

## FANRPAN Celebrates Women Champions in Agriculture

### Professor Sidi Osho - Nee Andu – new Chairperson for FANRPAN Board of Governors.

On the 1st of March 2019 in Pretoria, South Africa; at a meeting of the Board of Governors for the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN), Nigerian national, Prof Sidi Osho, was elected to Chair the Board. She takes over from H.E. Sindiso Ngwenya, the immediate past Secretary General of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), whose term had come to an end. Confirming their approval, network members at the Extra-Ordinary General Meeting that was held on 26 February, in Pretoria, South Africa, unanimously endorsed the election of Professor Osho.



She is an Award winning and seasoned administrator with over 35 years' experience in strategic planning, and public and private sector partnerships. Professor Osho served as the first Vice Chancellor of Afe Babalola University, Nigeria, from January 2010 and through her wealth of experience, led the development of the university into the world- renowned institution that it is today, within a period of 4 years.

Professor Sidi Osho is also the founder and president of the Sidi Osho Foundation, (SOF) an organisation seeking to contribute to human development and alleviating poverty in Africa through initiatives that include education, entrepreneurship, food security, leadership and governance, health, youth, gender and women empowerment.

She has been recognised and has received numerous awards for her work, including the 2007 Top Outstanding Young Persons of the World award; Best Female Scientist; College of Agriculture Olabisi Onabanjo University (2006); Award for promoting the Concept of Safe Campus, Association of Heads of Security of Tertiary Institutions (2011); the Distinguished Award for

Outstanding Contributions to Advancement, Service to Humanity and Role Model for the Girl Child (2011); Golden Award - Children In Science and Technology - Ghana (2011); Best Vice Chancellor of the Year, Nigeria, (2014); and the African Woman Hall of Fame Commemorating the UN International Women's Day (2015). In 2018, she received an award of Professionalism from Unicaribbean Business School.

Commenting on the election of Professor Osho during his handover speech, outgoing Board Chairman, H.E Sindiso Ngwenya said, "The election of Professor Osho marks the first time that the FANRPAN Board will be chaired by a person from outside of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region". He highlighted that given the network's historical background of having been created as a response to a call by Ministers of Agriculture from the Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) region, the recent leadership developments indicated the network's seriousness to consummate its 'Africa-wide' mandate, as bestowed upon it in 2010. H.E Ngwenya further commented, "During Professor Osho's tenure, we anticipate that the network's geographical coverage will extend to the central, northern, and western regions of Africa".

Professor Osho graduated from the Michigan State and Ohio State Universities in the USA, and worked extensively with the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) in several African countries, developing several food processing technologies and equipment for various crops. An agricultural value chain and Nutrition expert; Professor Osho has conducted collaborative trainings with other scientists all over the world, including Nigeria, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Uganda, Malawi, Togo, Benin, Senegal, and Madagascar, United Kingdom, and Asian Countries. Professor Osho is a member of over seventeen professional societies, and has attended over 100 global conferences where she presented conference papers on higher education, post-harvest loss management, food processing, nutrition, agriculture value chain, as well as hospitality and tourism. She has over 160 publications consisting of journal articles, monographs, book chapters, and training manuals.

Professor Osho is ably deputised by Dr. Theo de Jager, who is currently the President of the World Farmers' Organisation.

Statement released by FANRPAN Communications Department; for and on behalf of FANRPAN

# Celebrating Champions in Agriculture

## *Women Transforming Africa's Agriculture*

The theme for the 2019 International Women's Day campaign is **#BalanceforBetter**. This marks the beginning of an exciting and conscious movement toward a gender-balanced world in which everyone has a part to play - all the time, everywhere. The world is entering an era where it does not only expect balance, but acknowledges that balance drives a better working world!

To mark this important day, and as a way of sustaining momentum around this theme, the Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN) launches a bi-monthly series – Celebrating Champions – Women Transforming Africa's Agriculture. Each of the women featured have contributed in their own and unique way to ensuring that the continent moves closer to achieving its agriculture-driven transformation. And to cap it for FANRPAN, a woman of outstanding attributes and exceptional contribution to the sector has taken over the reins of leadership at FANRPAN! From 27<sup>th</sup> February 2019, Professor Sidi Osho took over as the Chairperson of the Board of Governors of FANRPAN, and immediately began the task of steering the network towards continued delivery against its mandate. Whilst we welcome and celebrate the elevation of an outstanding female champion, the task and challenges facing women within the food, agriculture and natural resources sector are all too visible to ignore. Professor Osho's tasks are clearly set before her, most pressing being the need to liberate women farmers by transforming the agricultural environment through evidence-based policies.

The role of women in African agriculture cannot be under-played. African agriculture is dominated by smallholder farming families, with women forming the backbone of food production. Women produce more than 80% of the continent's food. The dominant narrative of African women in agriculture is one of perpetual struggle and cyclical poverty, with their efforts subsidizing governments and private sector, thus making agriculture a poverty trap. There are significant gender disparities in the way that key resources essential for success in agriculture are distributed across Africa. Discriminatory laws and practices exclude women from conversations that determine agricultural policies, thus compromising their livelihoods. Access to land, inputs, finance, modern technology, productive assets, markets, information and knowledge, time, decision-making authority and income still present a huge challenge for women in the sector. The fact that women are also primarily responsible for food security at the household level further burdens the woman.



**Madame Graça Machel** (DBE, HonFBA) is an international advocate for women's and children's rights, a former freedom fighter and the first Minister of Education in independent Mozambique. Madame Machel is a member of the Africa Progress Panel (APP), a group of ten distinguished individuals who advocate at the highest levels for equitable and sustainable development in Africa. She has been recognised and honoured by various institutions for her humanitarian work, especially on the rights of women and children through her foundation, the Graça Machel Trust (GMT)

*“Let's define the things we need to transform, and who is responsible for this transformation, what they need to do, as well as ask how we should hold each other accountable.”*

*Madame Graça Machel, 2018*

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gra%C3%A7a\\_Machel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gra%C3%A7a_Machel)

**Dr. Agnes Kalibata** is the President of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), a dynamic partnership working across the African continent to help millions of small-scale farmers and their families lift themselves out of poverty and hunger. Before joining AGRA, she was the Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI) in Rwanda, where she was widely considered as one of the most successful agriculture ministers in sub-Saharan Africa. She also served as a scientist with the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA).

*“In Africa, six out of 10 women depend on the land for their livelihoods, they must have access to the means of production - the land itself. If we are going to have development across the globe, women need equal access to the land”*

*Dr. Agnes Kalibata, 2017*

<https://agra.org/who-we-are-our-leadership-old/agnes-kalibata-3/>



**Dr. Linley Chiwona-Karlton** has led efforts to integrate indigenous knowledge on food toxicity, processing and food safety into western research on food technology. She has been a powerful role model and mentor to a generation of scholars, motivating them to build on indigenous knowledge in the food sciences by combining local observations and experiences with western science towards robust African food systems that are capable of transforming from household-level to commercial food processing and marketing systems. Dr. Linley Chiwona-Karlton has been a strong advocate for African farmers, especially women who produce most of the food and prepare family meals. She has served for female scientists and for young professionals interested in African food systems.

*“We need to send professional role models to schools and youth gatherings to inspire African youth about the power of agricultural sciences and the range of potentially rewarding careers available in agriculture, agribusiness and food sciences”*

*Dr. Linley Chiwona-Karlton*

[http://www.mafs-africa.org/linley\\_chiwona-karlton/](http://www.mafs-africa.org/linley_chiwona-karlton/)

**Ndidi Okonkwo Nwuneli** is a co-founder of Sahel Consulting through which she has influenced agriculture strategy and policy in West Africa. Ndidi has 23 years' experience in international development and has spearheaded the formation of various organisations, including AACE Foods, a social enterprise which processes nutritious food from the best of West Africa's cereals, herbs, pulses and spices and LEAP Africa, which seeks to inspire, empower and equip the next generation of dynamic, principled and innovative young leaders. Ndidi serves as a director for various institutions, including the World Vegetable Centre and the Royal DSM Sustainability Board.

*“.. consumers in Africa spend a disproportionate percentage of their household income on food. One of the biggest reasons is the failure of regional governments to ensure competition in the food sector...”*

*Ndidi Okonkwo Nwuneli 2018*

<https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/africa-monopoly-food-prices-by-ndidi-okonkwo-nwuneli-2018-08?barrier=accesspaylog>



**Sonia Paiva** is the founder of Woman Farmer Foundation and Eswatini Kitchen, both based in Swaziland. Since inception, Woman Farmer Foundation (WFF), a 'not for profit' has identified, recognized and developed a cadre of "model" women and youth farmers across Swaziland. The more than 2000 women beneficiaries in the last decade have gone on to inspire their communities to address the effects of rural poverty, with a special focus on gender equality, agriculture and food security, water and sanitation. With an all-female staff

establishment, Eswatini Kitchen is a profit-making company, that manufactures a selection of Swazi gourmet foods. Apart from providing a sustainable market for small holder and intermediate woman farmers, Eswatini Kitchen donates 10% of its profits to the development of woman farmers through the Woman Farmer Foundation.

*"My desire was to see women grow economically with a sustainable source of income leading to improved livelihoods coupled with enhanced household food security."*

**Sonia Paiva**

<http://www.lionessesofafrica.com/blog/2018/1/27/startup-story-of-sonia-paiva>

---

**Dr. Florence Muringi Wambugu** founded the Harvest Biotech Foundation International (AHBFI) 2002, and has served as its Director and the Chief Executive Officer, working tirelessly to address the imbalance in the focus of agricultural scientific research. Most scientific research in agriculture in Africa has focused solely on cash crops, leaving out African smallholder farmers who produce over ninety percent of the continent's food. Fortunately, through a variety of scientific and community based interventions throughout the agricultural value chain, interventions by Dr. Florence Wambugu have been able to dramatically increase both the food security and incomes of smallholder farms throughout Africa. Dr. Wambugu uses a variety of scientific and community based interventions throughout the agricultural value chain to improve resistance of food crops to disease with effective organization and empowerment of farmers.

*"Together, we can feed the world"*

**Dr. Florence Muringi Wambugu**

<https://www.ashoka.org/en-US/fellow/florence-wambugu>



**Dr Lindiwe Majele Sibanda** has played a major role in influencing policies towards the transformation of Africa's agriculture. She is the former CEO and Head of Mission of FANRPAN, and has served as trustee and adviser to international food security-related bodies, including the CGIAR in various capacities. She is a serving member of the UN Committee for Policy Development (CDP), a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council Committee (ECOSOC); and the African Union Commission (AUC) Leadership Council. She has received numerous awards for her contribution towards agriculture and food security in Africa, including the Science Diplomacy Award from the Government of South Africa; the FARA Award for Exemplary Leadership; and the Yara Prize.

*"Poverty, hunger, and malnutrition are amplified by policies that are not implementable."*

**Dr Lindiwe Majele Sibanda**

[https://champs123blog.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/champions-12-3\\_quotes\\_april-21.pdf](https://champs123blog.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/champions-12-3_quotes_april-21.pdf)

---