenya's energy future using interactive tools such as SEEDS, Three Horizons, World Café and collective choice exercises. These tools helped generate short-, medium-, and long-term pathways, including immediate interventions to improve energy access and strategies for renewable integration and local innovation. Roundtable discussions then translated these pathways into actionable policy recommendations.

The National Policy Dialogue marks a significant step in shaping a sustainable and inclusive energy transition in Kenya. Learn more here: [Navigating Kenya's Just Energy Transition](#)

Blue Empowerment Project at ASK Mombasa International Show 2025



ACTS participated in the Agricultural Society of Kenya (ASK) Mombasa International Show 2025, held at the Jomo Kenyatta Showgrounds in Nyali, Mkomani. This year's theme, "Promoting Climate Smart Agriculture and Trade Initiatives for Sustainable Economic Growth," provided the perfect platform to showcase the Blue Empowerment Project alongside partners Bahari CBO Network, Kenya Industrial Research and Development Institute, and Sea Moss Corporation.

Visitors to the ACTS booth explored a live demonstration aquarium featuring fingerlings from the Blue Empowerment Project, a low-carbon, gender-transformative initiative that seeks to empower coastal fisherwomen through climate-smart Integrated Multi-Trophic Aquaculture (IMTA). The booth also displayed a range of seaweed-based products developed by the Bahari CBO Network, including shampoo, lotion, shower gel, hair food, soap, and seaweed powder.

The project team engaged with Patrice Jilani, Assistant Director of Fisheries at the Kenya Fisheries Service, who learned more about the project's contribution to sustainable aquaculture and women's empowerment along the coast.

Anchored in Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Gender Equality) and aligned with Kenya Vision 2030, the Blue Empowerment Project strengthens fisherwomen's agency, access to critical resources, and institutional capacity. By integrating innovative aquaculture practices with economic empowerment, the project demonstrates how women-led initiatives can drive sustainable coastal development while building resilience against climate change impacts.

Through platforms like the ASK Mombasa International Show, ACTS continues to amplify the visibility of coastal women's contributions to the blue economy, influencing wider adoption of sustainable and inclusive aquaculture practices across the region.

Our work highlights women's empowerment and economic participation through our programmes and projects, for instance the Gender, Youth and Inclusive Development (GYID) and projects advancing women-led clean energy and e-mobility enterprises. ACTS has also developed tools and resources, including the "Toolkit on Gender and Social Inclusion in Green and Inclusive Energy," to guide policies and practices that promote gender equality and social inclusion.

Learn more about the project here: [Blue Empowerment Project](#)



ACTS Blue Empowerment Project at the ASK Mombasa International Show 2025

CJLF Relaunches the Calestous Juma Legacy Series with Innovation Showcase on Women’s and Maternal Health

Calestous Juma Legacy Series Kick Off with Prof. Moses Obimbo

ACTS in collaboration with the **Calestous Juma Legacy Foundation (CJLF)** relaunched the Calestous Juma Legacy Series on 23 September 2025, introducing a new format under the theme Innovation Showcase. The first session featured Prof. Obimbo Madadi as the keynote speaker, who presented on *“Challenges and Opportunities in Women’s and Maternal Health in Africa: Leveraging New Tools for Scale and Impact.”*

Prof. Obimbo, a respected scholar and clinician at the University of Nairobi’s Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, has extensive experience in maternal and newborn health. He is an awardee of a five-year Calestous Juma Science Leadership Fellowship from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, through which he will lead a coalition of researchers to study the vaginal microbiome and metabolites during pregnancy, aiming to identify biomarkers and interventions to improve pregnancy outcomes in Kenya. His work focuses on improving access to quality care and strengthening health systems to better serve women across Africa.

The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that 300,000 women die each year from pregnancy- or childbirth-related complications, with Africa accounting for 70% of these maternal deaths.. In his presentation, Prof. Obimbo highlighted the growing importance of technology and innovation in advancing maternal health.



Prof. Moses Obimbo presents the challenges and Opportunitites in women’s and maternal health

He spoke about the use of digital health tools, data systems and community-centered solutions to improve early diagnosis, enhance service delivery and reduce maternal mortality. He also emphasized the need for greater investment in research and policy frameworks that enable these innovations to reach more women, particularly in underserved areas. Through the Innovation Showcase, ACTS and CJLF continue to celebrate the vision of Prof. Calestous Juma, who championed science, technology, and innovation as key drivers of Africa’s progress.

The series will feature thought leaders and practitioners whose work reflects his commitment to practical, evidence-based solutions for sustainable development.

Watch the full session here: [Challenges and Opportunities in Women’s and Maternal Health in Africa: Leveraging New Tools for Scale and Impact](#)

gDIH Kenya and UN Partners Advance Digital Inclusion through DigiKen -Digital Platforms Kenya



DigiKen - Digital Platforms workshop and Training of Trainers participants

On 4th September 2025, The DigiKen-Digital Platforms Kenya project officially launched its mission to expand digital inclusion across the country. Partners and trainers met in Nairobi for three days for an inception workshop to build internal capacity and plan the rollout of a community-based digital literacy training.

DigiKen is a three-year initiative led by the UN Resident Coordinator in Kenya and the Ministry of ICT and the Digital Economy, in collaboration with UNESCO, UNCDF, UN Women, and UNEP. The programme focuses on strengthening digital skills, promoting green innovation, supporting gender-responsive entrepreneurship, and equipping civil servants with digital governance knowledge.

Organized by UN Women and UNEP with support from the African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) through the green and Digital Innovation Hub (gDIH) Kenya, the workshop brought together 45 trainers from 15 Digital Innovation Hubs. These hubs will serve as community learning centers, reaching women, youth, and marginalized groups with essential digital skills.

Participants left the training ready to implement DigiKen's curriculum across the country.

"This project will be very helpful for the people of Tana River County," said Khavai Agripina of Kijiji Connect ICT Hub. "It will empower women, youth, and persons with disabilities to explore new opportunities in the digital world."

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DigiKen represents a strong partnership between the United Nations and the Government of Kenya, supported through the Joint SDG Fund and international partners, working to ensure that no one is left behind in Kenya's digital transformation.

Read the Needs Assessment Report here: [Digital Innovation hubs under DigiKen Programme](#)

Second Annual Symposium of the Research and Innovation Management (RIM) Project



Second RIM Annual Symposium held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

The second annual symposium of the RIM Project took place in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, bringing together 17 national science-granting councils, policy-makers, and research leaders from across Africa under the umbrella of the Science Granting Councils Initiative (SGCI). Hosted by ACTS in partnership with Côte d'Ivoire's Fonds pour la Science, la Technologie et l'Innovation (FONSTI).

The theme of this year's symposium was "From Research to Impact: Driving Africa's Sustainability through Research-Policy-Innovation Synergies." The symposium aimed to showcase key findings from projects, strengthen collaboration and interdisciplinary research, promote best practices in open science and enhance the integration of research, innovation and policy for sustainable development.

Opening remarks by Dr. Yaya Sangaré of FONSTI, ACTS leadership and the Université Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar (UCAD) set the tone for a focused dialogue on aligning research funding and management with national development priorities.

Participating institutions showcased innovations, including a Nigerian solar-powered biosensor for clean water, AI-driven malaria diagnostics in Ghana, biomass energy solutions in Mozambique, and eco-friendly packaging from Ethiopia. The RIM Project emphasis on not only academic excellence but also the translation of knowledge into practical, development-oriented outcomes.

The symposium emphasized that stronger systems of research funding and management are essential if African science is to serve continental goals and contribute meaningfully to sustainable development.



Second RIM Annual Symposium

In this context, the network-building, peer learning and strategic alignment fostered in Abidjan mark important steps in strengthening the continent's research infrastructure.

The **RIM Project**, through its capacity-building efforts, continues to empower Science Granting Councils (SGCs) to effectively fund and manage research initiatives that are driving change in their countries.



RIM Annual Symposium guests

Rethinking Business Incubation for Clean Energy Entrepreneurs



EVI-SICEE High-level learning workshop panelists

ACTS in partnership with KCA University and the Kenya Climate Innovation Center (KCIC), on 28th August hosted a high-level Learning Workshop under the Evidence for informing optimization and scaling of youth and women-led clean energy enterprises (EVI-SICEE) Project. The workshop sought to explore Kenya's clean energy ecosystem, compare different incubation and financing approaches, identify opportunities for youth and women entrepreneurs to scale their solutions and share practical insights from the EVI-SICEE Masters Fellows.



Workshop participants question and answer session



ACTS Director of Research and Innovation Dr. Ann Kingiri gives the opening remarks

It also provided a platform for networking, knowledge exchange, and collaboration to drive innovation and sustainable growth in Kenya's clean energy sector. The day began with a brief introduction from Prof. Lucy Waruguru, who highlighted the critical role of SMEs in driving the economy through job creation, fostering innovation and championing as well as promoting sustainable solution.

Participants in the EVI-SICEE workshop identified gaps for clean energy startups, including limited access to finance, mentorship, and markets. Discussions highlighted opportunities in Kenya's growing green energy sector and the need for strong policies, industry partnerships, and private sector collaboration. In the Innovation Design and Structuring Lab, participants turned ideas into actionable strategies and learned the value of tailored mentorship, building networks for market access, and aligning business plans with emerging trends.

A key insight was that bridging these gaps, combined with collaboration between academia, industry, and policy actors, can accelerate innovation and scaling of clean energy solutions. The workshop concluded with reflections on supporting youth- and women-led ventures and nurturing SMEs to advance Kenya's energy sector.

Learn more about the project [here](#)

ACTS ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE INSTITUTE AT THE INDUSTRIAL SKILLS WEEK AFRICA (ISWA) 2025

Session 3

Harnessing Responsible AI – Sector-Specific Guidelines for Africa’s Inclusive Digital Industrial Future

**9 September, 2025
10:00 AM - 1:00 PM**



PANELIST

Winston Ojenge, PhD
Principal Research Fellow,
Head, The ACTS AI Institute

Organised by     



KAMPALA CAADP SERIES

Webinar Session III

From Challenges to Opportunities: Building Resilient Food Systems in Africa

Thursday, October 16, 2025 13:00 - 14:30 GMT

Online



SPEAKER

Dr. Catherine Kilelu
Director of Communications,
Outreach & Partnerships
Senior Research Fellow, ACTS

ResAKSS  



Tracy Odero: **Empowered to Create: Digital Skills Training 2025 Graduate Stories**



Dr. Boniface Muli: **Empowered to Create: Digital Skills Training 2025 Graduate Stories**



Blue Empowerment Project Documentary

News Articles



- Research Professional News: [African AI institute launched to drive innovation - Research Professional News](#)
- Research Beeline: [Africa Charts Ethical AI Future with Launch of Pan-African ACTS AI Institute](#)
- News Ghana: [Making the case for Africa's leadership in responsible AI development](#)
- Health Business Kenya: [Africa Takes Bold Strides Towards Ethical AI with Launch of ACTS AI Institute - Health Business](#)
- Tech Review Africa: [Second RIM Annual Symposium](#)
- RSIF-PASET/ICIPE-STIKS: [African Leaders Champion Home-Grown PhDs to Power Continent's Development](#)
- RSIF-PASET/ICIPE-STIKS: [Scientists and Policy Makers Chart the Future of Africa's Higher Education and Skills Development](#)
- Opinion-editorial: [Making the Case for Africa's Leadership in Responsible AI Development](#)
- [Harnessing responsible AI-sector-specific guidelines for Africa's inclusive digital industrial future](#)
- [Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique](#)
- [Science Granting Councils Initiative \(SGCI\): RIM Symposium Highlights](#)

Video Coverage

- CGTN: [AI in Africa: Opportunities and challenges](#)
- KBC Business: [New solar biomass powered system launched in Kitui County](#)
- KTN News: [Kitui farmers set to benefit from solar plant that dries crop](#)
- Ramogi TV: [EVI-SICEE Project](#)
- Research and Innovation Management: [Second Annual Symposium](#)





The Blue Empowerment Project team poses for a photo during the internal Gender and Advocacy Training held in Voi County, Kenya. The session was led by Bahari CBO's Gender Experts, Eva Komba and Kenneth Odary



DigiKen Digital Platforms Kenya - Hubs Capacity strengthening and planning workshop held in partnership with UNESCO, UNCDF, UNEP and UN Women.



ACTS at the Kenya National Research Festival, 2025

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