AWIEF's #Value4Her programme is empowering women agri-entrepreneurs in Africa

The Africa Women Innovation and Entrepreneurship Forum (AWIEF) has partnered with the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA-EU) in the Netherlands and the African Women in Agribusiness Network (AWAN) to develop and launch the #Value4Her initiative - a programme to strengthen economic empowerment for women involved in Africa's agribusiness enterprises.



The AWIEF #Value4Her project launch took place in Nairobi, Kenya over two days and saw 15 southern Africa-based women agri-entrepreneurs from Namibia, Botswana, South Africa, Malawi, Lesotho, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe attend stakeholder workshops and keynotes from key gender empowerment and agri-business drivers.

The programme aims to increase value for women from agribusinesses through market access, finance, improving knowledge, skills and networks and advocacy, thereby addressing some of the key barriers for women’s empowerment in agriculture and agribusiness.

Irene Ochem, founder and chief executive officer of AWIEF says their dream for women is that they rise up to positions where they become strong players within agriculture and its value chains as well as competing effectively in these value chains.

"Women are key actors in agricultural activities, but hardly benefit from high-value businesses in agriculture. Supporting women to get into agribusinesses and to drive more incomes from agri-food markets is a sure way of increasing prosperity for rural communities," says Sabdiyo Dido Bashuna, senior technical adviser, Value Chains and Agribusiness, CTA.

#Value4Her will bring together these women entrepreneurs in a form of networking where they will be exposed to international markets, consequently benefiting from the social capital. "The programme has been designed to provide women in agribusiness with capacity in terms of business skills, leadership and how to operate in an international marketplace," says Bashuna.

Entrepreneur, chef and author, Nompumelelo Mqwebu, with AWIEF from South Africa, says: "There is a lack of women in leadership positions and decision-making within the hospitality industry as well as a lack of acknowledgement and development of women. Programmes such as #Value4Her play a pivotal role in bridging the gap and developing us, women entrepreneurs."

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