

Pioneering innovation and progress in Africa

Through ground-breaking research, transformative capacity building and visionary policy advisory in the realm of science, technology, and innovation (STI), the African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS) takes great pride in showcasing the continent's potential towards a brighter and sustainable future

Welcome to the latest edition of the ACTS Newsletter!

As a beacon of innovation and knowledge in Africa, ACTS takes immense pride in presenting a collection of inspiring stories that exemplify relentless pursuit of knowledge underpinned by science technology and innovation (STI). Join us in this exhilarating journey as we champion research and application of STI in Africa, in a way that illuminates a brighter path towards a more prosperous continent.

First, we feature a groundbreaking initiative that will reshape professional and executive training in Africa. The ACTS Pathways Academy (APA) offers cutting-edge programs to equip professionals with the skills and knowledge to thrive in the modern business landscape.

Meanwhile, find out how inclusive business models are transforming the lives of coastal women in Kenya and why Sida has granted additional funds to boost the Visiting Fellowship Programme (VFP).

In another inspiring development, an ACTS-led consortium is set to establish a Green Digital Innovation Hub (gDIH) in Kenya. This strategic endeavor aims to foster sustainable technology solutions that address pressing environmental challenges. Our Research and Innovation (RIM) initiative is also gathering pace as Science Granting Councils (SGC's) gear up to launching more than 60 research and innovation projects.

Also, ACTS is setting up the first-ever knowledge centre on cooling and cold-chain solutions in Africa that will offer crucial expertise and insights to meet the continent's unique cooling requirements. Did I mention how AI4D Africa scholar is influencing compilation of mortality statistics in Tanzania? Amazing stuff!

And finally, we share news about the launch of the Ethiopian Network for the Economics of Learning, Innovation, and Competence Building Systems (EthiopiaLics) and welcome three new staff members to the ACTS team.

We hope these stories inspire you to stand at the forefront of change, where passion and knowledge fuse to shape a thriving future for all.

Alfred Oduor, Editor.

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ACTS Pathways Academy: a new model of professional and executive training in Africa

Launched in July 2023, ACTS Pathways Academy is a new and exciting professional platform specifically designed to provide access to borderless, flexible, informative training to foster skills, knowledge and collaboration on STI



NETFund Resource Mobilization Manager, Chrispine Onyango, ACTS Climate Resilient Economies (CRE) Programme Lead, Dr Joel Onyango, AfDB Climate Change and Green Growth expert, Winnie Mutai and Climate activist, Michael Khaduyu, during the launch of the ACTS Pathways Academy, a resource centre for informative training to foster skills, knowledge and collaborations on STI.

Alvin Toffler - a renowned American writer and businessman - predicted that the illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn.

And true to his words, today's fast-paced and dynamic professional environment demands continuous learning and up-skilling for professionals and executives alike. With the ever-evolving demands of the global market, there arises a need for a cutting-edge and comprehensive training platform that empowers individuals to thrive in their careers.

Enter [ACTS Pathways Academy](#), an exciting professional platform specifically designed to provide access to borderless, flexible, informative training to foster skills, knowledge and collaboration on STI.

Whether you're a seasoned executive seeking to stay ahead of the curve or a budding professional aspiring to carve a successful path, ACTS Pathways Academy promises to be your ultimate catalyst for growth and success.

The unveiling of the Academy aligns with ACTS's mission to strengthen the capacity and policies of African countries and institutions to utilize STI for sustainable development.

A rich menu of courses

The Academy will offer training for both professional and executive training courses; the former is designed to build knowledge, skills and competence in individuals, a group or team while the latter will aim to improve leadership and management performance. Whereas professional courses will provide opportunities for employees to refine skills, learn new capabilities as well as expand their networks, executive courses are expected to transform trainees by challenging them to understand their strengths and talents.

Climate Change Modelling for decision-making

This course provides knowledge and practical skills on how climate models are constructed, run, interpreted and applied in decision-making. It will also include modules on climate systems, climate change scenarios and the practical programming required for climate modelling and data analysis.

Climate Change Finance

This training programme has been designed to build capacity to increase ability to access climate finance and efficiently utilize and manage resources while ensuring gender inclusivity as well as provide knowledge on some innovative ways that can be used to mobilize additional climate funding.

Climate Policy and Leadership

This programme aims to build the capacity of individuals to participate in international climate negotiations, influence national policy programming and understand the negotiation processes with the intention of increasing the involvement and participation of African leaders in global climate governance.

ACTS-led consortium wins bid to establish Green Digital Innovation Hub in Kenya

“We are extremely delighted to have won the call for proposals to establish the Green Digital Innovation Hub. The vision of the hub resonates and aligns very well with the aspirations of the individual member organizations of the consortium” – Prof. Tom Ogada, ACTS Executive Director

A consortium led by ACTS has won a competitive bid to establish and operate a [Green Digital Innovation Hub \(gDIH\)](#) in Kenya. The hub will support Kenya’s digital transformation while promoting sustainable development, the circular economy, environmental protection, and climate change mitigation.

While making the announcement on 30th June, 2023, the GIZ Digital Transformation Centre (GIZ-DTC-SKIIVE) team in Kenya revealed that the ACTS Consortium emerged winner mainly due to their *‘exceptional capabilities and dedication to driving sustainable innovation’*.

The GIZ-DTC-SKIIVE project team and the ACTS consortium will spearhead the development of the hub, ushering in a new era of sustainable technological advancements. Together, they aim to drive meaningful change, promote environmental consciousness, and foster innovation that paves the way for a brighter future.

The consortium will collaborate closely with the GIZ-DTC-SKIIVE project team to embark on a transformative journey. Through support of the GIZ/GFA, nine delegates - including three members of the consortium - visited four digital innovation hubs in Slovenia, Netherlands and Germany to have first-hand experience on the management and operations of the hubs.

Currently, the ACTS-led consortium is developing a business plan which will outline the strategic framework for the Green Digital Innovation Hub, ensuring its long-term success and impactful contributions to the sustainable technology landscape. The hub will be launched in December, 2023.

ACTS Executive Director, Prof. Tom Ogada, said the consortium has what it takes to achieve the objectives of the hub.

“As a consortium, we are extremely delighted to have won the call for proposals to establish the Green Digital Innovation Hub. The vision of the hub resonates and aligns very well with the aspirations of the individual member organizations of the consortium. We are therefore committed to using our expertise and resources to deliver effectively on the mandate of the Hub and to ensure it significantly contribute to the growth of the innovation ecosystem in Kenya,” he said.

The ACTS consortium will also oversee the incorporation of a non-profit entity, solidifying the commitment to a purpose-driven approach and fostering a collaborative environment within the hub. Additionally, an implementation plan will be meticulously devised, ensuring the seamless execution of initiatives, and maximizing the potential for transformative outcomes.

The Green Digital Innovation Hub (gDIH Kenya)

▶ **WINNER** is!!

ACTS Consortium

The ACTS Consortium comprises:

ACTS, Kenia, KONZA, KIRDI, KALRO

Supported by:

Ministry of Information, Communications and The Digital Economy, German Cooperation, GIZ, Digital Transformation Centre Kenya, GFA Consulting Group

Sylvia Mukasa, the Digital Innovation Hub Expert of the GIZ-DTC-SKIIVE project team congratulated the ACTS Consortium for emerging the winner.

“We extend our warmest congratulations to the ACTS Consortium for their outstanding achievement as the winning consortium of the Green Digital Innovation Hub. Their selection exemplifies their remarkable accomplishments and perfectly aligns with our shared vision of building a sustainable and connected world” - Sylvia Mukasa, GIZ-DTC-SKIIVE.

Other members of the consortium are Kenya National Innovation Agency (KeNIA), Konza Technopolis, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT), the Kenya Industrial Research and Development Institute (KIRDI), and the Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO). It also includes Vilgro Africa and AMSCO Development Solutions Limited.

How the BE project is using inclusive business models to empower coastal women in Kenya

Inclusive business models are meant to build women's a capacity to exploit the region's economic potential in fishing, small-scale agriculture and tourism

The [Blue Empowerment](#) (BE) project is implementing comprehensive and inclusive business models that will enable women in Kenya's coast to fully exploit economic existing opportunities in the region.

This inclusive business models are meant to build women's a capacity to exploit the region's economic potential in fishing, small-scale agriculture and tourism. This is expected to gradually unlock economic opportunities for women and uplift their socio-economic status.

This will be done by providing financial literacy training, microcredit facilities, and savings programs tailored to the specific needs of women. The project will also offer sustainable fishing practices and empowering women fisherfolk by providing training, modern equipment, and market linkages. Meanwhile, women will be trained on sustainable farming practices, access to markets, and value-added processing techniques.

There will also be training on hospitality, customer service, and product development with specific focus on tourism and handicraft sectors. This will create opportunities for women to establish their own guest houses, tour guiding services, or craft enterprises, enabling them to generate income and showcase their cultural heritage to tourists.

Finally, by equipping women with skills in business management, marketing, and digital literacy, they will have the capacity to seize economic opportunities and overcome gender-based barriers. Additionally, mentorship programs and networking opportunities foster an environment of support and mentorship, empowering women to thrive as successful entrepreneurs. The first phase of training was held in June 2023 where communities in Kwale, Kilifi were taken through fundamental components of the business models.

Apart from Training, the project will be creating a **networking platform** that connect coastal women with potential customers, suppliers, and collaborators to facilitate valuable business relationships. The project has also **leveraged**



Participants of the inclusive business model training in Kwale County during one of the activities.

access to financial resources, such as grants specifically designed for women entrepreneurs, to alleviate the barriers they face in accessing startup capital. Lastly, the project is facilitating **collaboration and partnerships within local** (sub-county) business units and promoting women's participation in relevant industry associations and networks, to support women-led business thrive and access new opportunities for growth and market expansion.

By combining these elements, the project aims to enhance the capacity for entrepreneurship among coastal women, enabling them to create sustainable businesses and contribute to the economic development of their communities. The project continues seeking partnerships that would accelerate the positive impact realized so far in Kwale, and Kilifi counties in Kenya, and we invite you to be part of the transformation.



BE Project Officer, Bernadette Nazi, guiding one of the trainees during the inclusive business models training in Kilifi County.

Additional funds for Visiting Fellowship Programme

The funds will cover the expenses for the students for a three-month fellowship stint in at the University of Johannesburg

The Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), has granted additional grants to support the 2023 cohort of students under the [Visiting Fellowship Programme](#) (VFP). These funds will cover the expenses for the students for a three month fellowship stint in at the University of Johannesburg. The three-month period will allow them to engage in rigorous academic activities and collaborate with scholars.



A cross-section of Visiting Fellowship Programme (VFP) scholars during a previous meeting.

The VFP plays a crucial role in enhancing the research capacity and academic qualifications of African Ph.D. students working in the field of innovation and development. By increasing their exposure to international knowledge and providing them with invaluable mentoring from both African and international scholars, this programme equips the students with the necessary tools and expertise to excel in their respective fields.

We express our deepest gratitude to Sida for their unwavering support and commitment to enhancing research capacity in Africa. Their contribution towards the 2023

cohort's experience at the University of Johannesburg is truly invaluable and will have a lasting impact on the student's academic and professional journey.

AfricaLics family gets a new addition - EthiopiaLics

This network will serve as a platform for Ethiopian researchers and scholars in the field of innovation and development and operates as an Ethiopian chamber of AfricaLics

Ethiopian Network for the Economics of Learning, Innovation, and Competence Building Systems ([EthiopiaLics](#)) has been launched. EthiopiaLics is the latest entrant in the vibrant continental Network for Economics of Learning, Innovation, and Competence Building Systems (AfricaLics), which brings together scholars, researchers and policy analysts in these areas.

It seeks to bridge the knowledge gap, facilitate competence building and transfer, and foster mentorship between established and upcoming scholars through training and mentorship programs. This network will serve as a platform for Ethiopian researchers and scholars in the field of Innovation and Development and operates as an Ethiopian chamber of AfricaLics.

Announcement of the new outfit was made during the 5th AfricaLics Conference held last year in Yaoundé, Cameroon. It is an initiative of the Department of Technology and Innovation Management (TIM) at Adama Science and Technology University (ASTU), in collaboration with Addis Ababa University, University of Gonder, and Haromaya University.



Members of EthiopiaLics and Secretariat pose for a photo after the launch.

EthiopiaLics aims to bring together scholars, researchers, and policy analysts working in the areas of development, innovation, learning, and competence building to address challenges and facilitate solutions for Ethiopia and the region. The network is dedicated to promoting research activities and projects focused on innovation and economic development.

For further information you can read the [workshop report](#).

Research and innovation management project gains traction as SGCs begin implementation

So far, 17 Science Granting Councils (SGCs) have plugged into the RIM project, 11 of which have already launched their calls for proposals while four councils have identified projects to fund



Research and Innovation project manager at IDRC, Dr Ellie Osir, talking to SGCs from East Africa during a workshop in Mombasa, Kenya.

A project geared towards supporting Science Granting Councils (SGCs) in Africa to fund and manage research and innovation projects is fast gaining ground.

Barely eight months into implementation, the [Research and Innovation Management](#) (RIM) project funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), has covered significant ground as councils launch calls for proposals and identify projects to fund.

So far, 17 councils have plugged into the RIM project, 11 of which have already launched their calls for proposals while four councils – Kenya, Uganda, Senegal and Cote D'Ivoire – have already identified projects to fund. Two councils – Nigeria and Senegal – are working to launch their calls.

It is envisaged that over 60 research and innovation projects across Sub-Saharan Africa will be funded under the RIM initiative. Meanwhile, councils are also refining their respective research and innovation frameworks which will guide implementation of selected projects. In this respect, the ACTS project implementation team recently held meetings with SGCs in east and southern Africa to guide them on refining their respective frameworks.

The two workshops specifically aimed to enable councils to understand the importance of research and innovation framework, explore the key elements of research and innovation framework and learn how to design such a framework.

In addition, the workshops to discuss the

effective methods for managing and evaluating research and innovation projects, facilitate sharing of the best practices among the Councils and understand the importance of synthesizing research results and developing knowledge products for effective communication and dissemination.

During a meeting with SGCs from East Africa, IDRC representative, Dr Ellie Osir, emphasized the need for conceptual coherence for the projects to be funded while ACTS Executive Director, Prof. Tom Ogada, asked councils to be clear on what they expect to achieve through the projects. Consequently, SGCs from both blocks have developed draft frameworks which will be further refined to reflect their national development priorities as well as SGC monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

The RIM project aims to strengthen the capabilities of SGCs in SSA to effectively fund and manage research and innovation projects. It is implemented by a consortium led by ACTS in collaboration with the Association of African Universities (AAU) and Université Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD), Senegal.



Intriguing policy dialogue on the potential of solar dryers to reduce post-harvest losses in Kenya

Under the umbrella of the Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security (AFNS) Programme at ACTS, the policy dialogue provided an opportunity for an enthralling discussion on strategies for creating an enabling policy environment for up-scaling solar dryers in Kenya



A panel discussion during the policy dialogue on the potential of solar dryers to reduce post-harvest losses held in Nairobi, Kenya.

A cross-section of government officials, farmers, regulators, private sector, financial institutions and cooperatives converged in Nairobi to discuss the potential of solar dryers to reduce post-harvest losses (PHL), curb carbon emissions and unlock opportunities for dried food in Kenya.

Under the umbrella of the [Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security](#) (AFNS) programme at ACTS, the occasion witnessed a thrilling convergence of minds and ideas on strategies for creating an enabling policy environment to support up-scaling of solar dryers in Kenya.

This comes in the backdrop of a burgeoning global population with the attendant increase in demand for food. In this context, mitigating post-harvest losses not only ensure food security but also paves way for economic prosperity in communities reliant on agriculture. Meanwhile, with traditional food drying methods heavily reliant on fossil fuels, the carbon footprint associated with food preservation is undeniable.

The dialogue - *opportunities and Challenges for Enhancing the Market for Quality, Low-cost Solar Drying Technology in Kenya* - is part of a project implemented by ACTS, KIRDI and UNEP, funded by the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) through the Seeding the Future Global Food System Challenge.

ACTS expects to deploy 500 affordable quality solar dryers across Kenya over the next 5 years.

Speaking during the event, Dr. Catherine Kilelu, the head of AFNS programme, noted that the technology is key for enhancing food and nutrition security in Kenya.

“To benefit from these innovations, there is urgent need to drive wide-scale market adoption as a strategy to scale impact of these benefits,” - Dr. Kilelu, ACTS.

And whereas the potential for solar dryers is huge, several challenges hinder their adoption: limited knowledge/awareness related to technology options, financial constraints, and sub-optimal performance of the technologies in the market due to lack of quality standards.

“When you look on the drying rate, solar drying is better and has several advantages including faster drying rate, better protection of products; it reduces the risk of prolonged drying and product spoilage thus improving product quality,” - Dr. Fred Ogutu, KIRDI.

How AI4D Africa Scholar is using AI to influence reporting of mortality statistics in Tanzania

Previously, physicians had to go through verbal autopsy reports to determine the causes of death, which was tedious, time consuming and prone to bias. The new AI model enables the government to identify causes of death in real time and plan for timely interventions based on morbidity patterns

A beneficiary of the [AI4D Africa scholarship project](#) has developed a unique AI model that can easily determine causes of deaths for patients who die out of hospital.

Consequently, the government of Tanzania is now changing how it collects, compiles and reports mortality statistics.

Dr Mahadia Tunga, who was funded by the AI4D Africa Scholarship project, recently graduated with a Phd in Data Science from the University of Dar es Salaam. The Project is funded by IDRC and SIDA. It is implemented by a consortium led by ACTS since 2021.

Development of the model was prompted by the high number of people who die out of hospital and whose causes of death are not recorded - or wrongly attributed.

The model is based on a list of about 500 questions developed by WHO, which is administered by community health volunteers in Tanzania to collect data on the symptoms leading to death for those who die out of hospital. This process is known as verbal autopsy. This data could then be used by physicians to determine the causes of death.

Out of a list of 500 questions in the WHO questionnaire, she identified the minimal set of optimal questions that could be used to establish the causes of death and also to reduce the time someone interviews.

“These questions record signs and symptoms to determine the causes of death. Currently it takes at least 45 minutes and is very tedious and time consuming,” she said.

She developed the AI model using existing data to determine cause of death for those who die out of hospital. To validate the accuracy of the model, the Ministry of Health compared results of the verbal autopsy generated by the model with those verified by the physicians. The model registered 97% accuracy.

Previously, the Ministry of Health in Tanzania compiled verbal autopsy and medically certified reports separately.

“Previously, to compile mortality statistics, physicians had to go through the questions to determine the cause of death, which was tedious and could be also be biased. It also came with the risk of double counting,’ she explained

This methodology has now changed: This year's report will integrate both sets of data – medically certificated reports



Dr. Mahadia Tunga being conferred a PhD degree in Data Science at Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology in Tanzania. Her studies were partly funded by the AI4D Africa Scholarship project.

and verbal autopsy generated by the model - into one national mortality statistics report.

She is now working with the Ministry to use the verbal autopsy based on the model to generate causes of death in real time rather than wait for the physician to go through the data and determine the causes of death.

“Previously, CHVs had to share the results with the physicians to determine the cause of death after every year but this tool will give the results instantly. The government will be able to know the causes of death in real time and plan for interventions based on morbidity patterns instead of getting the results a year later,” she said.

The Role of AI4D Africa Scholarship project

According to Dr Tunga, this model would not have been developed as quickly as it was without support from the AI4D Africa Scholarship project.

“Conducting this kind of study is expensive. It required the researcher to go to the field and understand how the data is being collected, validation, getting permits, engaging Ministry officials. It helped me a lot with regard to financial and also credibility of the work. This support also made me complete my Phd studies in record 3 years or less,” she said.

She is now engaging with WHO verbal autopsy working group to work out how they can incorporate narratives on the verbal autopsy reports to improve their quality.

ACTS to establish the first knowledge centre on cooling and cold-chain solutions in Africa

Technically referred to as Specialized Outreach and Knowledge Establishments (SPOKEs), the centres will be deployed in strategic locations across Africa to demonstrate solutions, provide technical assistance and cascade knowledge to the local markets

Plans are underway to establish the first specialized knowledge centre on cooling and cold-chain solutions in Africa.

The centre - to be set-up and operated by ACTS - will aim to develop and disseminate expertise on resilient cooling and cold-chain solutions.

It will be used to demonstrate solutions and cascade knowledge to local markets in order to accelerate deployment of sustainable smart cold-chain including Community Cooling Hubs (CCH).

Technically referred to as Specialized Outreach and Knowledge Establishments (SPOKEs), the centres will be deployed in strategic locations across Africa to demonstrate solutions, provide technical assistance and cascade knowledge to the local markets.

The initiative is part of the Africa Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Cooling and Cold-Chain (ACES), which will serve as a “hub” to undertake collaborative research, test new equipment, develop knowledge, capacity building and training programmes.

Working with governments, industry, academia, communities and wider stakeholders, ACES is a comprehensive, one-stop hub for state-of-the-art technical assistance and knowledge transfer along the ‘farm-to-fork’ continuum.



A simplified framework of the SPOKE model for cooling solutions.

installation and maintenance. In addition the center will conduct research on future-proof, localised solutions for food loss reduction, exchange lessons learned via a hub-and-spoke model and build public awareness on the benefits of using sustainable cooling.

What has been done so far?

The SPOKE in Kenya, to be located at Konza Technopolis, will focus on the agriculture and health sectors, with the potential to scale up throughout Africa and create a template for roll-out into other markets throughout Africa.

Specifically, the centre will develop, test, demonstrate and deploy fit-for-market pathways to net zero smart cold-chain and cooling at scale in Africa; improve knowledge on post-harvest behaviour of food to optimise systems and maintain nutritional and physiological quality.

It will also provide technical business assistance and training to small-holder farmers and rural communities and Build the skilled engineering workforce for

1. Site assessment for setting up the SPOKE has been finalized.	2. The floor plan has been done.
3. Technical specifications of equipment & machinery completed.	4. Proof of concept and business model for the SPOKE is ready.
5. Stakeholders meetings and training underway	6. Stakeholders validation forum for refrigeration and air-conditioning (RAC) curriculum conducted

ACTS family welcomes three new staff members

It is with great pleasure and honor to introduce a dynamic trio of remarkable professionals who recently joined our organization, further enriching our capabilities and strengthening our mission. Their expertise and experience are poised to contribute significantly to the advancement of ACTS' objectives

Dr. Nicholas Odongo



Dr. Odongo joins ACTS as a Research Fellow supporting the Science Technology Innovation Knowledge and Society (STIKS) programme. He is an economist and public policy researcher in the areas of policy analysis & strategy, impact evaluation, government & governance, environmental policy & climate change, and development

economics. He holds a B.A. Economics from Moi University, an M.Sc. Public Policy from the KDI School of Public Policy and Management and a Ph.D. Policy Studies from Korea University. He is mainly involved in the Science Granting Councils Initiative (SGCI) work where his primary research work includes refining STI policy ecosystems, research frameworks modeling, research results synthesis, and Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL). His other research interests include governance reforms especially on accountability, participatory democracy & collective public action; sustainable community development within the context of resilience and climate change; and social impact research.

Dr. Caroline Mbayi

Dr Mbayi joins ACTS as a Research Fellow and Head of Gender, Youth and Inclusive Development Programme. She holds a PhD in Entrepreneurship and SME Management; and MSc. Research, both from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain; MBA in Finance, from University of Nairobi, Kenya; and a B.Com in Accounts & Marketing from Daystar University, Kenya. She has 15 years industry experience in Finance, Policy Design and Monitoring and Evaluation. She is a published academic in the field of Gender and Female Entrepreneurship on which she has conducted extensive research. She has been involved in policy formulation in the areas of Youth Development, Women Empowerment and Gender Based Violence at local government level.



Mr. Michael Malenya

Mr. Malenya, who joins ACTS as a Strategic Business Development Manager, Michael holds an MBA from the United States International University in Nairobi and a Bachelor's degree in Actuarial Science from the University of Nairobi. He is currently pursuing a Post Graduate Certificate in Marketing from the Chartered Institute of Marketing, UK, and a Diploma in Insurance from the Chartered Insurance Institute, London. Previously he served as the Director of Business Development and Scaling at Farmbetter, where he was the strategic lead, defining its direction based on user needs and revenue potential. He also served as the Head of Sales and Business Development at Sendy, where he achieved remarkable success in launching Sendy Fulfilment and expanding its operations to Uganda, Ivory Coast, and Nigeria.



Promotions

Ms. Jane Wanjeri

We are happy to announce that Jane has been promoted from the position of a Finance Officer to that of Senior Finance Officer. She joined ACTS as an Administration Intern on 14th November 2011. Since then she has risen through the ranks to her current position. Her new position entails preparing budgets for fundraising proposals, pre & post-award grants management, general ledger management, supervising and training the Finance Assistant/Finance Officer. She will also be charged with preparing donor financial reports and ad-hoc reports for management; while also supporting project & annual statutory audits, managing grants receivable and payable schedule and payroll management.



Ms. Elizabeth Muthusi



Elizabeth, who joined ACTS on June 2022, has been promoted from an Intern to the position of Finance Assistant. As an Intern, she was mainly charged with facilitating payments, and filing returns. In her new position, she will be charged with journal entries, bank reconciliations and account statements.

9th AfricaLics PhD Academy

4th - 8th September 2023

The 9th AfricaLics Ph.D. Academy is jointly organized by the University of Johannesburg with support from the AfricaLics Secretariat hosted at ACTS in Kenya. The event is supported financially by the University of Johannesburg, the AfricaLics network, and Sida (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) through Sida Research.

The Academy provides an opportunity for Ph.D. students enrolled at African universities who work in the field of innovation and development studies to gain more knowledge of this burgeoning field, meet leading academics in this field, and receive feedback on their Ph.D. studies.

The Academy will invite frontier researchers in the field of innovation and development from around the world to provide lectures and mentor students. The Academy also provides opportunities for Ph.D. students to share their work and learn new skills.

RIM Workshop in Senegal

2nd - 3rd October 2023

The Research and Innovation Management project will hold a workshop for SGCs in West Africa – both Anglophone and Francophone - on October 5th and 6th 2023.

The workshop will provide an opportunity for SGCs in West Africa to understand the importance of research and innovation framework in their respective countries, explore the key elements of research and innovation framework, co-design individual country's research and innovation framework and discuss effective methods for managing and evaluating research and innovation projects.

In addition, the workshop will aim to enhance sharing of the best practices among the councils and enable them understand the importance of synthesizing research results and developing knowledge products for effective communication and dissemination.

At the end of the workshop, It is expected that SGCs will develop revised research and innovation frameworks, a methodology for synthesis of research outputs/outcomes and a roadmap for project selection for funding for the next 3-5 years.

The main goal of the RIM project is to strengthen the capabilities of SGCs in SSA to effectively fund and manage research and innovation projects.

AI4D Africa Scholarship Conference

11th - 13th December 2023

The AI4D Africa Scholarship project will hold a scientific conference on 11th-13th December in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The conference will bring together 24 PhD, 38 MSc scholars and 10 Early Career Academics (ECAs) from 22 universities in 18 Africa countries working on different artificial intelligence and machine learning research projects.

It will also bring together project partners from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (Ghana), Université Cheikh Anta DIOP (UCAD), University of Kinkoping (Sweden), Research ICT Africa (RIA), Institute for Humanities in Africa based at the University of Cape Town (UCT), the University of California and Eduardo Mondlane University (Mozambique). The project aims to design and administer a scholarship program to foster the talent needed to meet the growing demand for research and development in responsible Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning in African public universities.

Forum on Sustainable Cooling

17th - 19th October 2023

ACTS, together with the Africa Centre for Sustainable Cooling and Cold-chain (ACES) and the UK's Centre for Sustainable Cooling will hold a forum on sustainable cooling and cold chain in Kigali Rwanda on 17th - 19th, October 2023.

ACES open day will be held on day 1 of the forum where participants will be taken through the new facilities in development including the demo hall, refrigeration training centre, and the training and graduate programmes being launched as well as updates on the progress the first SPOKES in Africa and next stage centres in India. The second day will see ACES partners discuss their plans at the Centre and equipment being deployed. On both days, there will be a series of workshops, guided tours of the campus and facilities being built and information stands to learn more about ACES and our programmes.

The final day will focus on the inaugural conference anchored on *The Hot Reality: Living in a +50°C World* project that brings together an international group of multi-discipline, multi-sector experts to explore through the lens of the cooling how humans can adapt in a sustainable, resilient, just and equitable way to living in a world in which seasonal ambient temperatures are continuously rising and extreme heatwaves are becoming more frequent and prolonged.

Editorial Team

Editor: Alfred Oduor

Editorial Assistants:
Fiona Makayoto
Yvonne Gitu
Moses Owidhi



Participants of the Decoloniality Summer School held on 14th - 21, August 2023 in Kwale County, Kenya. It was hosted by ACTS Pathways Academy a virtual institution established in 2023 under ACTS in partnership with the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna (BOKU), University of Innsbruck, Consortium for Transdisciplinary Futures Research (CTFR) & Africa Uni-Net. Building on previous summer schools, webinars, and the theme of decolonizing knowledge and learning systems, this year's summer school provided participants with practical opportunities to explore various decolonial themes. It aimed to address the need for flexible methodologies in knowledge pursuits to ensure broader applicability without sacrificing scientific rigor.



Lilian Wainaina (left) from Konza Technopolis poses for a photo with ACTS staff after she presented a key to symbolize the centre's physical presence at the technology. ACTS has acquired a 3-acre piece of land at the hub and is currently setting up offices. The hub will host ACTS Artificial Intelligence Institute and the first Specialized Outreach and Knowledge Establishment (SPOKE) on cooling and cold-chain solutions in Africa.



Benjamin Lammers (seated, left) and Maxwell Onyango (seated right) visited ACTS offices on August 10th, 2023 to provide a brief on their 8-week training camp at the Calestous Juma Innovation and Resource Hub (CJ Hub) in Port Victoria, Busia, Kenya. The duo held training for young people, mostly those fresh out of high school, how to code using python, amongst other computer languages.



Representatives from Centro Stirling and Gamos/MECS Project partners held a meeting with ACTS team to discuss options of exploring the market for customised eCooking devices in East Africa, and brainstorm on funding/partnership possibilities.



Senegal's Minister of Higher Education, Research and Innovation Prof Moussa Baldé (2nd from left) and the Director of Senegal SGC, Prof Soukeye Dia Tine (2nd from right), join ACTS-led Consortium representative from the Université Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD), Dr. Nouhou Diaby, during the award ceremony for research and innovation projects in Senegal.