



Knowledge for Better Livelihoods

EDITOR'S NOTE

As the pages of 2025 unfold, this edition captures the energy of new ideas taking root across the continent. From cooling hubs in Kiambu to creative voices in science communication, we highlight local innovations, inclusive policy dialogues and the partnerships driving climate resilience and sustainable development.

In line with our commitment to strengthening the role of science, technology and innovation in Africa's development, we continue to build the capacity of institutions and inform policies that drive real change, anchored in the visionary legacy of our founder, **Prof. Calestous Juma**.

Inside, you will find stories on empowering coastal women in the blue economy, unlocking circular value in Kenya's dairy sector and deepening regional dialogue on higher education. We also explore how youth and women are shaping Africa's clean energy future, supported through practical training and policy engagement.

It has been a season of momentum, impact and a few full-circle moments.

Here is to what comes next.

Fiona Makayoto

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ACTS Hosts 34th Governing Council Session and Launches College of Scholars



ACTS Executive Director, Prof. Tom Ogada and Director of Communications and Partnerships, Dr. Catherine Kilelu with the Governing Council and College of Scholars

The African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) successfully held its 34th Governing Council Meeting and Research Seminar from January 30 -31, 2025, at Eka Hotel in Nairobi. The meeting brought together members of the ACTS Governing Council, staff, and key stakeholders to reflect on strategic priorities and future directions for science, technology, and innovation in Africa.

One of the major highlights of the day was the official launch of the ACTS College of Scholars. This new initiative brings together a distinguished group of thinkers and leaders in academia and research, who will play a vital role in shaping ACTS' intellectual agenda and influence across the continent.

Among the members of the College of Scholars are:

- Professor Shem Wandiga, a renowned scientist and founding director of ACTS.
- Professor Bitange Ndemo, Kenya's Ambassador to Belgium and long-standing champion of digital innovation.
- Dr. Veerle Vandeweerd, an expert in sustainable development and global partnerships.
- Martin Mbaya, a respected development strategist and grows enterprises with a focus on Public Policy, Digital Learning and Trade.
- Professor Mammo Muchie, a leading voice in innovation systems and pan-African thought leadership.

Speaking during the event, ACTS Executive Director Prof. Tom Ogada noted that the College of Scholars will



ACTS staff pose for a photo with the Governing Council and College of Scholars during the ACTS 34th Governing Council Session

serve as a beacon of excellence and critical thought, supporting ACTS in its mission to drive transformative and inclusive development through science, technology, and innovation. The meeting and seminar provided a platform for knowledge exchange, reflection on ongoing research projects and dialogue on how African institutions can remain at the forefront of addressing global and regional development challenges.

The official launch of the College of Scholars marks a new chapter in ACTS' journey as a leading policy think tank, committed to strengthening African research capacity and thought leadership for sustainable futures.

Learn more about ACTS leadership here: [ACTS Leadership](#)

Partnering for Inclusive Digital Transformation: ACTS Hosts UN DigiKen Team at Konza Technopolis



DIGIKEN at gDIH

The African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) and the green and Digital Innovation Hub (gDIH) recently welcomed the UN in Kenya DigiKen team to Konza Technopolis for strategic discussions on collaboration under the DigiKen programme. The visit, held on 5 February 2025, provided an opportunity for ACTS to present its work through the Green and Digital Innovation Hub (gDIH), an initiative that supports Kenya's transition to a digitally driven, sustainable economy.

A digitally driven, sustainable economy requires all actors in the ecosystem to contribute towards policy research and champion digital transformation and youth empowerment. The gDIH supports this by equipping young innovators with the skills, resources, and market access they need to grow viable digital solutions. As highlighted by Dr. Caroline Mbaya, gDIH Project Manager and Dr. Winston Ojenge, Head of the Africa Climate and AI Initiative (ACAI), there is a need to focus on practical capacity building and inclusive innovation.

Dr. Caroline Mbaya, speaking on the Hub's vision, noted:

“The hub is keen to support young innovators to tap into emerging opportunities in the digital ecosystem by matching them with the right financing channels, strengthening their capacity through need-based training and connecting them to the right markets.”

The DigiKen consortium, supported by the UN Joint SDG Fund, outlined its approach to strengthening Kenya's digital ecosystem. The programme focuses on improving access to capital for local entrepreneurs, enhancing digital skills among vulnerable groups, and building public sector capacity to lead inclusive and rights-based digital transformation efforts.

Prof. Tom Ogada, Executive Director at ACTS, emphasized the value of strategic collaboration:

“Partnerships are key to ensuring that digital innovations are not only cutting-edge but also inclusive and sustainable. We need solutions that align with Kenya's development priorities.”

Echoing this perspective, Irene Mwoga, UNEP Regional Coordinator for the Digital Transformation Programme – Africa, added:

“Innovation and digital transformation thrive on strong partnerships. The success of DigiKen is rooted in collaboration, leveraging the achievements and lessons from Konza and other key partners to drive impactful progress.”

The visit concluded with a tour of Konza Technopolis, reinforcing shared commitment to scaling locally led, sustainable digital solutions that empower youth, women, and underserved communities.

Read the full story: [Read More](#)

Strengthening Climate Leadership Across the Global South at the CLARE Capacity Strengthening Hub Seasonal School



CLARE Capacity Strengthening Hub Seasonal School 2025 participants with community members in Vingunguti, Tanzania

Climate change continues to affect the Global South in complex and deeply unequal ways, demanding thoughtful and collaborative responses. This is made possible when communities, researchers and decision-makers come together to examine the root causes of vulnerability and develop contextually relevant strategies. This formed the basis of the [CLARE Capacity Strengthening Hub \(CS Hub\)](#) Seasonal School on **Critical Thinking and Collaborative Research in Climate Resilience** held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from February 23 to March 1, 2025. The hub brought together Early Career Researchers from across CLARE projects, creating a dynamic space to strengthen critical thinking, build collaborative networks, and support professional growth within the climate resilience community.

The Seasonal School focused on the role of critical thinking in climate research, especially its contribution to inclusivity and real-world impact. Participants explored how research can meaningfully inform policymaking, drawing from case studies that illustrated the lived experiences of climate-vulnerable communities and the practical solutions emerging from these contexts.

Moderated by the team from PlanAdapt and ACTS, discussions also delved into the ethics of research and contextualizing data collection in climate adaptation.

“
We've normalized doing unethical research. The session has been a turnaround for me. When it comes to research, need to ask how the data was collected and whether ethics were truly considered -
Dr. Bessy Kathambi”

The group also embarked on a field visit to the Centre for Community Initiatives (CCI) in Vingunguti, an informal settlement in Dar es Salaam. Informal settlements can provide insights on the importance of inclusive stakeholder management while showcasing community-led projects and their relevance to climate adaptation research.

Another area of focus was effective research communication and knowledge brokering. Without these, researchers risk their work being overlooked, misunderstood or having little real-world impact. The sessions explored how researchers can better communicate their work, using storytelling and visualization to engage broader audiences, and build interdisciplinary teams.

Hosted by [PlanAdapt](#) and the ACTS, the Hub continues to play a vital role in supporting CLARE's CS agenda by fostering knowledge exchange, leadership, and collaboration across the Global South.

Advancing Climate Adaptation and Celebrating Sustainability Champions Across Africa



APA Sustainability Fellows Graduation and Policy Workshop

On 6 March 2025, the African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) hosted a dual event at Eka Hotel, Nairobi in collaboration with [The Adaptation Research Alliance \(ARA\)](#) - A Regional Policy Workshop and the [ACTS Pathways Academy \(APA\)](#) Sustainability Fellows Graduation Ceremony.

The ARA Policy Workshop consisted of around climate finance mechanisms, including the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) and the New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance (NCQG). GGA aims to strengthen climate resilience and reduce vulnerability worldwide, while the NCQG focuses on setting a new target for climate funding to support developing countries beyond 2025. Both are key to advancing global climate action under the Paris Agreement.

Alongside the workshop, the graduation of the APA Sustainability Fellows marked a moment of celebration and reflection after months of going through an intense fellowship programme. The fellows showcased their research projects, shared their experiences and demonstrated the impact of their work on sustainability and policy advocacy.

The day featured contributions from Joan Andega serving as moderator, Dr. Ann Kingiri, Director of Research and Innovation at ACTS, and Dr. Joel Onyango, Director of Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Impact. A keynote address was delivered by Dr. Bessy Kathambi, followed by a presentation on Climate Adaptation Finance by Kelvin Muli, which added depth to the policy discourse.



TLS Knowledge Synthesis and ARA Advocacy Symposium

Highlights from the day included:

- Interactive policy dialogues on adaptation finance and governance.
- Research exhibitions from APA Fellows.
- Impact stories on sustainability leadership across Africa.
- Meaningful networking between fellows, policymakers, and technical experts.

The momentum continued from 10 – 12 March 2025, as the Tracking, Learning and Sharing (TLS) Knowledge Synthesis and ARA Advocacy Symposium took place in Nairobi. Hosted by [Transitions Research](#) and ACTS, the event brought together partners from across Africa to collectively explore solutions for climate adaptation grounded in locally led approaches.

Over three days, participants examined key themes such as climate and health, human settlements, food security, and water resilience. The conversations emphasized real-world experiences, innovations in climate-smart agriculture, improved water governance, and the importance of inclusive community-led adaptation.

There is a need to strengthen knowledge-sharing systems, scale proven local strategies and ensure communities are not only engaged but empowered to lead change. As one of the key takeaways, the symposium reaffirmed that Africa's climate solutions must be context-specific, equity-driven and rooted in trust and collaboration.

As the continent prepares for COP30 and beyond, the work of ACTS, ARA, and their partners is transforming climate dialogue into sustained and actionable impact.

Driving Change: Women Breaking Barriers in Kenya's E-Mobility Sector

On 11 March 2025, Strathmore University Business School hosted a dynamic workshop that brought together government representatives, entrepreneurs, and industry leaders to spotlight the role of women in Kenya's fast-growing electric mobility sector.

The workshop is part of a 24-month research project titled "The Transformative Power of Electric Mobility Technology in Kenya: Understanding and Empowering Women Entrepreneurs." Led by ACTS in partnership with Coventry University and the Kenya Climate Innovation Centre (KCIC), the project is supported by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the British Council, and the UK Department for Science, Innovation, and Technology.

Discussions focused on how women are stepping into new roles across the e-mobility value chain as delivery riders, mechanics and small business owners despite the sector being historically male-dominated. Several participants shared personal stories of transition, such as moving from street vending and public mini-bus staff to pursue better livelihoods through e-mobility. While challenges persist, including limited financing, safety concerns, and workplace bias, the event highlighted stories of resilience and determination. Women are not only adapting to new technologies but are also creating pathways for others to follow.

Key takeaways from the workshop included targeted skills development programs, inclusive financial models, safer working environments, and the need for strong mentorship networks to support women's increased participation and leadership in the sector. The workshop marked an important step toward shaping a more inclusive and gender-responsive e-mobility ecosystem in Kenya, one where women are not just included but actively leading innovation and change.



Transformative Power of Electric Mobility Technology in Kenya Workshop in partnership with Coventry University and the Kenya Climate Innovation Centre (KCIC)

Clean Energy Workshop Drives Gender and Youth Inclusion in Africa



Evidence For Informing Optimization and Scaling of Youth and Women-Led Clean Energy Enterprises (EVI-SICEE) Workshop

A regional workshop held at the ICIPE campus in Nairobi brought together over 60 participants, including 35 women, to accelerate the growth of youth- and women-led clean energy enterprises. Organized by the ACTS under the EVI-SICEE project, the event featured stakeholders from Kenya, Uganda, Malawi, and South Africa.

The workshop addressed challenges limiting access to finance, training, and markets for young people and women in the sector. Kenya's draft Energy Policy was discussed as a key opportunity to promote inclusive energy systems, with a focus on clean cooking, bioenergy, and electric mobility.

Updates from partner countries highlighted progress in research, policy engagement, and enterprise development. A survey across 32 Kenyan counties found most women and youth involved in non-technical roles like sales and distribution, yet only 29 percent had received business support.

Recommendations included expanding access to training and finance, simplifying regulations, and strengthening mentorship and market links. The event closed with a call for continued collaboration to build an inclusive clean energy ecosystem across the region.

ACTS at the Evi4Dev Conference



ACTS at the Evi4Dev 2025 Conference

The African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) participated in the Evidence for Development Conference (Evi4Dev2025) in Nairobi, Kenya from May 6 - May 8, 2025. The conference brought together an influential network of leaders from government, academia, civil society, the private sector and the media to discuss how science, technology, and innovation, combined with evidence-informed policymaking, can drive Africa's progress in line with the African Union's Agenda 2063.

The conference presented a unique opportunity for ACTS to highlight its incredible work through its programmatic areas: Digital Economies, now ACTS AI Institute, Gender, Youth and Inclusive Development, Climate Resilience, Agriculture and Food Nutrition Security and Science, Technology and Innovation Knowledge Society. Sessions highlighted various challenges the continent is facing and solutions the programmes are implementing to address these challenges.

Highlights: Daniel Musyoka demonstrated how innovative cold chain solutions are reducing post-harvest losses and strengthening smallholder value chains. His presentation showed how these systems are helping farmers maintain the quality of their produce and gain better access to local and regional markets.

Dr. Winston Ojenge led a thought-provoking discussion on artificial intelligence policy in Africa. The session explored key issues such as ethics, regulation and preparing the workforce for a future shaped by digital technologies. It emphasized the importance of building policies and frameworks that ensure AI solutions reflect Africa's unique needs and values.

In the area of clean energy and innovation, Dr. Ann Kingiri spoke about the continent's emerging innovation ecosystems. She highlighted models led by young entrepreneurs and women, showcasing how they are creating affordable and sustainable energy solutions that contribute to both economic growth and climate resilience.

The conversation on research commercialization was shaped by Dr. Agnes Lutomiah, who convened a panel that examined the role of public and private sector collaboration in turning research outputs into products and services that meet real-world needs. The discussion reinforced the value of creating strong partnerships that link scientific research with business development.

Finally, Dr. Caroline Mbayi moderated an engaging session on the future of work, which focused on creating inclusive employment opportunities for youth, women, and workers in the informal sector. The dialogue called for policies and programs that equip young people with digital and entrepreneurial skills while ensuring fair access to emerging job markets.

ACTS continues to ensure that science and evidence-based policymaking remain central to the continent's economic, social, and environmental transformation. Read more [here](#)



ACTS Programmes at the Evi4Dev 2025 Conference

Women Lead the Way in Strengthening Kenya's Blue Economy



Blue Empowerment Project Policy Dialogue, Kwale County

From business skills training to shaping county policies, women in Kenya's coastal regions are stepping up as key players in the growth of the blue economy. Through recent engagements in Mombasa, Kwale, and Kilifi, the Blue Empowerment Project has supported their leadership by addressing challenges in access to finance, representation, and policy participation. Learn more about the [Blue Empowerment Project](#).

Building Stronger SACCOs for Coastal Women

From 24 to 27 March 2025, women from Kilifi and Kwale gathered in Mombasa for a training focused on strengthening SACCO governance, resource mobilization, and business planning.

The sessions equipped participants with practical skills to manage cooperatives, attract investment, and grow their enterprises within the blue economy. Many of these women already play vital roles in fisheries and trade, and the training aimed to help them formalize and expand their impact.



BE Consortium Partner, Kenyatta University, Facilitating a Session during the Women-led SACCOs Training

Shaping Inclusive Blue Economy Policies

In May, the project held policy dialogues in Kwale and Kilifi counties to strengthen women and youth participation in fisheries and aquaculture decision-making. Stakeholders discussed how gender-responsive policies can improve access to resources, markets, and leadership opportunities.

In Kilifi, participants emphasized the role of women in food production and community resilience. As Cyrilus Mwangome, Director of Gender and Youth Affairs, stated:

"We know women are at the heart of food security, and food security is a key part of the blue economy. This dialogue has come at a very critical time."



BE Policy Dialogue Kilifi County

Solar-Biomass Dryer Launch to Strengthen Agribusiness and Livelihoods in Kitui



Hybrid Solar and Biomass Powered Dryer Launch in Kitui County



Participants Showcase Dried Products during the Hybrid Solar and Biomass Powered Dryer Launch in Kitui County

On 30 June 2025, a new hybrid solar and biomass-powered dryer was commissioned in Kitui County through a partnership between Vine Fruits and Vegetables Kenya Ltd, the African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS), and Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT). The initiative is part of the project Scaling Up Solar Drying to Reduce Post-Harvest Losses in Kenya: Opportunities for Inclusive Climate Action Enterprises.

The dryer offers an efficient, off-grid solution for preserving crops such as mangoes, vegetables and chillies. Its launch addresses a major challenge faced by smallholder farmers—losses that occur after harvesting due to poor storage and drying infrastructure. By extending shelf life and maintaining quality, the facility allows farmers and agribusinesses to supply larger markets, reduce waste, and increase profitability.

For rural entrepreneurs, this development opens the door to more stable income more stable income and better integration to value chains. Reliable drying technology makes it possible to produce consistent, high-quality dried products suitable for both local consumption and export. The hybrid design ensures continuous operation by combining solar and biomass energy, which is particularly important in areas with variable sunlight or limited access to electricity.

In addition to being a processing unit, the facility will also serve as a learning centre, offering training for youth in agribusiness, food processing, and sustainable farming practices.

This focus on capacity building supports employment creation and economic development in semi-arid regions such as Kitui, where opportunities for young people remain limited.

At the national level, this initiative contributes to efforts to strengthen Kenya's food systems by reducing agricultural losses and encouraging value addition. It supports government priorities around climate resilience, local manufacturing, and rural enterprise development. The dryer also reflects regional ambitions across Africa to improve food security, boost intra-African trade in agricultural goods, and promote environmentally responsible innovation.

With the growing need to improve food availability and build climate-resilient supply chains, this model presents a practical step forward. It brings together innovation, enterprise, and knowledge-sharing to ensure more food reaches the market and fewer resources go to waste.

Read the full story [here](#).

Advancing Sustainable and Inclusive Cooling and Cold Chain in Kenya

The African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS), in collaboration with the African Centre for Sustainable Cooling (ACES) and the Clean Cooling Network has continued its efforts to contribute to climate and ozone protection through sustainable cooling solutions under a flagship project on sustainable cooling and cold chain.

Below are key activities implemented between March and June 2025:

Empowering Farmers in Lari through Cold Chain Innovation

On 25 March 2025, ACTS launched Kenya's first "Try Before You Buy" sustainable cooling and cold chain unit in Kinale, Lari Sub-County, Kiambu. The initiative, developed in partnership with the [Clean Cooling Network](#) and the Lari Horticultural Farmers' Cooperative Society, aims to reduce postharvest losses and enhance the quality and marketability of farm produce. The launch was officiated by David Kuria, Executive Committee Member for Agriculture in Kiambu County, alongside Prof. Tom Ogada, ACTS Executive Director. The first shipment of produce was dispatched to Tawi Fresh Kenya Limited, marking a milestone in the transition to market-led, climate-smart food systems.



"Try Before You Buy" Sustainable Cooling and Cold Chain Unit Launch

Strengthening Cold Chain Capacity through Training

From 7 to 11 April 2025, ACTS hosted the third cohort of trainees of the Cold Chain Foundation Course in Machakos County. The training brought together early-career professionals and practitioners from the food and pharmaceutical sectors to deepen their knowledge of refrigeration technologies, environmental impacts, and supply chain logistics. The course successfully combined technical learning with practical exposure to real-world cold chain systems. Participants took part in group exercises, field visits to the Kinale Aggregation Centre and Tawi Fresh packhouse and pitched cold chain business solutions.



Cold Chain Foundation Course Cohort III

Visit to Greenspoon Packhouse

On 28 May 2025, lead farmers from Lari Horticultural Cooperative Society visited Greenspoon Packhouse to learn more about product handling, food safety, and cold chain operations. The visit covered every stage of the value chain, from precooling and packaging to delivery, reinforcing the importance of quality control and market alignment. The session equipped farmers with insights into how proper handling can boost market value and reduce losses.



Greenspoon Packhouse Visit

UK Delegation Assesses Progress Sustainable Cold Chain project



The UK DEFRA delegation, alongside ACTS Staff at Konza Technopolis

A high-level delegation from the United Kingdom’s Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) visited the African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) in Nairobi, Kenya from 16 - 17 June 2025. to gain firsthand insight into the strides being made under the Sustainable Cold Chain project.

The delegation comprised Kathryn Muir, Esme Gausson, and Sabrina Keys, who were joined by Sonja Mettenleiter from the Clean Cooling Network. The ACTS team, led by Dr. Catherine Kilelu, hosted the visitors and facilitated discussions with key county officials and local stakeholders.

During the visit, the delegation met with David Kuria, Executive Committee Member for Agriculture, Water, Livestock, and Irrigation in Kiambu County. Their discussions focused on the ongoing efforts to improve cold chain infrastructure and enhance market opportunities for smallholder farmers. The ‘Try Before You Buy’ Cooling Hub project has played a key role in providing farmers with affordable access to cooling solutions, enabling them to preserve the quality of their produce and reduce post-harvest losses.



H.E. David Kuria hosts the delegation in Kiambu County



The delegation Visits Kinale

The delegation also visited Kinale in Lari sub-county, where they toured the Cooling Hub, a state-of-the-art facility designed to serve the needs of local horticultural producers. To get a closer look at the impact on the ground, the visitors explored two cooperative members farms. These visits provided an opportunity to see how improved access to cooling technology is enabling farmers to enhance the quality of their produce and secure better prices in the market. The delegation observed how such solutions are not only reducing food loss but also contributing to higher incomes through better market access enabled by collective action of the co-operative.

The visit concluded with a tour of the TAWI Packhouse in Limuru, one of the cooperative’s key produce buyers. At the packhouse, the delegation experienced the buyer’s perspective and learned about the critical role that cold chain systems play in ensuring market access, product quality and seamless supply to consumers.

Read more here: [Clean Cooling News](#)

Reflections on the Intersection of Ethics, Regulation, and Responsible AI Development in Africa

On 6th of May, 2025, the ACTS Artificial Intelligence Institute (ACAI) hosted a dialogue on the sidelines of the Evidence for Development (Evi4Dev) Conference, convened by African Institute for Development Policy, AUDA-NEPAD, and Science for Africa Foundation. Themed “Optimising the Role of Data, Evidence, and Innovations in Africa’s Efforts to Create Wealth, Empower Citizens, and Foster Responsive Governance”, the conference brought together Africa’s leading minds to chart a path forward through science, technology, and innovation (STI). The side session spotlighted a paradox in Africa’s AI development in that while AI innovation is thriving, actual implementation and scaling remain limited.

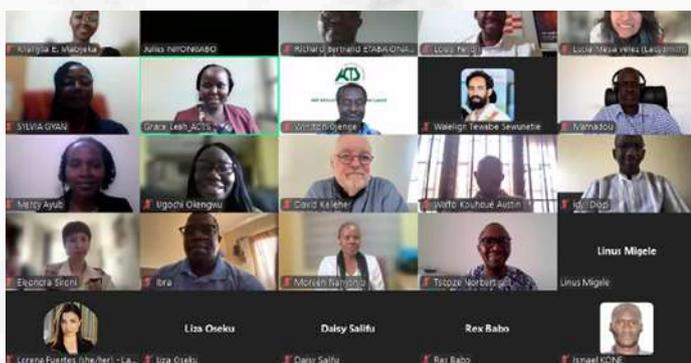


ACTS AI Institute Dialogue

Experts, including policymakers, researchers, civil society, and innovators called for a deliberate balance between ethics, regulation, and innovation to unlock AI’s transformative potential across economies and public services. The session emphasised the risks of unregulated AI, such as safety failures, and stressed the importance of inclusive design, especially for rural users and women. With fragmented regulatory frameworks across the continent, stronger collaborations between governments, academia, and industry were urged to promote responsible, context-specific AI governance rooted in African values, ethics, and cultural authenticity.

For more information, visit: [Reflections on the Intersection of Ethics, Regulation, and Responsible AI Development in Africa](#)

Mentorship Program on Scaling Responsible Artificial Intelligence Solutions



ACTS AI Institute Mentorship Programme

The program seeks to develop the capacity of AI innovators in Africa to not only scale their solutions but do so ethically.

Through this program, expert mentors guide innovators on responsible AI development and how it connects to human rights, and the principles of gender equality, diversity, and inclusivity. The program will also explore strategies for scaling AI responsibly and gain access to essential responsible AI toolkits. This program adopts a case-based learning approach, where real AI solutions developed by participating teams will be used as study cases to provide hands-on learning. Throughout the mentorship period, AI teams will engage in regular one-on-one mentorship sessions, while mentors will also hold monthly meetings to exchange insights and address challenges. For more information, visit [AI4D innovation pillar project SRAIS mentorship](#)

In April 2025, ACTS in collaboration with Gender at Work, Ladysmith Collection and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) through the Artificial Intelligence for Development Africa Program kicked off the Scaling Responsible Artificial Intelligence Solutions (SRAIS) mentorship program.

Unlocking Value in Kenya's Dairy Sector Through Circular Economy



VALORISE Project Workshop

The VALORISE project implemented by ACTS and its consortium partners recently convened two strategic workshops in Nairobi focused on advancing circular economy practices within Kenya's dairy industry. These forums brought together a wide range of stakeholders to explore how dairy processing by-products, particularly whey, can be transformed into valuable products that reduce waste, add value and support sustainable development. Kenya currently generates over 9,000 metric tons of whey each day, most of which remains underutilized.

On 12 March 2025, the team held a Scenario Workshop at Jacaranda Hotel, Nairobi. Centered on the theme "Building Pathways for Valorisation in Dairy Processing". The session explored opportunities to integrate circular strategies into dairy production and processing. Participants discussed how to repurpose sidestreams such as whey into livestock feed, health supplements, and other marketable goods, aligning with the Kenya Dairy Industry Sustainability Roadmap 2023–2033.

This was followed by a high-level stakeholder forum at EKA Hotel in June 2025 themed "Harnessing the Circular Economy in Food Processing - Engaging and Learning from Kenya's Dairy Industry". Over 60 representatives from government, research institutions, farmer cooperatives, the private sector, and development organizations came together to share experiences and identify practical pathways for valorisation in the dairy sector.

Key highlights from the events included:

- Demonstrations and tastings of whey-based products by Arla Foods Ingredients (Denmark) and PROMACO EAST AFRICA (Kenya)
- Presentations on business models, cost-benefit insights, and policy recommendations
- Group dialogues focused on scaling local innovations and reducing waste in the dairy value chain, consumer perception, research and development in lysin extraction from whey for animal feed supplementation.



VALORISE Project Stakeholder Forum

The workshops emphasised the potential of turning this resource into economic and nutritional value, while strengthening food system resilience and creating new opportunities for rural entrepreneurs.

[Learn more about the Project Here](#)

Advancing Higher Education and Skills Development in Africa



Strengthening Doctoral Training, Research Impact and skills Development in Kenya and Ethiopia.

In June 2025, the African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) participated in two high-level policy dialogues focused on strengthening doctoral training, research impact, and skills development in Kenya and Ethiopia.

On 12 June, stakeholders gathered in Naivasha, Kenya under the theme “Bridging Policy and Practice: A Strategic Approach for Higher Education and Skills Development in Kenya.” The event was convened by the PASET Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund (RSIF) and brought together policymakers, academics, and development partners to discuss how PhD training can better align with national development priorities.

Dr. Agnes Lutomiah, Head of ACTS’ Science, Technology and Innovation Knowledge in Society (STIKS) program, presented on “Pathways to Strengthen PhD Training and Postgraduate Impact,” highlighting the importance of institutional support, collaboration, and enabling environments. ACTS Executive Director Prof. Tom Ogada joined a panel discussion on aligning research with Kenya’s development agenda. The session called for stronger national collaboration, better integration of research into policy, and more targeted support for postgraduate training.

Two weeks later, on 26 June in Addis Ababa, ACTS joined a similar forum in Ethiopia under the theme “Bridging Policy and Practice: Advancing Higher Education, Research, and Innovation for Ethiopia’s Transformation.”



Strengthening Doctoral Training, Research Impact and Skills Development in Kenya and Ethiopia.

The dialogue was informed by findings from a multi-country study on doctoral and postdoctoral training in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Rwanda conducted by ACTS.

Stakeholders in Addis Ababa explored how Ethiopia’s PhD training and innovation systems can be reoriented to better support national priorities. Participants reflected on the need for tailored policies, strong research institutions, and partnerships that bridge academic training with real-world challenges.

Both dialogues reaffirmed ACTS’ commitment to evidence-informed policy and regional collaboration in transforming higher education across Africa.

[Learn More Here](#)

Transforming Science Communication Across Africa



On June 5th, 2025, the African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS), through its Pathways Academy, hosted a vibrant session at the SRI Africa Satellite Event 2025 held at the University of Nairobi. The session, organised in collaboration with the Transformations Community, focused on alternative science communication as a critical tool in sustainability and research engagement.

This interactive workshop brought together researchers, communicators, and practitioners to explore creative ways of making science more accessible and relatable. Participants engaged with skits, poetry, infographics, short videos, and social media to translate research into compelling stories that resonate with diverse audiences. The session featured expert facilitators including Dr. Joel Onyango, Peter Ongalo, Mutanu Gitari, Norah Ouma, and Betty Mohe Ndiguitha.

Discussions centred on lived experiences in science communication, storytelling strategies, and lessons from knowledge brokerage. It provided early-career researchers and professionals with hands-on skills in presenting complex ideas in ways that invite public interest and action.

During the same session, ACTS officially launched the ASk Network—a community dedicated to advancing alternative science communication across Africa. The ASk Network connects students, early-career researchers, seasoned academics, creatives and science-policy practitioners committed to more inclusive and innovative ways of engaging with science.

This new initiative reflects ACTS' broader commitment to rethinking how knowledge is shared, interpreted, and used to shape sustainable futures in Africa and beyond.

[Join the Network Here](#)



ACTS Pathways Academy at the SRI Satellite Event

New AfricaLics 2025 Visiting Fellowship Program Cohort

Five PhD students - Two female and three male - have been selected to take part in this year's AfricaLics 2025 Visiting Fellowship Programme (VFP). The successful candidates were selected from a pool of 84 applicants by a distinguished committee comprising of members of the AfricaLics Scientific Board and the Secretariat. The 2025 cohort represent a diverse range of African countries (Ethiopia, Nigeria, Tanzania and Benin).

The 2025 cohort will get the opportunity to participate in a one-year fellowship programme combining online pre- and post-activities with a study period of 3 months at the University of Johannesburg, South Africa.

Mentoring will be provided by a range of African and international scholars in innovation and development studies who are research active in AfricaLics and Globelics.

The aim of the programme and the scholarships is to help African PhD students working in the field of innovation and development to strengthen their academic/research qualifications, improve the quality of their dissertations and prepare for a career in innovation and development either within academia or outside (e.g. in the private sector or in government/policy making).

The programme does this by increasing the mobility and level of exposure of the PhD students to international knowledge in the field of innovation and development. It forms part of the efforts by AfricaLics to contribute to the development of a vibrant research community in Africa in this emerging and highly multidisciplinary field.

During phase I and II of the Research Capacity Development Programme (2011-16 and 2017-22 respectively), the visiting fellows had the opportunity to visit Aalborg University as part of the programme. However, from 2022, the VFP fellows have been hosted by African universities.

The Swedish International Development Agency, Sida (Stockholm), has so far provided funding for the visiting scholarships as part of the project Enhancing research capacity on Innovation and Development in Africa.

The AfricaLics secretariat (hosted by ACTS) is responsible for the project with the AfricaLics Scientific Board providing advice on scientific matters and issues of strategic importance.

Meet the Fellows



Mercy Jacobs Sinmidede
University of Ilorin, Nigeria
PhD Research Title

Impact of Index-Insurance and Micro-Credit on Maize Productivity among Smallholder Farmers in North Central Nigeria



Aline Mutabazi
University of Rwanda
PhD Research Title

Essay on multifaceted challenges for sustainable development in Sub-Saharan Africa.



Dismas Jerome Kimaro
Nelson Mandela African Institute of Science and Technology, Tanzania
PhD Research Title

Market readiness for the adoption of improved solar-Biogas hybrid dryer for post-harvest management of fruits and vegetables



Esdras Obossou Abrewa
National Agriculture University of Benin
PhD Research Title

Effectiveness of climate adaptation in west African Vegetables Farming Systems.



Mohammed Hassen Toyib
Addis Ababa University/ College of Business and Economics, Ethiopia
PhD Research Title

Effect of robotization on Employment, Trade and Foreign Direct Investment in Africa

ACTS Launches AI Institute to Drive an African-Centered Digital Future

The African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) has officially unveiled the ACTS Artificial Intelligence Institute (ACAII) an institute dedicated to advancing responsible and inclusive artificial intelligence (AI) in Africa. The virtual launch, held on July 15, 2025, under the theme “*Charting the Path Towards an African-Centered AI Future*,” marked a major step in aligning AI development with Africa’s priorities as outlined in the AU Digital Transformation Strategy and Agenda 2063.

The Institute will focus on five pillars: responsible AI solutions, policy and governance, AI and jobs, capacity building, and data science, targeting key sectors such as agriculture, healthcare, education, and climate resilience.

The launch brought together development partners, policymakers, and prominent experts shaping the future of AI in Africa and internationally. Among them was Dr. Devotha Nyambo, an alumna and network member of the Artificial Intelligence for Development in Africa Scholarship Programme (AI4D Africa) implemented between 2021 and 2024, who commended the program and acknowledged the significant progress made by the institution leading to the establishment of the AI Institute.

Key Messages from the Launch

- Kathryn Toure (IDRC) praised the AI4D Scholarship Program for bridging AI gaps and empowering innovators from marginalized communities.
- Dr. Laurent Bocheureau (EU) highlighted the EU-AU collaboration and Africa Initiative III, with €500 million funding, including a call for Generative AI for Africa.
- Amb. Prof. Bitange Ndemo urged investment in local infrastructure and AI capacity building to drive economic transformation.
- Gillian Dowie (IDRC) emphasized the need for responsible policies and inclusive opportunities for Africa’s youth.
- Prof. Brando Okolo (AUDA-NEPAD) stressed integrating African languages and cultural contexts into AI innovation.
- Prof. Divine Fuh (HUMA) described the Institute as an “AI laboratory” to address Africa-centered challenges.

ACTS Executive Director, Prof. Tom Ogada and Dr. Winston Ojenge (ACAII) reiterated the Institute’s mission to develop ethical AI tools and frameworks tailored to African realities.

Learn more about the launch [here](#).



ACTS in Rwanda with NCST, Exploring Innovative Cricket Farming at Nutrifarm Ltd. as Part of MEL Activities Under the Research and Innovation Management Project.



The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Visits ACTS. From Left to Right: Dr. Agnes Lutomiah, Prof. Tom Ogada, Dr. Ellie Osir, Prof. Rebecca Hanlim



June 26th, 2025: YÜKSEL Farm Hosts LHCS Lead Farmers for Learning on Sustainable Production



The AI Challenge Program, led by the African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) and The Alan Turing Institute Policy Priority Inference (PPI) Workshop



The Green and Digital Innovation Hub (GDIH) in collaboration with Kenya Industrial Research and Development Institute (KIRDI): Innovator Mapping and Training Workshop in Murang'a County



UK-Kenya AI Challenge Fund Mid - Term Review Workshop in Partnership KICTANET. Learn more [Here](#)



Knowledge Transfer Experts from Innovate UK Business Connect Joel Ferguson and Geraint Jones Visit ACTS





Dr. Catherine Kilelu,
Director of Communication, Outreach & Partnership at ACTS

Africa-EU Bioeconomy Policy Dialogue

Theme: "Building a robust bioeconomy in Africa through policy reforms to drive scaling of biobased technologies and solutions"

On 6–7 May 2025, Dr. Catherine Kilelu represented ACTS at the UN STI Forum in New York and the Africa-EU bioeconomy dialogue in Brussels, sharing insights on sustainable agrifood systems and biobased innovations.

[Read more here.](#)

Workshops/Webinars/Conferences



ACTS is hosting a session on Climate finance at THE GLOBAL GOBESHONA CONFERENCE 5

African Voices on Climate Adaptation Policies and Challenges: Driving African Agency in the Global Goal on Adaptation and the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG).

Key Messages

- Translate GGA and NCQG into meaningful local actions
- Inclusive finance systems that reflect local knowledge, track real impacts, and drive climate justice.
- Unlocking climate finance for the most vulnerable communities.
- Drive a collective voice for COP30 negotiations

29th April 2025
3.00pm to 4.30pm E.A.T

Evidence-Driven Insights from ACTS Advocacy Projects
Interactive Experience Sharing
Thematic Breakout Discussions

Scan to Register

ACTS, ICCCAD, GOBESHONA Global Conference, Africa Center for Technology Studies



POWERING CHANGE: WOMEN, YOUTH, AND THE CLEAN ENERGY REVOLUTION

Speaker
Dr. Ann Kingiri

Women and youth evidence-based solutions from Africa

Date: 13 March, 2025
Time: 11:30am - 1:00pm
In-person event at UNCSW 2025



LIVE WEBINAR

NAVIGATING THE PATENT REGISTRATION PROCESS FOR MSMEs AND INNOVATORS: LESSONS FROM AN EXPERIENCED INNOVATOR

Wednesday, 19 March 2025
2:00 pm - 3:00 pm EAT

Innovators face various challenges when navigating the patent registration process e.g. Lengthy and complex application processes, high costs, potential for patent rejection, lack of understanding of intellectual property laws, difficulty in drafting a strong patent application, and concerns about publicly disclosing their innovations too early, especially in competitive markets. Another major challenge is the lengthy examination process as it can delay the commercialization of an invention and leave the innovator vulnerable to competition. Such challenges make it important for innovators to learn from an experienced innovator who has navigated the patent system. This webinar will provide practical insights to innovators, help demystify the complex procedures and share real-life strategies for navigating the Patent landscape.

Speaker: Dr. Winston Ojenge
Head: ACTS AI Institute (ACAII)

Moderator: Dr. Carabine Mwaeni
Lead: Gender Youth & Inclusive Development Programme: ACTS

Co-Moderator: Clinton Mwaeni
IP Research Specialist: ACTS

Register Here

www.gdih.org

German Cooperation, European Union, giz, DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION CENTER KENYA, GDih

T20 Side Event www.acts-net.org

Towards Just, Equitable Data and AI Governance in Africa

Wednesday 18, June 2025
Johannesburg, South Africa

SPEAKER
Dr Winston Ojenge
Principal Research Fellow and the Head of the ACTS AI Institute, ACTS



ACTS, RESEARCH ICT AFRICA, D4D.net, ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR DEVELOPMENT AFRICA

Visit our YouTube Channel to Watch Recordings of our Webinars, Conferences and Testimonials:

[African Centre for Technology Studies YouTube Channel](#)

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ACTS will be participating in the upcoming Kenya National Research Festival 2025. The festival seeks to foster collaboration between researchers, producers, policymakers, industry leaders and communities to drive impactful solutions in sustainable agriculture and food security.

It will provide a dynamic platform to showcase cutting-edge research, emerging technologies, and innovative practices that can be scaled to enhance community resilience, food systems, and economic empowerment across Kenya.

For more details visit:

[Kenya National Research Festival 2025](#)

2

11th AfricaLics PhD Academy on Innovation and Competence Building Systems

Date: 22 - 23 July 2025

3

Research and Innovation Management (RIM) Project Second Annual Symposium

Date: 28 - 30 July 2025

[Watch the Highlights of the First RIM Annual Symposium](#)

4

AI4D Writeshop Events

July 17 and October 6 - 10

New Publications

1. Policy Brief: [Global Goal on Adaptation and Key Recommendations for Africa Ahead of CoP 30](#)
2. Brief: [Unlocking Women and Youth Clean Energy Entrepreneurship Potential through an Enabling Environment - Lessons from Kenya](#).
3. Brief: [Enhancing Skills and Capacities for Women and Youth Clean Energy Enterprises: Lessons from Kenya](#)

ACTS in the Media

1. Clean Energy and CoP 30 featuring ACTS Pathways Academy Alumni: [From dust to fuel: How lecturer is turning charcoal waste into clean cooking energy](#)
2. ACTS at the Evi4Dev Conference: [Africa rallies for evidence-based development as leaders convene in Nairobi](#)
3. ACTS at the Evi4Dev Conference: [Kenya hosts landmark Evidence Conference as Africa rallies behind Science, Innovation](#)
4. Solar Bio-Mass Dryer Launch: [New Hybrid Dryer Commissioned to Transform Value Addition in Kitui](#)



Visit: [African Centre for Technology Studies \(ACTS\)](#) to read new blog posts and view and download other publications and resources!

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