

African female leaders awarded the Yara Prize

The Yara Prize 2012, which aims to contribute to the transformation of African agriculture and food availability within a sustainable context, thereby helping to reduce hunger and poverty, are being awarded to Dr. Agnes Kalibata, minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources in Rwanda, and to Dr. Eleni Gabre-Madhin, outgoing CEO of the Ethiopian Commodity Exchange (ECX) in Ethiopia.



The Yara Prize Committee selected the two prominent African female leaders for their work on areas for the African Green Revolution: effective public policies in support of agricultural growth and profound innovation in agricultural markets and will be celebrated at the gala night on 27 September 2012 during the African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) in Arusha, Tanzania.

Transformative change in challenging environments

The two leaders demonstrated how transformative change can be achieved in a complex and challenging environment. They applied innovative approaches, collaborating with partners in new ways. Their achievements are fit to inspire other countries to transform the productivity and sustainability of their agricultural sectors.

"Yara creates impact by addressing global challenges. By awarding the Yara Prize, we salute the champions of sustainable agricultural development. I wish to extend my personal congratulations to the laureates," said Jørgen Ole Haslestad, president and CEO of Yara and chairman of the Yara Prize Committee.

"The impressive transformational work the laureates are doing provides great inspiration, and this is exactly the kind of development we want to promote in the Grow Africa Initiative, co-chaired by Yara alongside NEPAD and the African Union."

Why Dr. Agnes Kalibata?

Kalibata is being awarded the prize for her leadership in the transformation of food security and agricultural development in Rwanda in a relatively short period of time. She currently serves as the Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources for the Republic of Rwanda.

For six years, Kalibata has been the architect of the remarkable transformation of Rwandan agriculture. Rwanda has moved from having a food deficit to being a country that is largely food self-sufficient.

Over 1 million Rwandans have moved out of poverty between 2005 and 2011. Kalibata has been able to align national agricultural policies with the NEPAD/CAADP frameworks, i.e. the commitment to increase government budget share for agriculture to 10%, and Rwanda was the first country to adopt a Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) compact.

Internationally, the country has in many ways become a success story that has inspired other African countries. By sustaining the gains in food security and the future of agriculture in Rwanda, She has also been a driving force behind the Grow Africa Initiative, a partnership platform to accelerate investments for sustainable and inclusive growth in African agriculture.

Why Dr. Eleni Gabre-Madhin?

Dr. Eleni Gabre-Madhin is the founder and outgoing CEO of the Ethiopia Commodity Exchange (ECX). She is being awarded the prize for showing leadership in managing the transformation process toward an efficiently functioning market, especially for smallholder coffee producers in Ethiopia.

The ECX has had a far-reaching impact in Ethiopia in several areas of agriculture and in the lives of small farmers since its inauguration in 2008. Under her leadership, ECX's growth has seen a strong increase in volumes every year, from trading 138 000 tons in the starting year 2008/2009 to 601 000 tons in 2011/2012.

The value of ECX trades reached USD 1.2 billion in 2011/2012, representing up to USD 20 million per day. With a transparent and efficient market, the share of the final export price for coffee has risen from 38% to 65%, having a positive impact for 15 million coffee farmers in Ethiopia. At present, 12% of ECX membership is made up of farmer cooperatives, representing 2.4 million smallholder farmers. Gabre-Madhin was among *The Africa Report's* "50 Women Shaping Africa" 2011, was named Ethiopian Person of the Year 2010 and was nominated for Outstanding Businesswoman of the Year 2010 by African Business. She received the African Banker Icon Award for 2012.

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