



**9TH ANNUAL** **Circular Economy  
Conference  
& Awards 2024**

**REPORT**

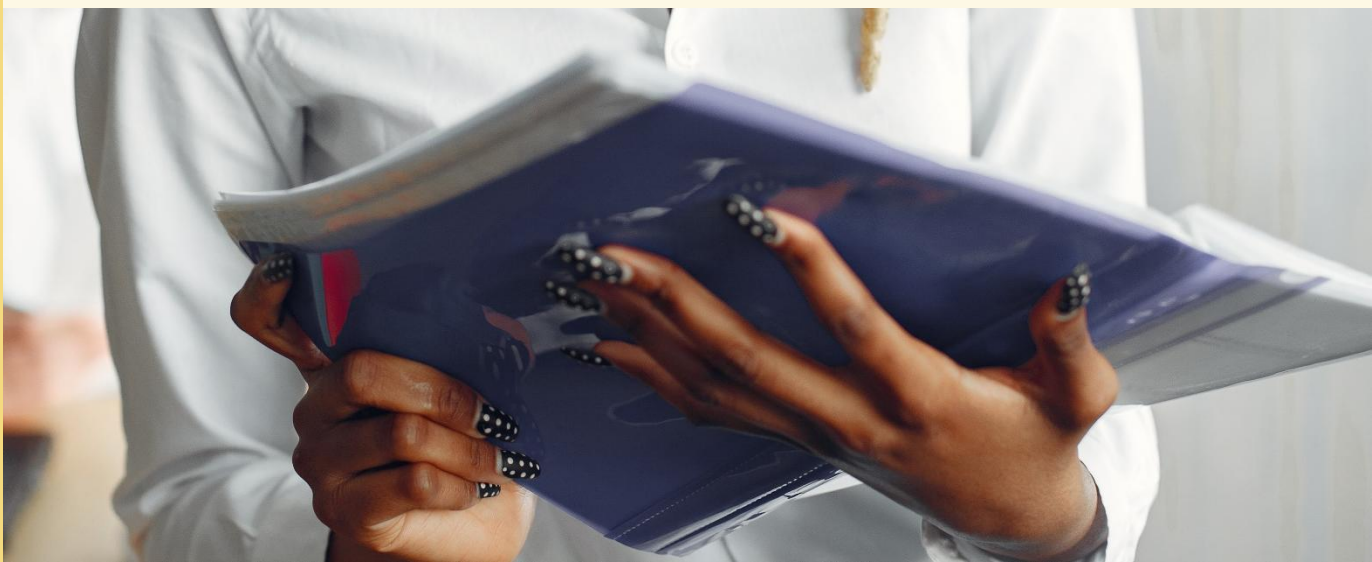


**SUSTAINABLE  
INCLUSIVE** BUSINESS  
THE KNOWLEDGE CENTRE KENYA

**TheRockGroup**



|           |                                                               |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>3</b>  | <b>INTRODUCTION</b>                                           |
| <b>6</b>  | <b>WELCOMING REMARKS</b>                                      |
| <b>15</b> | <b>BREAKOUT SESSIONS</b>                                      |
| 15        | Circular Agriculture & Food systems                           |
| 26        | Digital Access and Tech Connectivity                          |
| 34        | Circular Opportunities in Kenya's Textile Industry            |
| 45        | Packaging in a Circular Economy in Kenya                      |
| 55        | Community-Based Solutions                                     |
| 63        | Financing Opportunities & Skills Development                  |
| <b>70</b> | <b>THE INAUGURAL CIRCULAR ECONOMY AWARDS</b>                  |
| <b>71</b> | <b>CONFERENCE PARTNERS AND EXPO</b>                           |
| <b>72</b> | <b>SUSTAINABLE INCLUSIVE BUSINESS</b>                         |
| <b>72</b> | <b>KENYA PRIVATE SECTOR ALLIANCE (KEPSA)</b>                  |
| <b>73</b> | <b>THEROCKGROUP (TRG)</b>                                     |
| <b>74</b> | <b>A HIGHLIGHT OF GOOD PRACTICES IN CIRCULAR ECONOMY</b>      |
| <b>77</b> | <b>VOICES FROM THE FRONTLINE: INSIGHTS FROM OUR DELEGATES</b> |
| <b>80</b> | <b>THROUGH THE MEDIA LENS</b>                                 |
| <b>81</b> | <b>LOOKING AHEAD</b>                                          |



# INTRODUCTION



In a **world** teeming with challenges, the **youth emerges as the pillar of hope**, carrying the potential to **reshape our future**. Recognizing the important role they play, we understand that the essence of **sustainability lies in empowering & supporting the young minds** who are eager to embrace change.

Our commitment to sustainability extends beyond human

boundaries, echoing the necessity of always reserving a seat for nature at the table. Our relationship with the environment is not transactional but symbiotic.

In this journey toward a sustainable and inclusive future, creativity stands as the linchpin of **transformation**. It is the force that allows us to reimagine our world and challenges the status quo. To usher in a new era of

economic models, ones that **are circular and inclusive**, we must harness the power of every sector. This vision necessitates collaboration across businesses, academia, government, NGOs, and civil society. To grow thriving circular businesses we do need not just collaboration and partnerships, not only multistakeholder engagement – but commitment, investment and change in systems.



PHOTO 1: PLENARY SESSION



Watch  
National  
Anthem  
Performance  
by Janelle

Watch  
Sustainable  
Fashion  
Wear by  
Afro Wema

Watch  
Sustainable  
Song  
performance  
by Janelle  
Mayianda

Watch  
Sustainable  
Fashion  
statement by  
Deepa Dosaja  
an Mayianda

Watch  
Sustainable  
Fashion  
Runway by  
Delight  
School

On November 14, 2024; The Sustainable Inclusive Business Kenya (SIB-K), the knowledge center under the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) hosted its 9th Circular Economy Conference and Awards at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa Learning and Resource Center.

The event, '**People and Opportunities in East Africa**,' was designed to spark conversations, create collaboration, and inspire actionable change toward a sustainable, inclusive future on the foundation of the '**WE economy**', which lies in circularity, climate, and biodiversity awareness, the strength of people power, and a commitment to ethical business values.

The event brought together over 300 delegates, including expert speakers, 25 exhibitors, and stakeholders, to discuss critical issues surrounding sustainability, biodiversity, and pollution management.

## Conference Themes

Circular Agriculture & Food Systems.

Digital Access & Tech Connectivity – The Role of AI in Shaping Africa's Workforce.

Circular Opportunities in Kenya's Textile Industry: Pathways to a Sustainable, Circular & Inclusive Future.

Packaging in a Circular Economy in Kenya: EPR Guidelines, Innovation, & the Future of Waste Management.

Community-Based Solutions: Empowering Youth & Women Through Local Innovations

Financing Opportunities & Skills Development for SMEs in a Circular Economy



Watch  
National  
Anthem  
Performance  
by Janelle



## Wanjira Maganjo: Master of Ceremonies

Wanjira Maganjo has over 12 years of Experience on Public Relations and media relations. She is dedicated to raising awareness, promoting education and fostering meaningful Conversations around pressing environmental issues facing Kenya and the world. Currently Hosting an Audio-visual radio show on Icon Radio -Sustainability Connect Wanjira holds a Bachelor of Arts in communication focused on Public Relations and Mass Media from St. Paul's University Kenya.



## WELCOMING REMARKS

Participants are welcomed, and thanks to SIB—K for choosing CUEA to host the circular economy conference. The circular economy agenda is a critical aspect of development that plays a crucial role in achieving sustainable development goals in the 21st century.



### **Professor Justus Munyoki – DVC – Academic Affairs, Catholic University of Eastern Africa**

Justus Munyoki is a Professor of Marketing at the University of Nairobi, Kenya, and is currently the Coordinator, Research, Publications and Conferences, School of Business, University of Nairobi. A result oriented citizen always focused on better performance and achievement of individual and organizational goals within set time limits

"In our deliberations today, we will demonstrate what we are doing as a country, the continent, and the world because, in the 21st century, we are under threat from climate change effects. Resources are becoming increasingly limited; our population is growing, and our cities are continuously expanding, destroying what used to be a green and healthy environment. Humanity is being called upon to ask a difficult question: where are we going if we continue a development pathway accelerating the destruction of our fragile ecosystems." Professor Justus Munyoki, DVC – Academic Affairs, Catholic University of Eastern Africa

Over the years, the Annual Circular Economy Conference has provided a platform for the private sector, academia, and policymakers, among other relevant actors, to engage in peer- to-peer learning, influence policy decisions, and champion new sustainable business models and well-evidenced research.

SIB-K has created a neutral knowledge transfer network through the conference, bringing together several innovators, start-ups, MSMEs, and large corporations to exhibit revolutionary innovations in waste management, information dissemination, and organic food production, among other green growth initiatives.

The conference has played a fundamental role in creating a Community of Practice characterized by concerted collective action from the private sector, academia, and policymakers to share knowledge, champion policy reforms to advance circularity, adopt new business models, and change consumer behaviour to eliminate the accumulation of waste in the environment.



Watch Karin  
Full speech

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### **Karin Boomsma Project Director: Sustainable Inclusive Business-K (KEPSA)**

Karin has a background in B2B communication, creating concepts, project and campaigns that bring ideas and people together. Having an educational background in Social and Cultural studies, she is also passionate about creating a mind shift through providing access to information for youth. She has lived and worked in Asia, Europe and Africa.

With her extensive experience in the NGO field in Africa, she both co-founded and is director of Sustainable and Inclusive Business in Kenya. By encouraging start-ups and established businesses to rethink their business DNA, she helps them redesign models into future proof ones. Being a creative and innovative soul, she converts climate change and circular economy into relevant business strategies, communication, fruitful partnerships and networks, activities and positive impact.

“We live in a time when we must deal with the consequences of how we have shaped our world over the years. The globe faces high pollution levels, inequalities, and the climate crisis, among other perils. It is time to transform, cause patching up wont create the change needed”

“Over the years, traditional communities have relied on indigenous knowledge to advance circular approaches such as producing products for longevity and durability and elimination of waste, as communities did not overproduce or over-consume. How our ancestors related and interacted with nature can teach the current generation about sustainable ways to reconnect and be part of nature again.” Karin Boomsma Project Director: Sustainable Inclusive Business-K (KEPSA)

SIB-K is the secretariat to the Kenya Plastics Pact (KPP), an ambitious and highly collaborative platform bringing together 40 plastic value chain businesses to advocate for eliminating unnecessary and problematic plastic packaging materials. KPP developed its 2030 Roadmap to invigorate businesses to eliminate problematic and unnecessary plastic packaging items.

The roadmap identifies several plastic items exacerbating plastic pollution in Kenya that businesses can eliminate in their processes. As part of KPP's strive to implement its 2030 roadmap, a second phase of the LetsBeClearInnovationChallenge was launched at the conference. The innovation challenge brings together businesses, especially manufacturers and brands, to improve their packaging

through product redesign, use of alternatives and shift to less plastic packaging.

The second phase of the LetsBeClearInnovationChallenge is an ideal opportunity for manufacturers, brands, PROs, and other businesses and actors in the plastic waste value chain to join KPP and advance Kenya's ambition to address the menace of plastic pollution.

Watch Lets  
be clear  
challenge  
video



### Josephine Wawira Corporate Communications Manager - KEPSA

Josephine Wawira is a communications specialist with over 12 years of professional experience, including in the nature conservation field. With a profound passion for the environment and a proven track record in strategic communications, she's keen to showcase best practices in the circular economy to inspire others to adopt sustainable business models. Currently, she holds the position of Corporate Communications Manager at the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA).

Josephine Wawira is well-versed in leveraging various communication channels to disseminate information and build strong stakeholder relationships. She has been profoundly instrumental in developing and implementing the Kenya Plastics Pact. This ambitious, collaborative initiative brings stakeholders across the whole plastics value chain to transform the current linear plastics system into a circular economy for plastics. It is the 2nd of its kind in Africa after the South African Plastics Pact.

"Over the last year, we have been engaging businesses and consumers to sensitize them about redesigning plastic packaging to support reusability and recyclability. Through such innovation challenges, several novelties in design for the longevity and durability of packaging materials are going on. Still, we need many more people and businesses on board for a holistic shift to sustainable packaging to succeed. The LetsBeClearInnovationChallenge aims to increase product redesign, recyclability and reusability of packaging material." Josephine Wawira Corporate Communications Manager – KEPSA

As part of raising awareness of the 2nd phase of the Lets Be Clear Innovation Challenge, a similar billboard will be erected along Junction Mall. Data on the emissions captured from the billboard will be analyzed, and an in-depth report will be developed at the end of the innovation challenge.



Photo: Let's Be Clear consumer awareness Billboard at Junction Mall, Nairobi

Watch the Lets Be Clear Campaign Challenge launch



### Gideon Ruita CEO, Gigastream Media

Gideon Ruita is a seasoned business and brand management expert with a focus on strategic brand development and sustainability initiatives. Industry specialist in driving growth through unlocking new markets and enabling brands to deliver the right message, in the right way to the right audience at the right place and time.

"Recently, Gigastream partnered with NCBA, a leading financial institution in Kenya that is keen on championing the sustainability agenda. We have launched arguably the first billboard in Africa that not only absorbs harmful emissions from the environment but also drives awareness for the different clients. We installed the billboard around 6 months ago along Argwings Kodhek road; from the billboard, the samples will be taken to the laboratory for analysis to provide information on the amount of pollutants captured and their impact on the business environment. One single billboard has the potential to absorb emissions from approximately 15,000 cars. Therefore, there is a need to have more billboards of that kind." Gideon Ruita CEO, Gigastream Media

**22K+**

tons of waste

Sustainability challenges, including the waste crisis, climate change, and biodiversity loss, are accelerating faster than predicted. In Kenya, 22,000 tons of waste are generated daily, with only 8% recycled.

**1,1%**

gas emissions

Global greenhouse gas emissions are rising by 1.1% annually, contributing to severe climate impacts such as rising temperatures, extreme weather events, and water scarcity.

**1** million species

risk of extinction

Furthermore, biodiversity loss is reaching critical levels, with 1 million species at risk of extinction. These challenges are not just environmental but have far-reaching effects on businesses, health, agriculture, education, and national security. In Africa alone, climate change could reduce GDP by 3% by 2050.



Watch Dr. Jas Bedi Full remarks



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### Dr. Jas Bedi Chairman: Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA)

Jas is a textile graduate (1984) and has attended numerous executive business courses at Harvard Business School, IMD and IIM. His business acumen has been recognized by the Government of Kenya whereby HE President Mwai Kibaki decorated Jas with a medal, Moran of the Burning Spear (MBS) in 2012. Further in 2016 Jas was nominated as a finalist in the Africa CEO forum awards and subsequently awarded Sikh CEO of the year. Thereafter in 2017, HE President Uhuru Kenyatta decorated Jas with a medal, Elder of the Burning Spear (EBS). Jas is currently the chairman of Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA).

“Sustainability challenges encompass multidimensional threats to our businesses, health, agriculture, education and even national security sectors. We are now at a point where almost all of humankind has realized that it is imperative to tackle pressing socioeconomic and environmental issues impeding the realization of the United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda 2030.” Dr. Jas Bedi Chairman: Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA)

Mainstreaming circular and sustainable approaches in business practices requires individual responses, collaboration, and partnerships to share roles and resources.

Kenya's private sector shift to green growth must be grounded in sector-specific interventions. Each sector, including the plastic value chain, agriculture and agri-food systems, textile and apparel, is characterized by unique processes that require distinctive approaches to address energy and waste use, waste management, and other sustainability aspects.



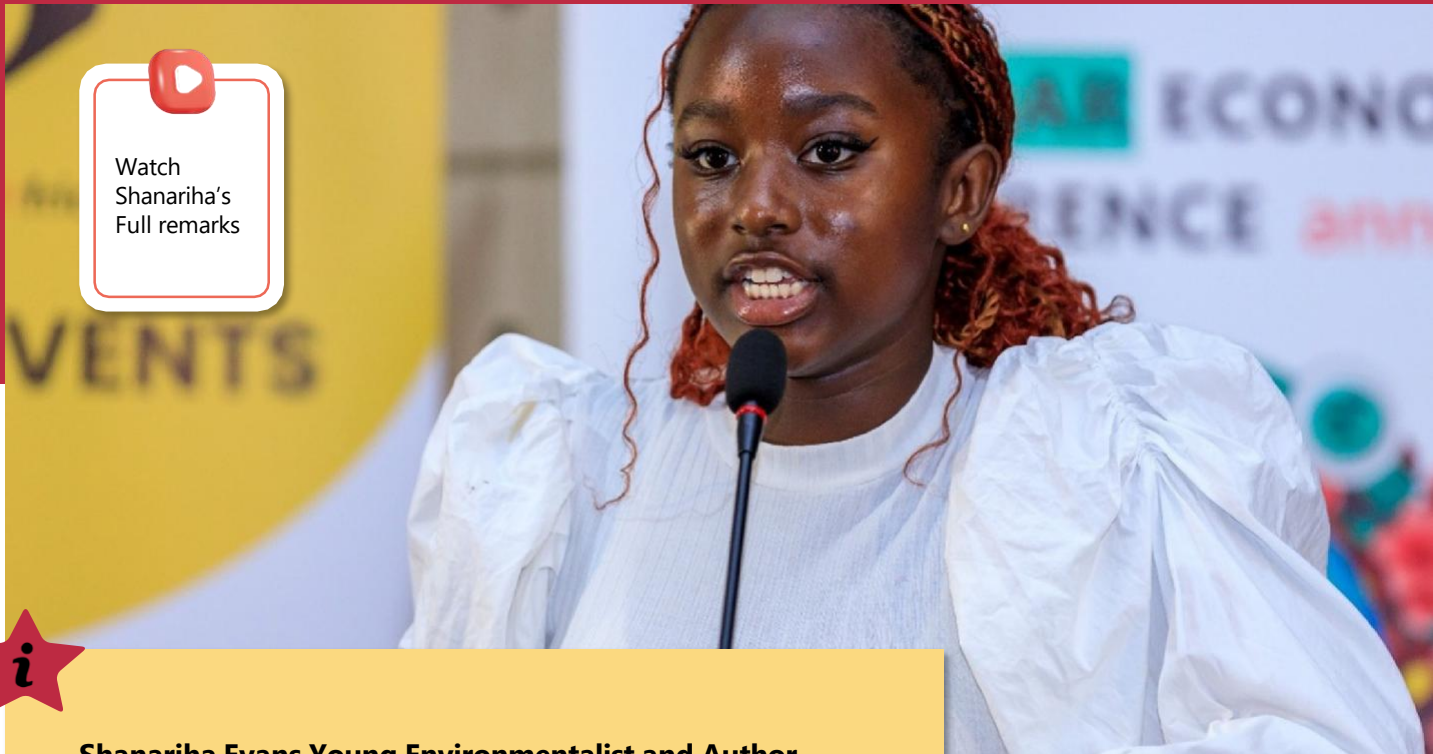
"KEPSA has positioned itself as a torchbearer in advancing the circularity and sustainability agenda to invigorate businesses to lower their carbon and ecological footprint. The apex body influences businesses to embrace circularity and sustainability agenda ranges from awareness creation on national policy priorities, development of research and knowledge transfer materials such as the Carbon Market Guidebook for Kenyan Enterprises, public-private dialogues and projects to equip youth with green skills." Dr. Jas Bedi Chairman: Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA)

"Circular economy discussions are happening at the right time when we need to mainstream effective consumption and production patterns in our fibre- to-fashion value chain. The beginning point of legitimizing integrating circular approaches in the textile and apparel sector is structured knowledge transfer sessions that extend to workshops, conferences, and intense media engagement. Cascading simplified information on the benefits of recycling and upcycling waste, many textile and apparel businesses will likely embrace particular approaches such as sourcing natural fibres, waterless dyeing, design for longevity and durability, and use of renewable energy to comply with government directives and achieving a competitive market edge." Dr. Jas Bedi Chairman: Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA)

Children and the youth play a fundamental role in raising awareness about pathways to biodiversity protection that extend to information dissemination and engagement in practical sustainability efforts such as afforestation and clean-ups. Fostering awareness and action to the younger generation on the importance of harmonious co-existence with nature helps

them to acquire environmentally conscious skills and perceptions, contributing to a healthier planet. Collective action by educational institutions, religious institutions, parents, and guardians to transfer knowledge on waste management, ecosystem rehabilitation, and protection to the younger generation will significantly empower them to take action.

Children and youth have been recognised as puissant catalysts of change due to their creativity and enthusiasm, which often inspire the older generation to embrace change. Engaging the younger generation in the drive for a sustainability agenda will inspire new ideas and innovations that can solve pressing sustainability perils.



Watch  
Shanariha's  
Full remarks

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### **Shanariha Evans Young Environmentalist and Author of "The Ocean Warrior"**

Shanariha Evans is a multi-award-winning singer, recording and performing artist, author, environmentalist, climate change Activist, and Global Citizen from Mombasa Kenya. At only twelve (12) years old she has proven that where talent matters, age doesn't. Shanariha is undoubtedly the current top, trending and sought for youngest teen-star in Kenya and female artist from the coast of Kenya. Shanariha champions for United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 14; Life below water, that seeks to create awareness on the importance of conserving and sustainable use of our oceans and marine resources. Through this course, she has taken a keen interest in fighting environmental pollution through monthly beach clean-up activities and other sensitization programs that help reduce plastic pollution.

"We, the children, are not just beneficiaries of a sustainable future but active participants in providing solutions. I am demonstrating this by organising beach clean-ups and collecting over 100,000 kilograms of plastic waste along the shores of Mombasa. I am also involved in writing books to advocate for environmental conservation, which has been documented in a short film to raise more awareness, especially among children." Shanariha Evans Young Environmentalist and Author of "The Ocean Warrior"



Watch  
Shereen  
Shaheen  
Full  
remarks



Over 90% of our materials are wasted, and only 8.6 % are repurposed. That's why Tetra Pak has reformulated its packaging by spending 100 million dollars to remove some of the layers.



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**Shereen Shaheen - Head of Corporate and Public Affairs Grand Middle East & Africa TetraPak**

Shereen is a 23-years veteran in corporate affairs , corporate governance and risk assessments ,government affairs , brand communications, regulatory mitigation strategies ,digital PR, social media consumers engagement , purpose positioning ,sustainability, LCA studies, social development goals integration ,CSR, lobbying &advocacy , marketing research ,stakeholder mapping , research & analysis on digital trends, study on corporate reputation and Organizational change . She is also an executive coach & corporate trainer.

"Tetra Pak started the sustainability journey long ago with the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), and our long-standing partner, PAKPRO. We have engaged in a campaign called Leta Carton Pack Ushinde, which teaches everyone at home to segregate and understand the process of recycling from home. This cannot be done without ensuring that everyone is on the same page, and we are also prepared for such change in terms of levies, fees, or any policy that would put financial pressure on the recession and economic pressure that Kenya is going through." Shereen Shaheen - Head of Corporate and Public Affairs Grand Middle East & Africa TetraPak



# MEET THE SPEAKERS



**Karin Boomsma**  
Project Director  
Sustainable Inclusive Business - Kenya



**Wanjira Maganjo**  
Presenter - Sustainability Connect Show  
ICON RADIO



**Dr. Jas Bedi**  
Chairperson - Kenya Private Sector  
Alliance (KEPSA)



**Shanariha Evans**  
Young Environmentalist and Author 'The  
Ocean Warrior'



**Jonathan Kinisu**  
Managing Director, Tetra Pak



**Dr. George Njenga**  
Founding Executive Dean  
Strathmore University Business School



**Josephine Wawira**  
Capstone Communication Manager  
Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA)



**Eric Thuo**  
EO - GreenSpoon Kigrowth Manager -  
GreenSpoon Kenya



**Benard Ochieng**  
Quality Assurance and Safety Manager -  
Rio Fish Limited



**Shadrack Agaki**  
Climate Change & Food Systems  
communication consultant



**Laura Stanford**  
CEO - PetLoop



**Marie Louise W.**  
CEO - OnlyPlants Food



**Rosalid Rwaru**  
Head of Sustainability -  
Bio Food Products



**Delia Stirling**  
Commercial Director at Brown's Food C



**Ebenezer Amadi**  
Senior Program Manager, Bopinc



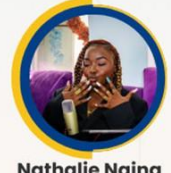
**Lisa Kibutu**  
Founder - Reface



**Mr. Saitoti M.**  
Director - Delight Technical College &  
Delight Africa Corporate Training Solutions



**Idah Odeka**  
JUST Fashion Transition  
Environmental Lead



**Nathalie Naina**  
Communication Manager Africa Collect  
Textiles (ACT)



**Brian Langat**  
Brian Langat - M&I and Impact Manager  
KEYAP - Kenya Private Sector Alliance



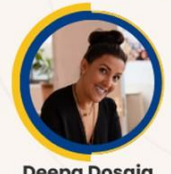
**Amra Turcinhodzi**  
First Secretary - Swedish Embassy



**Cynthia Mwangi**  
Brand Manager - Moisha by Nilita



**Prof. Josphat I.**  
Business Development Expert - Edukans



**Deepa Dosaja**  
Climate Change Expert



**Tally Einav**  
Executive Officer, UNDO



**Shereen Shaheen**  
Head of Corporate and Public Affairs  
Grand Middle East and Africa - Tetrapak



**Muthu Ravi**  
Founder - Africa Collect Textiles (ACT)



**Dr. Ayub Macharia**  
Director, Environmental Enforcement -  
NEMA



**Joseph Sunday**  
Communications, Corporate Affairs &  
sustainability Director for East & West  
Africa / Unilever



**Anita Shah**  
Founder and CEO of Green Stem Ltd



**Talya Shalev**  
International Partnerships Manager -  
WRAP



**Dr. Jackson Koimbori**  
Head of KEPSA Consult, Circular Economy  
and Climate Change



**Yunia Bidali**  
Chief Growth Officer - Mr. Green Africa



**Alex Kubasu**  
Program Coordinator, Circular Economy  
Initiative - WWF Kenya



**Dr. Tayba Hatimy**  
Founder - Bous Taka enterprises and  
participant of the gender mainstreaming  
toolkit development



**Eric Guantai**  
Consultant - Climate Change, Circular  
Economy, Waste, and Sustainability



**Justus Lokapel**  
Director - Northern Wolves Academy



**Vera kloetttschen**  
Circular Economy and Climate Consultant



**Benson Abila**  
Founder & CEO M-taka



**Veronica Ndung'u**  
African Monitoring and Communications  
Officer - International Tree Foundations



**Patrick Kimathi**  
Co-Founder and CEO - Carbon Zero  
Mobility



**Lucy Ngorongo**  
CEO - Junky Bins



**Gregor Pannike**  
Founder & Managing Partner - Algema  
Analyst



**Laila Kassam**  
Investment Officer - Grassroots Business  
Fund



**Karina Faßbender.**  
Managing Director - Circle Innovation



**Peris Kiguru**  
Projects Officer - SME and Enterprise  
Development



**Anthony Munyi**  
Founder and CEO - Rocket Jobs



**Catherine Masolia**  
Director - WEE Centre



**Ian Muthomi**  
CEO - Vision4ill



**Gathukia Mwangi**  
Co-Founder - Ukwiza VR



**Eric Munene**  
Founder and CEO - Circulently Space



SCAN HERE

And More



**9TH ANNUAL Circular Economy  
Conference  
& Awards 2024**  
People & Opportunities in East Africa

## Breakout sessions

# CIRCULAR AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS



Watch Circular  
Agriculture &  
Food systems  
Full session

| Name                 | Organisation                                                                                        |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Alexander Osinga     | CEO, GreenSpoon                                                                                     |
| Benard Ochieng Oile  | Quality Assurance and Safety Manager, Rio Fish Limited                                              |
| Delia Stirling       | Brown's Food, Grove and Meadow                                                                      |
| Laura Stanford       | Co-Founder & CEO LoopPet                                                                            |
| Marie-Louise Wiegert | CEO, OnlyPlants                                                                                     |
| Shadrack Agaki       | Climate Change & Food Systems Communication Consultant,<br>Office of the Member of Parliament Kenya |
| Rosalid Rwaru        | Safety   Sustainability, BioFoods                                                                   |

**Moderator**  
Ebenezer Amadi  
– Senior Program  
Manager, Bopinc

## The Circular Future of Agriculture



In Kenya, the agri-food system comprises the sum of all on and off-farm GDP, jobs and income-generating across all agricultural value chains.

The country's first component of the agrifood system includes its primary agriculture, characterized mainly by crop production, fishing, and livestock.

Agro-processing is the second constituent, consisting of manufacturing activities and value-addition to produce processed agricultural products. Agriculture is the backbone of many African economies, yet it faces significant challenges regarding sustainability, market access, and youth engagement. To transform agriculture and food systems, we must make farming more desirable, strengthen connections between farms, markets, and collective distribution systems, and promote regenerative and circular farming practices.

This session **explored how humankind can rethink agriculture in a way that values waste as a resource extending food's lifecycle from human consumption to soil enrichment and biogas production while also showcasing innovative products derived from organic waste, such as medical, cosmetics, and more.** Here are the highlights.

"At OnlyPlants, we are mapping and identifying underutilized ancient crops in Kenya to transform them into innovative products, driving demand for climate-adapted crops."

**Marie-Louise Wiegert,**  
CEO, Only Plants

"At LoopPet, we upcycle ugly or rescued vegetable waste into insect-powered pet food, combining sustainability and nutrition."

**Laura Stanford, Co-  
Founder, LoopPet Food**

## Trends in Agri-Food Systems

Population growth and technological changes have modernized Kenya's agri-food system, creating upstream and downstream opportunities. However, the sector contributes to biodiversity loss, greenhouse gas emissions, and waste accumulation. Organic waste harbours pathogens and methane gas, posing environmental and health risks.

"Organic waste is an eyesore and a resource. Using waste for animal feed or compost can address environmental challenges and drive innovation."

**Delia Stirling, Brown's Food, Grove and Meadow**

## Agriculture Reimagined: Where Passion Meets Purpose

To make agriculture appealing, investments are needed in market access, credit, quality inputs, and extension services. Empowering farmers with knowledge and technology enhances productivity and ensures sustainability.

"One of the key decisions we made at BioFoods was to pay farmers based on quality rather than just quantity. When farmers are only rewarded for volume, many will focus on producing more without necessarily maintaining high standards. But when quality is the priority, it drives greater investment and intentionality in production. For example, while smallholder farmers typically produce 4–7 liters of milk per day, the farmers we work with average 19 liters. This shows that a strong focus on quality not only improves productivity but also ensures better earnings for farmers."

**Rosalid Rwaru, Safety and Sustainability Expert, BioFoods**

"Farmers need training to adopt sustainable practices like Black Soldier Fly farming, which converts organic waste into rich fertilizers and animal feeds."

**Laura Stanford, Founder, LoopPet**





## Revitalizing Indigenous Knowledge

Traditional farming methods, like intercropping and organic composting, improve soil health and conserve biodiversity. Mainstreaming these practices alongside modern advancements promotes regenerative agriculture.

"Cultivating Bambara nuts restores nitrogen in the soil, increasing fertility without synthetic fertilizers. Indigenous intercropping practices are key to sustainable farming."

**Marie-Louise Wiegert, CEO, OnlyPlants**

"Reverting to traditional methods while integrating modern science can make agriculture more resilient to climate and sustainability challenges. The Black Soldier Fly rearing has proven to be a revolutionary invention to manage organic waste by generating organic fertilizer rich in soil-sustaining nutrients. Nearly 15 kilograms of organic waste generate an equivalent of 1kg of dried larvae and 3kg of organic waste; this shows the potential to compost organic waste to increase the application of eco-friendly farm inputs. Therefore, farmers require training to practice BSF rearing to produce organic waste and worms as poultry feeds."

**Laura Stanford, LoopPet Food**

## Closing the Loop: Circular Agriculture in Practice

Circular innovations like biogas production from organic waste and fish offal showcase the potential to achieve zero waste. These solutions reduce environmental harm, provide clean energy, and generate economic opportunities.

"Circular systems turn waste into resources, like using compost for high-value crops or feeds for animals. It's a win-win for agriculture and sustainability."

**Delia Stirling, Grove and Meadow**



"Biogas from fish offal offers clean energy, waste management, and biofertilizer. Scaling this innovation transforms fish processing into a circular model."

"In fish production, for example, a single tilapia generates 10-11 percent waste, offal's about 9% and scales account for 1-2%. In mass processing of such fish species, a fish farm or industry will produce vast volumes of fish offal that are detrimental to the environment if not carefully managed. Acknowledging the sustainability challenges facing the fisheries sector, KEPSA and Rio Fish Limited, with support from Sustainable Manufacturing and Environmental Pollution (SMEP), are implementing a project to generate biogas from fish offal to run some operations at the facility. Effluent water from the gutting process is recycled into lagoons to cultivate water hyacinth used as a feedstock for biogas production.

**Benard Oile, Quality Assurance Manager,  
Rio Fish Limited**

## Equality and Inclusion in Agri-Food Systems

Inclusion of rural farmers in decision-making, fair markets, and access to training is critical for sustainable agri-food systems. Policies and collective actions must align to drive shared responsibility across government, businesses, and communities.

"Collaboration across sectors is essential. Policies must harmonize agriculture and trade to ensure shared responsibility and practical solutions."

**Shadrack Agaki, Agricultural Expert**

"Academia and knowledge hubs must test viable systems to transfer proven technologies to businesses and farmers, accelerating circularity."

**Laura Stanford, LoopPet Food**

## Consumer Engagement: Building Sustainable Markets

Raising consumer awareness about the benefits of sustainable and circular products drives demand and supports market transformation. Innovative packaging and education campaigns are critical.

"Consumer engagement through diverse platforms is key to driving demand for sustainable products and scaling circular agriculture practices."

**Marie-Louise Wiegert, OnlyPlants**

"Circular innovations must be accessible to the public through common spaces like markets, showcasing technologies and benefits firsthand."

**Benard Oile, Rio Fish Limited**

## Shared Responsibility and Policy Innovation in Agri-Food Systems

The sustainable transformation of Kenya's agri-food systems depends on a shared responsibility among government, businesses, and communities. The government's role is critical in harmonizing national and regional policies to address overlapping interests and foster collaboration across sectors. Breaking down silos between ministries, such as Agriculture and Trade, ensures interconnected value chains work efficiently.

"Government involvement in agri-food systems can foster cross-sector collaboration, breaking silos between ministries to address interconnected value chains effectively." Effective policies also require multistakeholder engagement, combining well-documented data and diverse perspectives to create frameworks that eliminate unsustainable practices and align Kenya with global sustainability goals. Businesses, too, act as key catalysts by forging partnerships and supporting farmers, as seen in initiatives like BioFoods' #SafeMilkKenya, which disseminates vital information to smallholder farmers.

"Including diverse voices in policy-making cascades practical solutions to stakeholders, ensuring a cohesive effort to eliminate unsustainable practices in agri-food systems."

**Shadrack Agaki, Agricultural Expert**



## Driving Circularity Through Innovation and Community Action

Circular innovations like biogas production from fish waste and organic composting showcase how community-driven solutions can manage waste, reduce environmental harm, and create economic opportunities. These approaches close the loop in agricultural production, addressing sustainability challenges while empowering local communities.

“Scaling biogas generation from fish waste in marketplaces reduces deforestation and biodiversity loss, offering clean energy and effective waste management.”  
Academia plays a pivotal role in testing and proving such innovations. Transferring well-tested technologies to businesses accelerates the adoption of circular systems, enabling practical implementation on the ground.

**Benard Oile, Quality Assurance Manager,  
Rio Fish Limited**

“Academia plays a vital role in testing sustainable systems. Proven technologies can transform businesses and accelerate the shift to circularity.”

**Laura Stanford, Co-Founder, LoopPet Food**



## Engaging Consumers and Fostering Sustainable Markets

Consumer awareness is key to driving demand for sustainable products. Brands and businesses can leverage diverse platforms to educate consumers about the benefits of circular and ethical practices. Empowering consumers with knowledge creates a market for sustainable products and supports the broader transition to circularity.

“Brands must use diverse tools to educate consumers, making sustainability a priority and sparking demand for circular products.”  
By combining community-driven innovation, supportive policies, business leadership, and consumer engagement, Kenya’s agri-food system can transition to a circular model that promotes sustainability, resilience, and shared prosperity.

**Marie-Louise Wiegert, CEO, OnlyPlants**

Kenya’s agri-food system has immense potential to lead the way in circular and regenerative agriculture. By blending traditional knowledge with modern innovations, supporting farmers, and scaling circular practices, the sector can achieve environmental sustainability, social inclusion, and economic growth. Transformative actions across policy, technology, and consumer engagement will ensure the sector’s resilience and global competitiveness.

## Ebenezer Amadi



Senior Project Manager, Bopinc

Amadi is a sustainability champion, finance expert, and conference moderator extraordinaire. He currently serves as Senior Program Manager at Bopinc, having held the role of Program Manager at the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA). In his role at KEPSA, Amadi played a key role in leading the sustainability pillar and was instrumental in the creation of the Kenya Plastics Pact. His work focuses on improving community outcomes by ensuring sustainable performance anchored in strong corporate governance practices.

Amadi's expertise spans multiple sectors, with a particular emphasis on supporting countries in adopting circular economy principles. As a former WASH Advisor at the Netherlands Development Organization (SNV), Amadi led numerous studies assessing the circularity of the waste sector in Kenya, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Malawi. His work in these countries has focused on guiding their transition to circularity, exploring how sustainable business practices can be adopted to support long-term environmental and economic growth.

## Delia Stirling



Brown's Food, Grove and Meadow

Delia Stirling is a visionary in sustainable food systems, serving as Commercial Director at Brown's Food Co., Founder of Grove and Meadow, and the force behind the emerging Food Beyond the Plate movement in Kenya. She is passionate about sourdough, fermentation, and the intricate world of microbes. Delia's work emphasizes soil health, nutrition, and creativity in food innovation. Her businesses are rooted in circular, regenerative principles designed to inspire and practically support better eating and living. Committed to ethical growth, she proves that businesses can scale without compromising strong foundational values.

## Eric Thuo



Growth Manager – Greenspoon Kenya

Eric oversees growth strategies for Greenspoon, offering high-quality, socially, and environmentally impactful food. He focuses on scaling the business and sourcing the best Kenyan products, driven by his strategic scalability approaches.

Greenspoon exists to provide a new kind of grocery shopping experience in Kenya, one that's transparent, safe, delicious, and built on sustainability. Food can change the world when people and planet come first. Every product on Greenspoon is vetted for quality, social impact, and environmental impact, and considered within the prism of what makes the world a better place. Greenspoon's commitment to being a business for good shows in everything they do: circular economy with packaging returns, Kenya's only electric delivery vehicles and bikes, working with suppliers to reduce packaging, donating food waste to black soldier fly projects to turn into animal feed, recycling cardboard and paper waste into toilet paper and serviettes and much more.

## Benard Ochieng Oile



Quality Assurance and Safety Manager,  
Rio Fish Farm LTD | Advocate for  
Sustainable Aquaculture

Benard Ochieng Oile is a dedicated professional in aquaculture, currently serving as the Quality Assurance and Safety Manager at Rio Fish Farm LTD. With Kenya facing a critical fish supply gap—where domestic production meets only 30% of national demand—Benard is committed to driving sustainable solutions in the aquaculture sector. His work addresses key challenges such as depleted water bodies, environmental degradation, and the impacts of climate change, all of which exacerbate food insecurity. At Rio Fish, Benard plays an integral role in leading the transformation of Kenya's aquaculture landscape. The organization empowers smallholder farmers through smart-farming technology, direct market access, and innovative partnerships. A champion of inclusive development, Benard supports Rio Fish's robust network of women fish traders, who are vital to the aggregation, processing, and distribution of fresh fish to consumers. Under his leadership, Rio Fish continues to advance food security, improve living standards, and economically empower women and youth across Kenya, while promoting sustainable aquaculture practices to meet growing demand.

## Shadrack Agaki



Climate Change & Food Systems  
Communication Consultant, Office  
of the Member of Parliament Kenya

Shadrack Agaki is a seasoned consultant renowned for his expertise in climate Change and Food Systems Policy Communication. With over 10 years of experience in the legislative and policy environment, he has held impactful roles as a Researcher, Writer, and Columnist, contributing extensively to sustainable development. Holding a Master's in International Studies and a Bachelor's in Communication and Sociology from the University of Nairobi, he is committed to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals with a particular focus on food security, climate change, and diplomacy. Shadrack Agaki actively seeks collaborations and partnerships that will create lasting change. His experience across diverse settings underscores his dedication to a sustainable and equitable future. Through impactful storytelling and strategic insights, he aims to drive transformative change in food systems and climate policy.

## Laura Stanford



Founder, Loop Pet Food | Advocate for  
Sustainable Insect Solutions

Laura Stanford is a passionate advocate for insect-based innovation and sustainability, with over seven years of experience in East Africa's growing insect industry. Her work focuses on driving growth through innovative farming practices, research, and training. In 2022, Laura founded Loop Pet Food, a company dedicated to creating sustainable insect-powered pet solutions that help reimagine the pet food industry. Laura champions the idea of conscious consumerism, emphasizing that every purchase is a vote for the future consumers want to see. An influential voice for sustainability, she inspires individuals and brands alike to consider the environmental and social impact of their choices. Favourite Quote: "Vote with your shilling."

## Marie Louise Wiegert



Co-Founder & CEO, OnlyPlants Food | Champion of Indigenous African Crops

Marie Louise Wiegert is the Co-Founder and CEO of OnlyPlants Food, a company dedicated to promoting food and nutrition security by reimagining the potential of indigenous African crops. With a mission to create healthy, delicious, and affordable plant-based food for African consumers, OnlyPlants also focuses on sourcing ingredients locally, creating economic opportunities for smallholder farmers while encouraging sustainable food systems. Prior to founding OnlyPlants, Marie Louise gained seven years of investment experience, serving as Vice President of Sustainable Investing at Wafra Inc.. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Economics from The Wharton School and is a CFA Charterholder. Her unique blend of expertise in sustainable finance and passion for food innovation has positioned her at the forefront of Africa's plant-based food movement. Marie Louise leads a team driven by a shared commitment to providing nutritious, flavorful food for all, empowering local communities, and fostering economic growth. With a focus on reimagining plant-based cuisine for even the most skeptical palates, she is transforming how African consumers see plant-based eating.

## Rosalid Rwaru



Head of Sustainability – BioFoods

Her progression across diverse operational positions has equipped Rosalid with a unique perspective on the manufacturing sector. With a solid foundation in conserving water, optimizing energy, slashing waste, and embracing other sustainable manufacturing practices, her mission is crystal clear: to make a positive impact.

But here's the twist—She is not just about the processes; she is a champion of people. From top-tier executives to the unsung heroes on the frontline, Rosalid bridges the gap between perspectives to drive changes that truly matter. Currently, she proudly lead their safety and sustainability efforts, all geared toward a brighter future.

## Breakout sessions

### DIGITAL ACCESS & TECH CONNECTIVITY:

# THE ROLE OF AI IN SHAPING AFRICA'S WORKFORCE

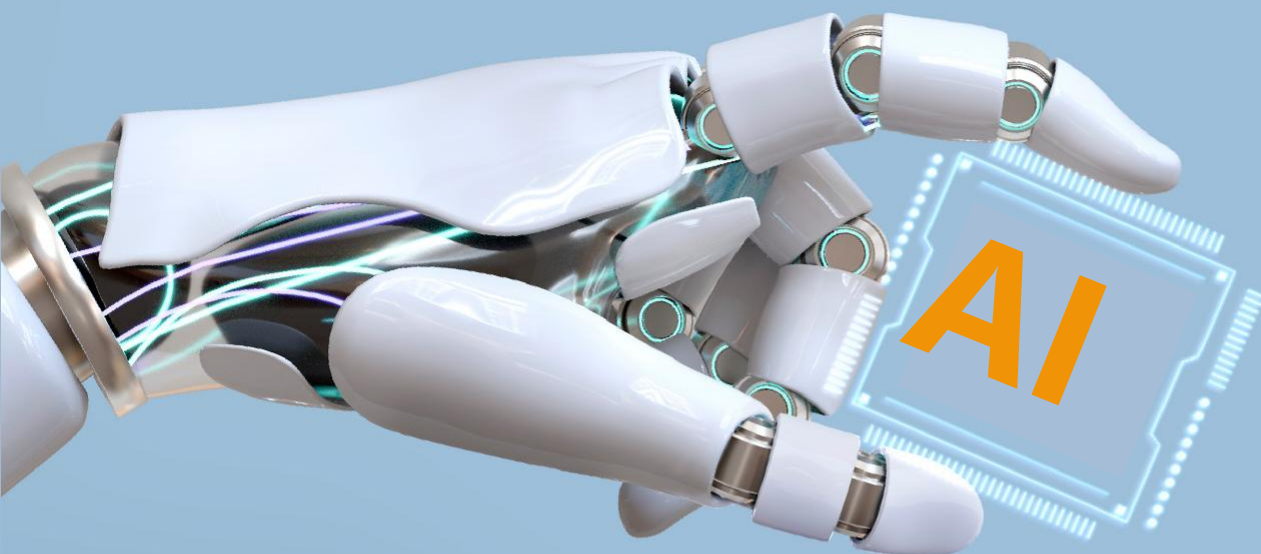


Watch Digital Access & Tech Connectivity Session Highlights

#### Moderator

Brian Langat – M&E and Impact Manager, Kenya Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship Accelerator Program (KEPSA).

| Name              | Organisation                                               |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Catherine Masolia | Director, WEEE Centre                                      |
| Eric Munene       | Founder & CEO, Circularity Space                           |
| Gathukia Mwangi   | Co-Founder, Ukwenza VR                                     |
| Ian Muthomi       | CEO, Visiondrill                                           |
| Nelly Githaka     | Head, Global Partnerships & Community Engagement, Avala AI |
| Name              | Organisation                                               |
| Catherine Masolia | Director, WEEE Centre                                      |



Digital technology has changed how people connect, work, and innovate across the world. However, as technology evolves, making sure everyone has equitable access remains a problem, especially in regions like Africa, where digital divides persist.

This panel looked at the role of digital access as a key driver of economic inclusion, focusing on how technology can be made accessible for all while embracing the principles of circularity. More so, with increased access to electronics such as mobile devices and laptops, comes a great deal in

electronic waste generation. Discussions further focused on the rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and how it will reshape Africa's workforce, influencing skills training, job creation, and sustainability. Here are the highlights:

## Equal Access to Digital Tools & Infrastructure

Africa is at a pivotal moment. With 75% of its population under the age of 35 often referred to as Gen Z, it boasts the youngest workforce in the world. However, with only 40% of Sub-Saharan Africa enjoying internet access and digital literacy levels are lagging, the gap between potential and reality is significant. The above chart underscores the challenge: 40% of Sub-Saharan Africans have internet access, while 60% remain disconnected. This highlights the need for infrastructure and connectivity to bridge the digital divide.

**Moreover, Africa accounts for only 1% of global investment in AI**

Such a big disparity makes it necessary to attract investments in unlocking AI's potential for sustainable development on the continent. Public-private partnerships are very important in addressing the gaps in digital infrastructure. Collaboration with entities like Starlink would provide rural connectivity and subsidize internet costs.



Photo: Speakers engage delegates with insights on Digital Access and Tech Connectivity session

"Partnerships between government and private entities can transform rural connectivity, boosting GDP and creating opportunities. Visiondrill offers free digital literacy programs, empowering communities to use technology for income generation through platforms like Upwork and Fiverr."

**Ian Muthomi, CEO, Visiondrill**

## AI's Role in Shaping Africa's Workforce

Artificial Intelligence (AI) presents an unprecedented opportunity for our continent to stimulate development and promote rapid technological advancement. While there is a risk of being left behind due to low AI adoption and investment, there's potential for leapfrogging development stages, similar to mobile money innovations.

African countries must prioritize workforce readiness by introducing AI-centric educational reforms and fostering public-private collaborations to close the skills gap.

"Africa's unique challenges are also its greatest opportunities. AI can help us leapfrog development stages, as mobile money did."

**Nelly Githaka, Head, Avala AI**

## Circular Economy and Technology Intersections

The global challenge to raise recycling rates is still hard to tackle with some users' uncertainty when deciding which items can be recycled and which cannot. Without proper user education, we can't grow recycling rates or know which type of recycling system is needed for a sustainable future. AI technology has been a breakthrough in recycling by helping divert recyclable items (such as paper, aluminium, plastic, glass, and more) from landfills. Technological initiatives like Circularity Space leverage AI and IoT (Internet of Things) to enhance waste sorting and resource optimization.

"Smart bins equipped with object detection technologies streamline waste segregation and incentivize recycling through reward systems, data collection and AI model training for local waste streams are underway, ensuring better applicability of technology to African contexts."

**Eric Munene, CEO, Circularity Space**

## Addressing E-Waste Challenges

E-waste short for electronic waste, is one of the fastest-growing waste streams globally, driven by the rapid adoption of technology. As technology advances, devices become obsolete quickly, leading to increased volumes of discarded electronics. The global monitor data of 2022 notes the world generated approximately 62 million metric tons of e-waste, with less than a quarter being formally recycled. The growth of e-waste is closely tied to the increase in household electronic devices, including smartphones, computers, and appliances. African-grown initiatives such as the WEEE Centre (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Centre) are at the forefront of collecting, recovering, and recycling electronic waste to promote a circular economy and contribute to sustainable development goals.

"Sustainable e-waste management is crucial as digital adoption grows. Refurbishing electronics for rural schools and creating jobs in recycling and redesign are viable solutions...WEEE Centre collaborates with Circularity Space on smart bins and conducts awareness campaigns through partnerships with supermarkets and petrol stations."

**Catherine Masolia, Director, WEEE Centre**





Automation has already transformed industries like media, displacing traditional jobs while creating new roles in areas like social media management and augmented reality. However, AI-driven automation can disproportionately affect young people entering the workforce. Equally, women are often overrepresented in roles that are more susceptible to automation, such as administrative and clerical jobs. Many entry-level jobs are at risk of being automated, which can exacerbate existing disparities, making it harder for rural populations to compete in the job market

"AI-driven automation may exacerbate inequalities, especially among youth, women, and rural populations. Education must address these disparities through inclusive curriculums and upskilling. Ukwenza VR integrates immersive technologies to enhance education, bringing abstract concepts to life, such as pollution and its solutions."

**Gathukia Mwangi, Co-Founder, Ukwenza VR**

Effective policy frameworks and partnerships between public and private sectors are essential for aligning technological advancements with sustainability and job creation.

The panelists collectively highlighted one powerful fact: AI is a game changer for Africa, but this transformation will require collaboration, bold leadership, and a shared vision. Policymakers must prioritize digital literacy, businesses must invest in localized solutions, and educators must prepare the workforce for the future. The future is bright, and the time to act is now. Africa's journey in AI is just beginning, and the world is watching.

"Partnerships between government and private entities can transform rural connectivity, boosting GDP and creating opportunities."

**Ian Muthomi, CEO, Visiondrill**

"AI regulation must be sector-specific, allowing innovation to thrive while ensuring alignment with sustainability goals."

**Gathukia Mwangi, Co-Founder, Ukwenza VR**

"AI is not just a tool; it's an opportunity to rewrite Africa's story. The question is not whether we will use it but how we will ensure it benefits everyone."

**Brian Langat, M&E and Impact Manager, Kenya Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship Accelerator Program (KEPSA).**

## Brian Langat



M&E and Impact Manager,  
Kenya Youth Employment and  
Entrepreneurship Accelerator Program

Brian is an experienced Monitoring and Evaluation Practitioner with a focus on empowering communities through participatory approaches in development, humanitarian, and peace programming. Currently, he is the M&E and Impact Manager for the Kenya Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship Accelerator Program at KEPSA, where he designs and manages monitoring systems to enhance youth employment, SME growth, and economic resilience through effective project management and impact evaluation.

## Gathukia Mwangi



Co-Founder Ukwenza VR

Gathukia Mwangi is a co-founder and creative lead at Ukwenza VR and cofounder of Nexa International School, both initiatives dedicated to making education more equitable. With a background in media as a creative, Mwangi brings a unique blend of storytelling and innovation to the educational landscape. At Ukwenza VR, they harness immersive technology to revolutionize learning experiences, while at Nexa International School, they focus on developing global citizens through an inclusive curriculum.

## Catherine Masolia



Director – WEEE Centre

Catherine is a lifelong learner, problem solver and tech enthusiast with over 15 years of experience in entrepreneurship, audit and tech. She is a Certified Public Accountant, CPA (K) and a Stanford Certified Advanced Project Manager.

She is passionate about helping African youth and women scale their businesses, contributing towards climate change adaptation and mitigation by accelerating the transition towards more circular and sustainable business models.

With a knack for making meaningful connections and an insatiable appetite for helping others maximize their potential, she knows how to guide, train and be a thought partner to high-potential individuals and businesses. Catherine is trained in International Standards on Audit and International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS).

## Ian Muthomif



CEO – Visiondrill

Ian Muthomi is the Founder and CEO of Visiondrill, a self-paced online course platform that equips learners with vital job market and entrepreneurial skills while offering job linkages. Under Ian's leadership, Visiondrill has attracted over 10,000 users and established key partnerships with Daystar University, the ICT Authority, Ajira Digital Program, KEPSA, and the Mastercard Foundation.

Ian is a passionate advocate for sustainable development and circular economy practices. Along with his business partner, who serves as an advisor for the Circular Economy Business Association, Ian promotes innovative solutions for social inclusion and environmental stewardship. They lead initiatives in waste management and resource optimization, empowering communities to recognize the value in their resources. Ian is also a mentor, supporting students at Daystar University's career fair and the Hult Prize.

## Eric Munene Mwirichia



Founder & CEO –  
Circularity Space Ltd.

Eric Munene Mwirichia is the CEO of Circularity Space Limited, where he leads the integration of AI and IoT technologies to advance the principles of the circular economy. With a strong background in software engineering, he is passionate about leveraging cutting-edge technology for sustainability and environmental stewardship.

Under his leadership, Circularity Space has developed innovative solutions like smart bins and AI-enhanced recycling processes, significantly improving efficiency and community engagement in waste management.

These initiatives embody the core values of the circular economy by minimizing waste and maximizing resource utilization.

Eric actively fosters partnerships and community programs to educate individuals on the importance of recycling and sustainable practices. Believing in the transformative power of technology combined with community involvement, his mission is to create impactful solutions that spur business growth and contribute positively to the environment by promoting a circular economy.

## Anthony Munyi



Founder & CEO – Rocket Jobs

Passionate about solving big problems that affect many people. After training as an engineer and a theologian, his journey has taken him deep into the world of business and technology—two areas of passion that merged when he founded Rocket Jobs in 2024. He cares about helping people achieve their dreams in life and believes that new technologies like AI give us an even faster paths to that destination.



## Breakout sessions

## CIRCULAR OPPORTUNITIES IN KENYA'S TEXTILE INDUSTRY:

# PATHWAYS TO A SUSTAINABLE, CIRCULAR, & INCLUSIVE FUTURE



Watch Circular Opportunities in Kenya's Textile Industry Highlights

| Name                 | Organisation                                                                       |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Lisa Kibutu          | Founder - ReFace                                                                   |
| Mr. Saitoti Meitamei | Director - Delight Technical College & Delight Africa Corporate Training Solutions |
| Idah Odeka           | JUST Fashion transition Environmental Lead                                         |
| Amra Turčinodžić     | First Secretary - Swedish Embassy                                                  |
| Cynthia Mwangi       | Brand Manager, Maisha by Nisria                                                    |
| Prof. Josphat Igadwa | Consultant Labour and Market Skills – Edukans                                      |
| Deepa Dosaja         | Fashion Designer                                                                   |
| Tally Einav          | UNIDO Representative to Kenya, Eritrea, Comoros, Seychelles and South Sudan        |
| Nathalie Naina       | Communication Manager Africa Collect Textiles (ACT)                                |

**Moderator:**  
Karin Boomsma,  
Project Director  
SIB-K.



**The fashion and textile value chain** covers a vast number of activities, processes, and stages, each with different technical and economic profiles.

Fibre-to-Fashion activities are considered one of the most extensive and diverse value chains. The value chain comprises fibre

production through agriculture and farming (natural fibres) or extraction (synthetic fibres), production of yarns, fabrics and textiles, design, garments, logistics, retails, consumption, and post-consumption. In Kenya, the textile and apparel value chain in Kenya extends to second-hand clothing

imports (mitumba) that present multidimensional benefits and challenges. Beyond fabric items, the fashion sector includes accessories such as jewellery, bags, shoes, belts, hats, etc. Due to this complexity, the textile value chain presents varied opportunities and challenges at each stage.

## The Promise of Circularity

Kenya's textile industry holds immense potential to lead the way in sustainability and circularity. By adopting practices such as organic production, durable design, and circular manufacturing, the sector can add value while addressing global environmental challenges. Circular approaches offer socio-economic benefits, from employment creation and entrepreneurship opportunities to reduced reliance on virgin resources. However, to achieve these goals, the sector must tackle the imbalance of high imports of synthetic fibres, cheap fast fashion, and low production for local markets.

"Let's redefine profit as Prosperity, ensuring revenues from textiles drive holistic societal transformation aligned with the SDGs."

**Tally Einav, UNIDO Representative**

## Reviving Indigenous Knowledge

Traditional knowledge in Kenya's fibre-to-fashion industry is fading due to the preference for modern methods and materials.

Skills such as hand-weaving, natural dyeing, and fibre crop production are being lost,

undermining Kenya's cultural identity and depriving local communities of sustainable livelihoods.

Reviving Indigenous knowledge and craftsmanship is essential to preserve Kenya's heritage

and to create eco-friendly, culturally rooted textile products. Training programs must integrate traditional and modern techniques to appeal to younger generations and maintain the relevance of these skills.



"We need stronger links between textile industry actors, academia, and local communities to raise awareness and provide training that integrates circular approaches with traditional knowledge."

**Amra Turčinodžić, First Secretary at the Swedish Embassy**

"Empowering local artisans with skills in upcycling and sustainable practices is key. Training must co-create knowledge by blending modern methods with Indigenous expertise."

**Idah Odeka, Environmental Lead at JUST Fashion Transition**

"Recognizing cultural ties to textiles and skills, like we have especially at the coastal region, we've set up a Textile Training Institute at Pwani University to teach sustainable practices across the fibre-to-fashion chain."

**Lisa Kibutu, REFACE**



## Rethinking Waste: From Disposal to Resource

Kenya's second-hand clothing market operates on a grading system from A to D, with most imports being B and C grades. While these items are reused and resold, their lifespan is limited, leading to growing volumes

of waste, particularly D-grade clothing, which is often discarded immediately. The influx of low-quality textiles from Asia exacerbates the problem.

Circular approaches such as upcycling and downcycling offer solutions by transforming waste into high-value products like rugs, insulation, or new fashion pieces, reducing landfill impact and extending textile lifespans.

"ACT has over 40 collection centres turning used textiles into raw materials. For example, we upcycled 44 jeans into a stunning art piece!"

"Nearly 80% of clothing donations to children's homes are waste. ACT recovers and upcycles these textiles into high-end products."

**Nathalie Naina, Communication Manager, Africa Collect Textiles**

"We transform textile waste into quality garments while training artisans. So far, 21 individuals have gained skills to create fabrics from upcycled materials."

**Cynthia Mwangi, Brand Manager, Maisha by Nisria**

"Upcycling creates jobs, especially for women and youth, through shredding fabrics, designing high-value items, and manufacturing."

**Deepa Dosaja, Designer and Advocate for Upcycling**

## Technology: The Catalyst for Green Innovation

Modern green technologies are crucial for Kenya's textile industry to transition toward circularity. These technologies can reduce water and energy consumption, improve dyeing processes, and foster eco-friendly material production. However, many manufacturers still rely on outdated methods that increase environmental harm. Investments in advanced technologies and collaborations with developed countries are needed to transfer knowledge and set up state-of-the-art infrastructure. Local artisans equipped with modern tools can innovate while preserving traditional techniques, bridging the gap between heritage and progress.

"Outdated technologies harm the environment. Kenya's textile sector needs green innovations to cut energy, water, and chemical use."

"Local artisans have the skills for green innovation, but access to advanced technologies is critical to making Kenya's textile sector ethical."

**Prof. Josphat Igadwa, Consultant, Labour and Market Skills**

## Gender Equality and Social Inclusion

Kenya's textile sector provides employment opportunities but often under exploitative conditions. Women, who make up a significant portion of the workforce, face wage disparities, workplace violence, and exclusion from leadership roles. Circular practices can drive gender equality and social inclusion by creating safe, fair working environments and empowering marginalized groups. Ethical labour practices, fair wages, and community empowerment must be central to the sector's transformation.

"Fashion is more than clothing; it's about choices that shape our impact. True style is sustainable—honouring the planet, empowering people, and driving ethical innovation. It's about blending creativity with responsibility to craft a future where beauty and values are seamlessly woven together."

**Deepa Dosaja, Designer and Advocate for Ethical Fashion**



## Circularity as a Business Model

Sustainability and profitability are not mutually exclusive. Circular innovations and green technologies can unlock new business opportunities while safeguarding the environment and empowering communities. By integrating circularity into their models, businesses can reduce waste, improve efficiency, and create high-value products from what was once discarded.

"There's a growing shift toward buying locally made or upcycled clothing, driven by increased awareness of sustainable lifestyles and their environmental benefits."

**Mr. Saitoti Meitamei, Director, Delight Technical College**

## Sustainability as the Future Key

A sustainable textile industry in Kenya requires a harmonious approach that addresses environmental, social, and economic dimensions. By reducing water and energy use, embracing ethical labour practices, and fostering circular innovations, the fibre-to-fashion value chain can achieve lasting impact.

"Sustainability in textiles isn't an afterthought. We must assess the entire lifecycle of garments to scale ethical practices – starting from the first step; design."

**Tally Einav, on holistic sustainability**



## Tally Einav



Executive Officer –  
UNIDO

Ms. Tally Einav has more than 15 years of experience in development and international organizations. She is passionate about the promise of inclusive and sustainable industrial development to countries well-being and the achievement of the global Agenda 2030. Starting in UNIDO in 2009, she worked in both technical cooperation and management of the organization.

Among her other roles over the years, she led on UNIDO's inquiry of its normative role as well on the coordination of the African Agribusiness and Agro-industries Development Initiative (3ADI) in UNIDO. She worked at the Executive Office of the Deputy to the Director General for many years and before moving to Kenya she worked in the External Relations leading on dialogues with Member States. She also served as the focal point for UNIDO's work with civil societies. She holds a Master's Degree in Organizational Development and certification in Sustainable Development. She also holds degrees in Political Science and Communications.

## Ms. Idah Odeka



JUST Fashion Transition –  
Environmental Lead

Idah is a champion of eco-friendly fashion through JUST Fashion Transition, a pioneering initiative and awareness raising platform started to support the advancement of Kenya's just and green transition within the fashion and textile industry. JUST Fashion Transition aims to contribute to the cumulative shift towards a low carbon and environmentally sustainable fashion and textile sector leaving no one behind. At JUST Fashion, they believe consumer awareness is important; thus, contribute to capacity building through workshops, fashion events and seminars to enhance the capacity of industry professionals, consumers, entrepreneurs, designers, and students in adopting innovative, green practices. They leverage social media for campaigns like, 'Tuongee JUST fashion', where eco-friendly fashion enthusiasts share their wardrobe stories, and their Instagram Magazine titled 'JUST fashion Instazine', which serve as a hub for information, best practices, research findings, policy updates, and success stories on sustainable fashion. They contribute to research through collaborations with research institutions interested in the transition of the fashion industry's linear business model to circular business model. Idah holds a Master of Art in Project Planning and Management (University of Nairobi) and Bachelor's in Environmental Studies (Kenyatta University). She is a fashion model, and has seamlessly blended environmental conservation with fashion.

### **Nathalie Naina**



Communication  
Manager Africa  
Collect Textiles (ACT)

Nathalie Naina is a Communications Manager at Africa Collect Textiles, where she advocates for the power of fashion to create meaningful impact in Africa. Her work focuses on driving conversations around textile recycling and upcycling, and how sustainability can shape the future of African fashion. She also promotes the employment opportunities within the industry and encourages people to support African fashion brands.

### **Lisa Kibutu**



Founder – ReFace

With a background in Anthropology, Lisa is a Cultural Entrepreneur and Arts & Culture Strategist, with 28 years of experience in the fashion industry and the arts. After living in Canada and the U.S.A. for over 20 years, Lisa now specializes in Swahili Coast culture and curates bespoke experiences for clients.

As a cultural entrepreneur and anthropologist passionate about Swahili heritage, her work's intention and purpose are to effectively influence various stakeholders to incorporate Swahili culture and indigenous knowledge within projects implemented in the Coast Region in order to realize sustainable outcomes the people of the Coast.

She is the founder of ReFace, a non-profit promoting sustainable innovation in fashion, fosters ethical practices, improves Kenya's fashion supply chain, and connects various stakeholders to build a competitive and sustainable industry.

### Amra Turčinhodžić



First Secretary –  
Swedish Embassy

Amra Turcinhodzic, based at the Embassy of Sweden in Nairobi for the last five years, brings almost two decades of experience in international development. Her journey started in Stockholm,

Sweden, at The Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) and has taken her across Eastern Europe, the Middle East, the Balkans, and East Africa, where she has excelled in development cooperation, risk management, and program oversight.

Amra holds a Master's in European Studies, with a major in Political Science.

Beyond her professional accolades, she has a deep passion for sustainable fashion and championing the just and green transition in the fashion industry. Amra believes in the power of merging environmental stewardship with economic and social equity, driving positive change that resonates far beyond her immediate work.

### Cynthia Mwangi



Brand Manager –  
Maisha by Nisria

Cynthia Mwangi is the Brand Manager at Maisha by nisria, a pioneering sustainable fashion concept from Gilgil Nakuru. The Brand's mission is to empower at-risk young adults by imparting valuable fashion skills. Through innovative upcycling techniques, Maisha transforms old, unused materials into high-end fashion pieces offering a compelling alternative to conventional textile usage. This approach challenges the traditional use and disposal of textiles, making Maisha a trailblazer in sustainable and socially impactful fashion concepts.

## Prof. Josphat Igadwa



Associate professor  
of Textile and  
Manufacturing

Josphat Igadwa Mwasiagi has a BTECH in Textile Technology (1991 from Bharathiar University (Coimbatore)), Master of Science in Textile Engineering (1998-2000 from China Textile University (renamed Donghua University (DHU)) and PhD in Textile engineering (2004 to 2009, from DHU). Mwasiagi has worked in Thika cloth Mills (Kenya) and Rivatex factory (Kenya) where he served as the Spinning Manager. In February 1997 Mwasiagi joined Moi University as a Teaching assistant, currently he is an associate Professor of textile Engineering, and has vast research and teaching experience in textile and Fashion, which includes, serving as the Head of Department for the Department of Textile Engineering (2002 -2004) in Moi University, working as a professor and Chair of Yarn Manufacture in Bahir Dar University, Ethiopia (2013-2015), local coordinator for SPREE project (sponsored by EU), Kenyan researcher for Collaborative Research on key issues of protective textile products in emergency situations in African countries, (sponsored by China Association of Science and Technology), external examiner of University of Swaziland, external staff reviewer for Kwame Nkrumah University of science and Technology, and a staff at Open University of Kenya.

Since 2021 Professor Mwasiagi serves as the Principal Investigator for UNEP Intex Project, which deals, with Eco-innovation, circularity, Life Cycle Assessment and Product Environmental Footprint in Kenya for Textile and Fashion industry in Kenya.

## Deepa Dosaja



Designer

As far back Deepa can remember fashion has been her passion. Her very first memory is spending her entire piano classes discussing fashion with her teacher mr Miani, much to the dismay of her father! At the age of thirteen she got a sewing machine for her birthday and from then on knew exactly what she wanted to do for the rest of her life. Her parents were pivotal in her quest to study fashion and work in fashion. Their support was truly the backbone Deepa needed in order to full fill her lifelong dream of creating a burgeoning fashion industry in her homeland Kenya. After completing fashion college in Montreal Deepa returned to Kenya and immediately set out to start her fashion brand Vabene couture in the early 90's.

In 2013 Deepa opened her first boutique in Nairobi and rebranded her label to Deepa Dosaja. Her deep passion for the environment and the people who inhabit it is reflected through the fact that she has never used synthetic fabrics throughout her fashion career and in any of her collections, and honours her team as the heartbeat of her company. She believes sustainability through fashion can only be created by keeping as many of the processes in fashion hand and not machine. She is passionate about growing the Artisanal class in Kenya and throughout Africa.

## Mr. Saitoti Meitamei



Director – Delight Technical College & Delight Africa Corporate Training Solutions

Mr. Saitoti Meitamei is a distinguished leader in the fashion and education sectors, serving as the Director of Delight Technical College and Delight Africa Corporate Training Solutions. With a passion for fostering innovation and sustainability in fashion, he has steered Delight Fashion School towards becoming a leading institution in the space of circular and sustainable fashion. Under his guidance, the school has championed the integration of eco-friendly practices in its curriculum, preparing future designers to prioritize environmental consciousness in their work. Mr. Meitamei's vision for fashion education goes beyond mere creativity; it emphasizes the critical role the industry plays in addressing global challenges such as waste reduction, ethical sourcing, and the reuse of materials. His dedication to nurturing young talent has empowered many to explore innovative approaches to textile design, production, and lifecycle management. Through strategic partnerships and initiatives, he has been instrumental in promoting circular fashion principles, ensuring that Delight Fashion School contributes meaningfully to a more sustainable future for the fashion industry. As a speaker at various industry forums, Mr. Meitamei advocates for the need to blend tradition with forward-thinking solutions, aligning fashion's future with sustainability goals. His leadership continues to inspire students, faculty, and industry professionals alike to embrace practices that reduce the ecological footprint of fashion, making Delight Fashion School a key player in Africa's journey toward a greener fashion economy.

## Karin Boomsma



Project Director – SIB-K

Karin has a background in B2B communication, creating concepts, project and campaigns that bring ideas and people together.

Having an educational background in Social and Cultural studies, she is also passionate about creating a mind shift through providing access to information for youth. She has lived and worked in Asia, Europe and Africa.

With her extensive experience in the NGO field in Africa, she both co-founded and is director of Sustainable and Inclusive Business in Kenya. By encouraging start-ups and established businesses to rethink their business DNA, she helps them redesign models into future proof ones. Being a creative and innovative soul, she converts climate change and circular economy into relevant business strategies, communication, fruitful partnerships and networks, activities and positive impact.

## Breakout sessions

### PACKAGING IN A CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN KENYA:

# EPR GUIDELINES, INNOVATION, & THE FUTURE OF WASTE MANAGEMENT

Watch  
Packaging  
in a Circular  
Economy in  
Kenya full



| Name                 | Organisation                                                                                 |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Anita Shah           | Founder & CEO, GreenStem                                                                     |
| Dr. Ayub Macharia    | Director of Environmental Enforcement, NEMA                                                  |
| Dr. Jackson Koimbori | Head Consult, Circular Economy and Climate Change, KEPSA                                     |
| Joseph Sunday        | Communications, Corporate Affairs & Sustainability Director for East & West Africa, Unilever |
| Muthu Ravi           | Member Kenya Plastics Pact & CEO, SILAFRICA                                                  |
| Shereen Shaheen      | Head of Corporate and Public Affairs Grand Middle East & Africa, TetraPak                    |
| Talya Shalev         | International Partnerships Manager, WRAP                                                     |

#### Moderator

Alex Kubasu- Program Coordinator,  
Circular Economy Initiative - WWF Kenya



Photo: Panelist in the Packaging in a Circular Economy in Kenya pause for a group photo

## Global Perspective of EPR

Recently, EPR schemes have emerged as vital policy tools to respond to the growing menace of waste crises and the overexploitation of natural resources. Across the globe, EPR implementation occurs through varying approaches and to various extents.

"Voluntary EPR schemes have proven to be key learning platforms for businesses to acquire well-evidenced information on the importance of embracing best practices such as product redesign, alternative packaging, and design standards for packaging materials with fewer plastics. The introduction of mandatory EPR provides an avenue for the introduction of eco-modulation, a concept of penalising brands and businesses for their packaging products that are less eco-friendly and rewarding those upholding the circularity agenda."

**Talya Shalev, International Partnerships Manager, WRAP**

International organisations like WRAP have been keen on supporting local organisations like SIB-k through the Kenya Plastics Pact to advance voluntary EPR schemes in preparation for the introduction of mandatory EPR schemes.

"EPR systems will strengthen existing green practices, such as alternative packaging materials as businesses strive to embrace eco-friendly packaging to benefit from eco-modulation. Businesses must embrace EPR as it upholds transparency, accountability, and traceability of resources extracted, products introduced to the market, and waste handling measures at the post-consumer phase."

**Anita Shah, Founder & CEO, GreenStem**

## Gazettement of EPR Regulations 2024

The gazettement of the EPR Regulations 2024 has made Kenya a torchbearer in sub-Saharan Africa, keen on accelerating its economic transition from a linear model to a circular economy.

The development of the EPR regulations has been undertaken through a rigorous process characterized by in-depth and wider stakeholder engagement spearheaded by the Ministry of Environment, Forestry, and Climate Change.

Kenya's EPR Regulations 2024 principal purpose is to provide a legal framework for establishing compulsory EPR schemes to promote resource efficiency and waste management.

The gazette regulations provide an opportunity for the private sector to actively engage in addressing waste from their products at the post-consumer stage. EPR fee will be determined by the producer's packaging material type, recyclability, and reusability.

"Kenya has made significant strides in embracing circularity as evidenced by the enactment and gazettement of the EPR Regulations 2024. The country's EPR Regulations have been developed following all the legal procedures laid down."

**Dr Ayub Macharia, Director of Environmental Enforcement, NEMA**



## Highly engaging policy discourse

Over the years, Kenya has relied on a top-down approach, a process where elite groups or higher authorities at an administrative level design policies to be implemented at the community level. Stakeholder engagement in top-down approaches in public policy formulation leads to a high dependency on expert reports, mainly consultants. This leads to a chaotic process that causes the term participation to bear a different meaning and hinders the inclusivity of other key actors in decision-making and implementation.

"As a country, we must design eco-friendly policies that uphold the ultimate sustainability goals. Moreover, we need a highly engaging policy formulation that provides a platform for consumers, producers, and other stakeholders to participate in informing the development of various legislations.

**Shereen Shaheen, Head of Corporate and Public Affairs Grand Middle East & Africa, TetraPak**

## Impediments to policy implementation

Kenya lacks adequate state-of-the-art waste management facilities to support policy implementation. Successful implementation of the gazetted EPR will highly depend on infrastructure availability, such as material recovery facilities and efficient waste transportation systems.

"The lack of effective waste management infrastructures is an ideal investment opportunity that can be undertaken through public-private partnerships. This will open pathways for businesses to expand their operations in waste management but also contribute to solving the lack of amenities to support collection, transportation, and recycling of waste."

"Through several projects and public-private dialogues, KEPSA creates awareness to provide businesses and other stakeholders with relevant information regarding EPR and other benefits of adopting eco-friendly business models. The awareness extends to knowledge transfer on opportunities for earning carbon credits through plastic waste management."

**Dr. Jackson Koimbori, Head Consult, Circular Economy and Climate Change, KEPSA**

"While the company's current focus is on recycling, it is also looking into providing solutions for reuse and refill. However, this will require many consumer sensitization sessions to support refill and reuse practices."

**Muthu Ravi, Kenya Plastics Pact & CEO, SILAFRICA**



## Incentivize EPR implementation

Mainstreaming circular approaches in businesses is a positive yet costly process that sometimes requires overhauling the production process to eliminate harmful practices. Efforts to galvanize the private sector to embrace the circularity agenda must strike a balance between the three pillars of sustainability: economic, environmental, and social. To cope with the change, the government can support the private sector through tax breaks and rebates for innovations and technologies, capacity building and training of industry players on emerging sustainable business models and provision of effective infrastructures such as MRFs, incubation and laboratories.

"The government should consider transitioning to EPR implementation gradually. Furthermore, the targets set for achieving EPR should be sound and realistic, noting that higher recycling rates for products such as LDPE will require additional investments in infrastructure."

**Shereen Shaheen, Head of Corporate and Public Affairs Grand Middle East & Africa, TetraPak**

## Global Plastics Treaty

Due to the pervasive plastic pollution, efforts are underway to formulate the Global Plastics Treaty to provide national practical actions to address the menace. The treaty has been hailed as a global unifying landmark to curb plastic pollution from production to disposal through cooperation, innovation and accountability. Kenya is actively involved in the deliberations, presenting key plastic polymers eliminated in the plastic value chain due to difficulty in recyclability and higher pollution risks.

"We have met as an Africa Group of negotiators and agreed to list two items, chemicals of concern listed in various conventions and single-use plastics under the plastic pact."

**Dr Ayub Macharia, Director of Environmental Enforcement, NEMA**



## Recycling of problematic plastics

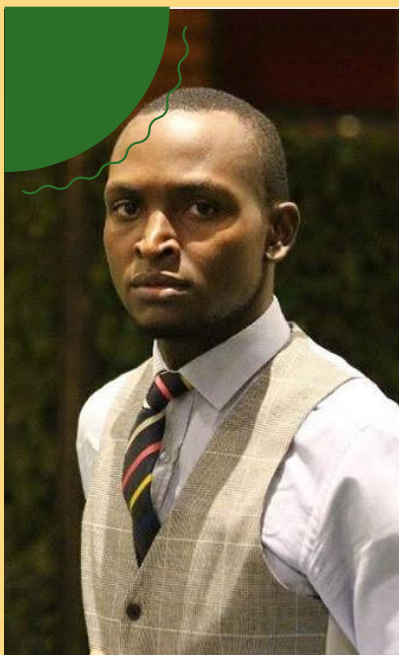
Sachets are complex and problematic materials due to their weight, which does not attract high prices. However, they are usually mixed with other plastic materials to produce finished goods like gunny sacks. In this case, there is a need for systemic collaboration to find alternatives and ensure higher collection and recycling. However, the efforts to increase collection and recycling is hampered by the requirements by county governments to pay cess when transporting waste through every county which in effect lead to higher recycling cost.

"Recycled plastic materials can be recycled up to 7 cycles as is. However, the materials collected for recycling also include other plastics made of virgin materials, which causes the recycled products to undergo more cycles."

**Joseph Sunday, Communications, Corporate Affairs & Sustainability Director for East & West Africa, Unilever**



## Alex Kubasu



Program Coordinator,  
Circular Economy  
Initiative – WWF Kenya

Alex is currently managing 3 projects in Coastal Kenya whose interconnected goals are to improve the plastic recycling value chain, ensure plastic material remains in the economy and not wreak havoc in the environment while creating decent jobs by working with government, private sector and community members. He is a DANIDA Fellow, having completed a course on Environmental Governance at the Local Level at Aarhus University, Denmark. Alex holds an MA Communication Studies - Development Communication – from the University of Nairobi; Executive Education in Circular Economy and Sustainability Strategies from the Cambridge Judge Business School; Certificate in Going Circular, EPR Guide from WWF Academy; and a Bachelor of Science in Microbiology and Biotechnology (Hons) from the University of Nairobi. He is also a PhD prospect. Alex is a Board Member at Health and Environment Research Institute, Ukunda and the Vice Chairman, The Mombasa Plastic Waste Management Technical Working Group.

Favourite quote "Waste is a resource in the wrong place. I believe in human ingenuity; it got us into this crisis. We have the brains and technology to help us imagine and achieve a circular world without waste."

## Shereen Shaheen



Head of Corporate and  
Public Affairs Grand Middle  
East & Africa Tetrapak

Shereen is a 23-years veteran in corporate affairs , corporate governance and risk assessments ,government affairs , brand communications, regulatory mitigation strategies ,digital PR , social media consumers engagement , purpose positioning ,sustainability, LCA studies,social development goals integration ,CSR, lobbying &advocacy , marketing research ,stakeholder mapping , research & analysis on digital trends, study on corporate reputation and Organizational change . She is also an executive coach & corporate trainer.

## Muthu Ravi



Member Kenya Plastic Pact  
& CEO – SILAFRICA

A dynamic leader with 30 years of global experience across Asia, the Middle East, and Africa in FMCG and packaging industries, specializing in dairy, beverages, and sustainable packaging. As Country CEO of Silafrica Kenya, he championed sustainable manufacturing by integrating green energy and pioneering 100% recycled plastic packaging solutions for the agriculture sector. Founded in 1963, Silafrica is a leading manufacturer of sustainable plastic packaging in East Africa, serving industries like agro-food and beverage. With operations in Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Mozambique, the company emphasizes performance, technology, and leadership, and circular economy principles, committing to 100% recyclable packaging by 2025.

"At Silafrica, the phrase best-in-class is as much about who we truly are as it is about what we do. It's about employing people who come to our organization with a "best-in-class" set of beliefs, and mind-set. It's about Lion University, our unique in-house education platform through which all employees learn and apply best-in-class leadership and technical skills. It's about upholding best-in-class standards of ethics and morality in the way we interact with each other, our clients and the public at large. And of course, it's about our best-in-class processes, systems and manufacturing technologies that deliver packaging solutions that respect the environment and consumers prefer. Best-in-class. It makes Silafrica and our packaging roar."

## Dr. Ayub Macharia



Director of Environment  
Enforcement – NEMA

Dr. Ayub Macharia holds a PhD in Environmental Education (Education for sustainability); Masters of Environmental Science, Master of Science (Strategic Leadership) and a Bachelor of Education (Botany and Zoology). Also holds 2 Post Graduate Diplomas in Pedagogy of Online Learning and on E-Course development and Online Course Leadership from Global Virtual University, UNEP and HSH-Norway. Also holds a Certificate in E-Learning in Practice (ELiP) from INWENT Germany. He has worked in several institutions such as secondary school teacher for Biology and Geography (3 years), Heritage Education officer at the National Museums of Kenya (7 years); Environmental Science Lecturer at Kenyatta University (3 years). Director, Environmental Education, Information and Public Participation at the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) in Kenya (10 years).

From July 2010 to April 2012, Dr. Ayub served as the Acting Director General (Chief executive Officer) of NEMA. Since 2009, He is also a part time lecturer at Strathmore University where he offer courses on 1) Environmental Law, Policy and Ethics; and 2) Leadership and Communication and 3) Strategic Leadership using a blended teaching approach.

Since February 2017, he serves as the Director, Environmental Education and Awareness at the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources. His objectives are to offer participative and result oriented leadership for sustainable development.

## Anita Shah



Founder & CEO –  
GreenStem

Anita is a Development Economist and Public Health Nutritionist who is passionate about social and environmental impact and justice. For the past twenty years, she has worked internationally with the United Nations, various NGOs, and donor governments on humanitarian and development issues.

Born and raised in Kenya, Anita's multicultural background and international exposure blend creative, home-grown, and global solutions to tackling plastic pollution. She exemplifies women driving change in sustainability and circularity in Africa. She is a passionate, innovative, and determined entrepreneur and change-maker.

## Talya Shalev



International Partnership  
Manager – WRAP

Sustainability and circular economy enthusiast currently working with partners across Africa who are delivering the collaborative initiatives required to ensure our planet has a sustainable future. International Partnerships Manager (WRAP) - focusing on supporting partners across Africa, on initiatives that are driving food system transformation, and the circularity of plastic packaging, textiles and clothing.

She is a Co-Founder of Our Sustainable World - a documentary series that celebrates sustainable innovation across the world. Talya Shalev brings experience from previous roles at WRAP, University of Leeds, Treligan and Co-op. She holds a 2016 - 2020 Food Science & Nutrition (BSc)(Ind.) in 1st Class at University of Leeds.

## Dr. Jackson Koimbori



Head of KEPSA Consult,  
Circular Economy and  
Climate Change

Jackson Kinyanjui Koimbori is a seasoned expert with over 11 years of experience in climate change, agriculture, WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene), GIS (Geographic Information Systems), and renewable energy. His expertise extends to business development, project management, policy formulation, greenhouse gas inventories, carbon markets, and stakeholder engagement. Currently, he serves as the Head of KEPSA Consult for Circular Economy and Climate Change at the Kenya Private Sector Alliance, following previous roles at Bodhi Global Analysis, EED Advisory, Climate Change Kenya Organization, and the County Government of Nakuru.

His educational journey began in 2013 when he earned a bachelor's degree in Biogeography from Egerton University in Kenya. He subsequently obtained two master's degrees: one in Earth Science from Uppsala University, Sweden (2018), and another in Climatology from Kenyatta University, Kenya (2019).

He further advanced his studies by earning a PhD in Agricultural Meteorology and Climate Change from the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences in 2022. His dedication to environmental conservation has garnered him several awards, including the Youth Environmental Award from Nakuru County (2020), the Chinese Scholarship Council Award (2019), and the Erasmus Mundus Masters Scholarship (2016). His previous and current research publications are focused on food, agriculture, climate, and Water. Jackson has helped developed key policies, including the County Sustainable Forest Management Policy, the County Climate Change Action Plan, and the Nakuru County Climate Change Bill.

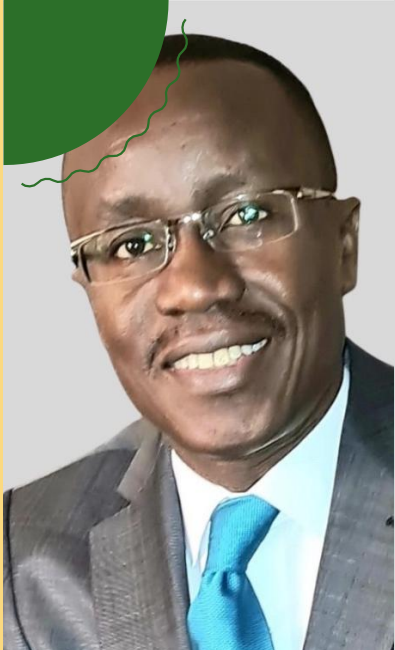
## Yunia Kaisha Bidali



Chief of Growth and  
Innovation – Mr Green

Yunia is the chief of growth and innovation at Mr. Green Africa. She is responsible for regional expansion, new product development and supply chain development. She has over 7 years of experience in supply chain management, project management and regional growth. She is adept at establishing and growing departments in Operations while leveraging her skills in business planning, problem solving, communication and time management.

## Joseph Sunday



Communications, Corporate  
Affairs & Sustainability  
Director for East & West  
Africa – Unilever

Joseph Sunday is the Communications, Corporate Affairs & Sustainability Director for East & West Africa at Unilever. With over 8 years at Unilever and more than 17 years in the industry, Joseph specializes in sustainability leadership and capability development. Before his current position, he served as the Director of Corporate Affairs, Communications & Sustainable Business since August 2017, where he focused on public policy and stakeholder engagement. His previous experience includes leading corporate communications at Diageo | East African Breweries, where he managed strategic communications across Eastern Africa. Sunday has also held roles in public relations and corporate communications at Population Services International and Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide.



## Breakout sessions

# COMMUNITY-BASED SOLUTIONS IN THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

## WHAT' HAPPENING ON THE GROUND



Watch  
Community  
-Based  
Solutions

| Name                | Organisation                                                                                  |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Yunia Kaisha Bidali | Chief of Growth and Innovation - Mr. Green Trading Africa.                                    |
| Dr. Tayba Hatimy    | Founder: Baus Taka Enterprises & Participant of the Gender mainstreaming toolkit Development. |
| Eric Guantai        | Nairobi Metropolitan Waste Management CBO Network                                             |
| Justus Lokapel      | Director - Northern Wolves Academy.                                                           |
| Vera Kloettchen     | Circular Economy & Climate Consultant.                                                        |
| Benson Abila        | Founder and CEO – M-Taka.                                                                     |

**Moderator:**  
Veronica Njeri,  
Africa Monitoring  
& Communications  
Officer -International  
Tree Foundation

## Trends in CBOs' Efforts to Strengthen Kenya's Transition to Circularity

Across Kenya, communities are at the heart of circular economy innovations, mainly through youth and women's leadership in waste management, water harvesting, and sustainable agriculture. Local solutions transform lives and environments in coastal areas like Mombasa, the Rift Valley (Maasai), and Laikipia's permaculture movement.

This session highlighted stories from the ground, showcasing how CBOs drive sustainable solutions through upcycling, recycling, and skills-based craftsmanship. The session explored how these grassroots initiatives can align with businesses and community needs to create a sustainable, inclusive, and regenerative future.

## The Inclusion Imperative: Transforming the Informal Sector

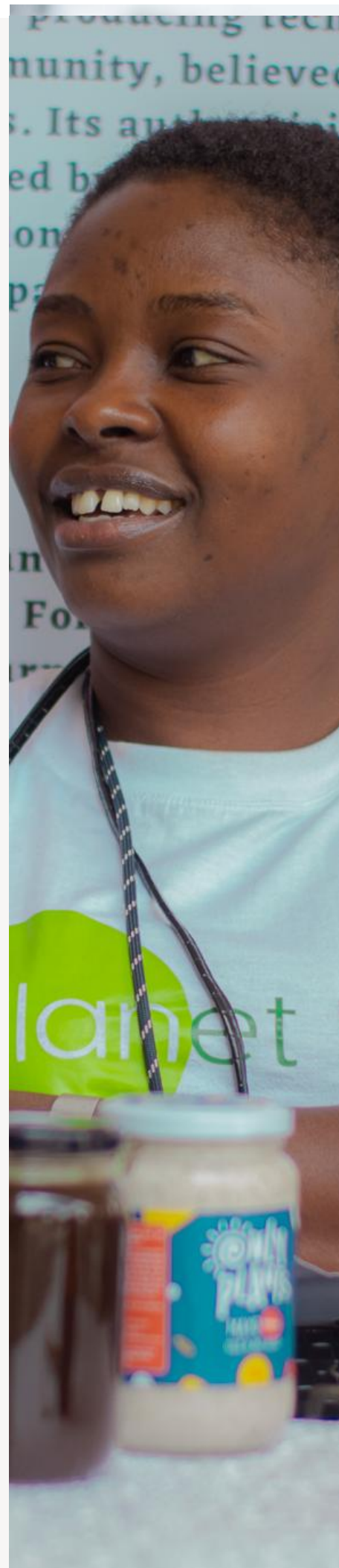
In Kenya, informal waste practitioners, who are comprised of CBOs engaged in waste collection, reuse, and recycling, play a vital role in waste management. These practitioners extend to individual practitioners **(waste pickers and recyclers)** mainly operating in urban and hinterland areas. Some terms used to refer to actors in informal waste systems present negative perceptions despite their immense work to create ideal living spaces for humankind. The negative perceptions impede efforts to recognise the critical role of informal stakeholders in waste management. Kenya's informal waste system is characterised by specific factors such as low-technology, labour-intensive, unregistered and unregulated activities that are not included in taxation and provision of healthcare insurance.

Kenya's informal waste sector is disorganized, with groups lacking legal recognition and licensing to operate. The development and assent into the law of the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Regulations present a pathway/opportunity for waste service providers and Producer Responsibility Organisations (PROs) to work closely with informal waste pickers, contributing to their formalization.

The introduction of the EPR Regulations contributes to identifying and mapping informal waste practitioners that comprise CBOs, building up on the national efforts to train them on the benefits of registering and acquiring licensing to participate in EPR implementation. Mapping and registering informal waste practitioners will create a database that producers and PROs can refer to engage waste pickers in their EPR schemes.

Additionally, legal recognition and registration will ensure that informal waste stakeholders benefit from access to financing and other incentives to improve their services and expand their operations.

A representative of the informal waste practitioners averred that: "In Kenya, the informal waste pickers and recyclers are often undermined by authorities and experts at higher levels. They are often happy that informal waste pickers are driving waste collection and management, but they do not recognize our impact."



# Dignity in Waste: Supporting the Unsung Heroes of Waste Management

The panel discussions revealed that CBOs engaged in waste operate in unhygienic settings characterized by disease-harboring and hazardous waste. Marginalized groups operating in the sector, mainly women, face exclusion from leadership positions and decision-making and face sexual exploitation and gender-based violence.

"Avenues to improve the working environmental setting of informal waste pickers and informal CBOs range from training them on safe waste management techniques, provision of personal protective gear and advocating for improved remuneration to ensure they have adequate resources to sustain their livelihood."

**Yunia Kaisha Bidali, Chief of Growth and Innovation - Mr. Green Trading Africa**

Awareness creation and capacity building of the base of the pyramid waste management actors was widely acknowledged as a starting point for recognizing their significant role in accelerating Kenya's transition to circularity. It was widely highlighted that cascading information and knowledge transfer to informal waste practitioners would invigorate them to comprehend the composition of different waste, effective reuse, and recycling strategies for each waste stream, among other emerging issues in the subsector.

"Education training and awareness creation targeting the informal waste sector players will provide them with relevant and effective waste collection, segregation, reuse, and recycling skills while at the same time improving their financial and entrepreneurship literacy, empowering them to maximize on income-generating opportunities."

**Eric Guantai, Nairobi Metropolitan Waste Management CBO Network**

"We must unite all the people, from producers, PROs, waste service providers, retailers, and consumers, to comprehend their shared role in waste management. Currently, waste value chain stakeholders in Kenya operate in silos, leading to inefficiencies in waste handling, limited information and data sharing, exclusion of informal stakeholders, and policy non-implementation".

**Vera Kloettschen, Circular Economy & Climate Consultant**

Raising awareness and improving the educational capacity of informal waste collectors and other actors in the waste value chain require training using locally available resources.

Dr. Tayba Hatimy, Founder of Baus Taka Enterprises, shared insights into the development of the Gender Mainstreaming in Waste Business Toolkit (made by Sustainable Inclusive Business and TheRockGroup with support of Climate KiC) and its potential to improve the knowledge and skills of waste management stakeholders.

The toolkit advocates for repackaging of information in simplified form, waste management knowledge and information co-creation, inclusion in decision-making, access to leadership positions in waste management, amping and registration and fair compensation."

The role of women in waste management in developing the toolkit extends to sharing and identifying relevant content to mainstream into the toolkit. Co-creation of knowledge with women in waste, especially Eco Champ Women based in Mombasa, was instrumental in the development of thought-provoking training resources tailored to local needs of waste value chain practitioners. The toolkit is widely available to waste management actors to utilize its as a training resource.

**Justus Lokapel, Director of Northern Wolves Academy,** championed awareness and training of CBOs and informal actors engaged in waste management to extend to traditional practices.

"Across Kenya, we have diverse cultures with rich traditional waste management practices. For example, among the Turkana community, we are utilizing skins and hides and hoofs to make garments and footwear and jewellery. However, traditional waste management is fading away due to young populations preferring to purchase fast fashion products. We must train the local communities to rely on traditional and modern practical strategies to reduce waste leakages into the environment."

## Tech meets trash: smarter systems, greener outcomes

Technologies and Artificial Intelligence can improve informal waste pickers' working conditions. Mainstreaming technological advancements to informal waste management systems supports data and information dissemination, improves coordination of various activities in the value chain, and promotes transparency.

"I have launched the M-Taka, a tech-driven waste management social enterprise that relies on a mobile app to connect waste collectors with potential clients and recycling agents. The M-Taka app allows households or commercial facilities to enlist the services of waste service providers, including organized informal groups, to collect waste and sell it to recycling agents at fair market prices."

**Benson Abila, Founder  
and CEO of M-Taka**

"Informed by the importance of emerging technologies, the Baus Taka app will be instrumental in tracking waste collection and recycling data, which is highly lacking in the country. Increased application of smart waste management and tracking systems contributes to generating well-evidenced data to inform policy reviews and development and guide the establishment of critical waste management facilities."

**Dr. Tayba, Founder Baus Taka**

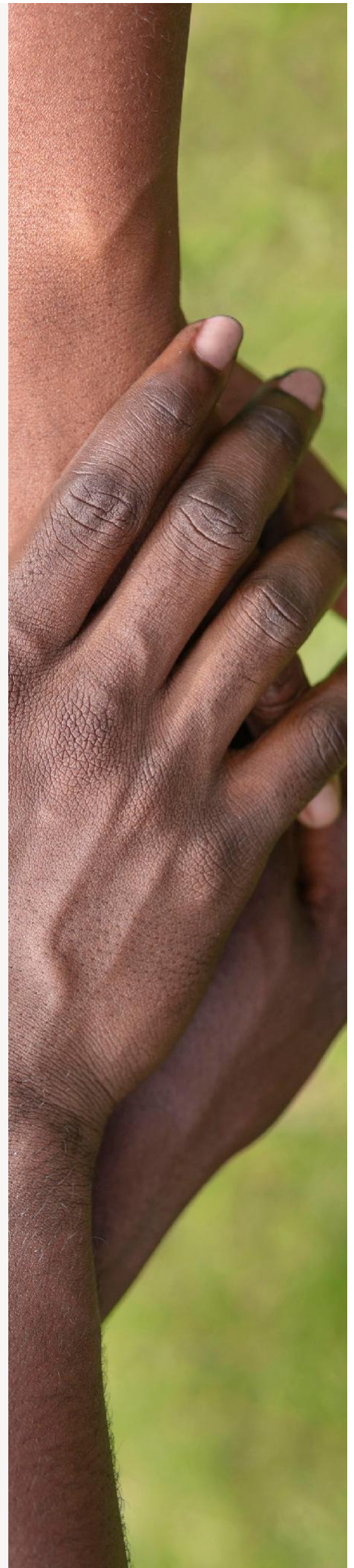
## Earning with Dignity: Incentives for Informal Waste Workers

Over the past few years, the informal waste sector in Kenya has been disorganized, with groups lacking legal recognition and licensing to operate. The introduction of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) recognizes the role of informal waste practitioners in increasing waste collection, segregation, and recycling.

"Mapping and registering of local community groups engaged in waste management will create a database for producers and PROs to work with closely to implement the EPR systems in Kenya. Legal recognition and registration will ensure informal waste practitioners benefit from access to financing and other incentives to improve their services and expand their operations."

**Eric Guantai, Nairobi  
Metropolitan Waste  
Management CBO Network**

Registration and mapping of informal waste practitioners should be streamlined to avoid double payment. Waste management CBOs must register with the national government for legal recognition and obtain licensing from NEMA. The EPR model offers a pathway for better remuneration of informal waste actors, with EPR fees ensuring PROs can fairly compensate waste pickers based on material composition and recyclability. High taxation on micro-enterprises disrupts their operations; thus, tax exemptions and rebates for CBOs involved in waste collection & recycling are crucial to overcoming financial barriers and supporting their growth. In addition, advocating for new financing models by financial lending institutions will help to provide equitable and fair credit facilities.



## Collaborations and partnerships

Collaborations and partnerships are critical to accelerating Kenya's transition to a circular economy. Inclusive approaches that involve local and Indigenous communities in waste management initiatives, such as segregation and creating high-value products, foster shared ownership and innovative solutions. Traditional communities often face exclusion from decision-making and policy development, but participatory approaches enable co-creation of knowledge and shared responsibilities. Additionally, higher education institutions play a pivotal role in generating evidence-based research on location-specific waste management challenges. This research can inform policymakers and guide businesses in adopting sustainable operation models.

"Higher education institutions must produce evidence-based research to address location-specific waste challenges. This data can inform effective policies and guide businesses toward sustainable practices."

**Vera Kloettchen, Circular Economy & Climate Consultant**

Collaboration among traditional communities, knowledge institutions, policymakers, and businesses is essential for creating inclusive and effective waste management systems.

By integrating local expertise with research-driven solutions, Kenya can advance its circular economy agenda and ensure a sustainable and equitable transition.

"Traditional communities are often excluded from shaping circular economy policies. A participatory approach allows diverse actors to co-create knowledge and share roles, speeding up the transition to circularity."

**Benson Abila, Founder and CEO of M-Taka**



## Dr. Tayba Hatimy



Founder – Baus Taka Entreprises & Participants of the Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit Development

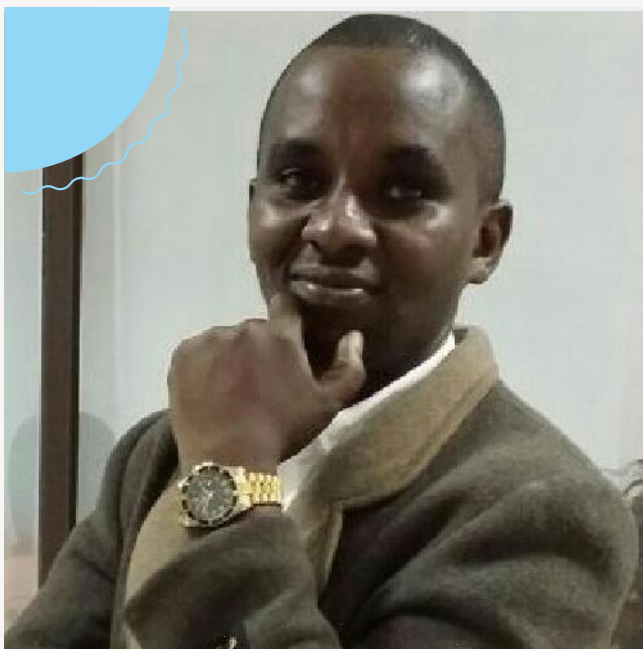
Eric Munene Mwirichia is the CEO of Circularity Space Limited, where he leads the integration of AI and IoT technologies to advance the principles of the circular economy. With a strong background in software engineering, he is passionate about leveraging cutting-edge technology for sustainability and environmental stewardship.

Under his leadership, Circularity Space has developed innovative solutions like smart bins and AI-enhanced recycling processes, significantly improving efficiency and community engagement in waste management.

These initiatives embody the core values of the circular economy by minimizing waste and maximizing resource utilization.

Eric actively fosters partnerships and community programs to educate individuals on the importance of recycling and sustainable practices. Believing in the transformative power of technology combined with community involvement, his mission is to create impactful solutions that spur business growth and contribute positively to the environment by promoting a circular economy.

## Eric Guantai



Nairobi Metropolitan Waste Management CBO Network

Eric is a sustainability consultant working with the Nairobi Metropolitan Waste Community Association to promote circular economy principles that apply to waste management, supply chains, logistics, repair, refurbishment, value additions, and recycling.

Nairobi Metropolitan Waste Community Association empowers informal waste circular economy enterprises and entrepreneurs, recognizing their essential role in building resilient urban and semi-urban environments. They collaborate with businesses, policymakers, and communities to integrate waste enterprises/entrepreneurs and all stationed across the waste value chain, upstream/downstream informally, into formal waste systems.

## Justus Lokapel



Director – Northern Wolves Academy

Justus Lokapel is a passionate advocate for sustainable development and the director of Northern Wolves Academy, a community-based organization in Northern Kenya. With a background in data science and a degree in statistics from South Eastern Kenya University, Justus combines analytical expertise with grassroots leadership. His work focuses on promoting a circular economy through initiatives in organic farming, waste-to-manure programs, and environmental conservation. Under his guidance, Northern Wolves Academy empowers youth and indigenous communities to build sustainable livelihoods, fostering inclusive economic models that prioritize biodiversity and climate resilience.

## Vera Kloettchen



Circular Economy & Climate Consultant

Vera Kloettchen is a Climate Leader driving nature-positive and circular economy solutions working as Climate Lead for WaterAid, as well as freelance Climate and Circular Economy Consultant. Vera is a systems thinker and project manager with 10 years of international experience coordinating complex multinational projects involving executing and academic partners, government organisations, communities, and donors. Her work spans Circular Economy, WASH, Nature-Based Solutions, Sustainable Finance, Climate Change Adaptation, and green Resilient Infrastructure in East Africa and beyond.

## Benson Abila



Founder & CEO – MTAKE

Benson Abila is a social entrepreneur, sustainability advocate, and civil engineer with experience in waste management, recycling, and circular economy. He is a 2022 Mandela Washington Fellow, 2023 Metis Fellow, 2023 Jasiri Fellow and a 2024 Pamoja Fellow. As the founder of M-taka, an award winning tech-integrated waste management and recycling social enterprise, Benson is dedicated to making a lasting impact and shaping a better and sustainable future for communities across the continent.

Benson is also the founder of Homeless of Kisumu, a non-profit improving the wellbeing and livelihoods of vulnerable groups in the Kenyan Western Region. He has worked with notable partners like USAID, GIZ, Global Affairs Canada, Michigan State University, US Embassy-Kenya and KEPRO Kenya and led his teams to special programs and awards, including the World Food Programme Innovation Accelerator, United Nations SDSN 2023 Investment Readiness Program, The Presidential Innovation Award and KEPRO Sustainable Packaging, Innovation and Circular Economy (SPICE) Awards 2024 including Youth Eco-Warrior Award and Small and Medium Enterprise Circularity Champion Award.

He is serving as the current President of the US Kenya Alumni Association and also a member of the International Leadership Association. Furthermore, he serves as a board member at the Dolfine Korando Faith Foundation, championing innovation and safeguarding and the Vice President of Membership for the Kisumu ToastMasters Club. Benson's dedication to innovation and sustainability continues to inspire positive change and drive impactful solutions across his projects.

## Veronica Njeri



Africa Monitoring and  
Communications Officer  
International Tree Foundation

Veronica Njeri Ndungu is a seasoned Communications Specialist with a diverse background in media, performance management, and sustainability advocacy. Her career spans roles at Nation Media Group, The KPI Institute, and now the International Tree Foundation. At Nation Media Group, Veronica excelled in corporate event management and strategic digital communications, significantly boosting the brand's reach through high-profile events like the KUSI Ideas Festival. She later contributed her analytical expertise at The KPI Institute, where she focused on performance management and strategic insights, shaping global conversations on key performance indicators. Currently, at the International Tree Foundation, Veronica leads impactful communication strategies that promote large-scale forest restoration and community-driven sustainability projects across Africa. Her campaigns have effectively engaged diverse audiences and inspired action towards environmental conservation.

With a passion for sustainability and a commitment to creating meaningful change, Veronica brings a unique blend of media, analytical, and environmental expertise to the conversation on the circular economy. Her experience makes her an engaging and insightful voice in discussions centered on sustainable development.

## Breakout sessions

# FINANCING OPPORTUNITIES AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

# FOR SMES IN A CIRCULAR ECONOMY



Watch  
Financing  
Opportunities  
and Skills



| Name             | Organisation                                  |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Patrick Kimathi  | Co-Founder and CEO - Carbon Zero Mobility     |
| Lucy Ngorongo    | CEO and Founder - Junky Bins                  |
| Gregor Pannike   | Founder and Managing Partner - Agema Analysts |
| Laila Kassam     | Investment Officer – Grassroots Business Fund |
| Karina Faßbender | Managing Director – Circle Innovation         |
| Patrick Kimathi  | Co-Founder and CEO - Carbon Zero Mobility     |

**Moderator:**  
Peris Wangui Project  
Officer- Jiinue Growth  
Program

## SMEs at a glance

SMEs play a critical role in economic growth both locally and globally being that 90% of all business globally are SMEs. In Kenya, SMEs contribute 33% to our growth GDP. Despite this significant contribution and impact, small businesses continue to face many challenges, including lack of financing, limited market access and unfavourable policies. With such challenges, those adapting sustainability and circular economy are not an exception because this sector is emerging with a lot of innovation.

Investment is key to driving SME innovation within the circular economy sector. Financial institutions and development partners should focus on deploying capital in sustainable solutions and empower business owners with funds management skills, and provide technical assistance to create economic resilience for small businesses for sustainable livelihoods. With such investments, it will enhance employment opportunities and lower the cost of products.

## De-risking innovation actually to be suitable for the available financial opportunities for SMEs

All startups need an investment to start their operations. Nonetheless, most small businesses do not understand the compliance standards that investors look out for smooth onboarding. All businesses face risks; it is necessary to profile such risks; this helps investors to know where they are putting their money and provide sound advice on how the risks can be mitigated. Derisking depends on a lot of factors, including understanding who the investor is, what their requirements are, the stage of the company, what needs to be built at a later stage, the kind of funding or kind of financing being looked for, and what the thresholds are. Having documents adequately organized and visible for investors who are willing to invest. Small businesses should endeavour to become more professional you become if they need to attract investment. Have data by keeping documents, have it properly organized and visible for investors or a bank, or whoever wants to give you money.

"Governance structure is very important and it's something which does make sense, and helps in efficient quick decision making. Put these mechanisms in place especially if operating in different jurisdiction to enhance global competitiveness. With the dwindling grants, SMEs need to position themselves in order not to miss out of this investment opportunity".

**Karina Faßbender Managing Director – Circle Innovation**

" Because many investors, whether be it impact investor, private equity, they all want their money back at the end of it, and they also want the business to grow. No one wants to invest in a business that's going to fail or it's going to close down. when we look at it from an investor's perspective, we're not looking at burdening the company, we're trying to help the business understand whether the business is a going concern".

**Laila Kassam Investment Officer – Grassroots Business Fund**



# GOOD PRACTICES HIGHLIGHTED

## Waste Management

Circular economy within the waste management sector does not end at collection, it is a wholistic process that starts with waste segregation at source, this enhances the value of the materials collected and minimizes the amount of waste disposed in the dumpsites. Unfortunately, as critical as this work is, financial institutions like banks consider it a risk in which they are not willing to invest. Like for example approaching a bank to get a loan to buy a garbage collection truck sounds like throwing money into garbage. Financial institutions should also not consider circular economy and innovation a risk when it comes to investment.

“Lets change the analogy of garbage collection, because people think, first of all, garbage collectors are people who have not been to school, people who are dirty, people who are thieves. When filling the investment form, there’s always agriculture and agro-processing, there’s water and sanitation, but never will you see waste management, so it becomes has to access funding”.

**Lucy Ngorongo CEO and Founder - Junky Bins**



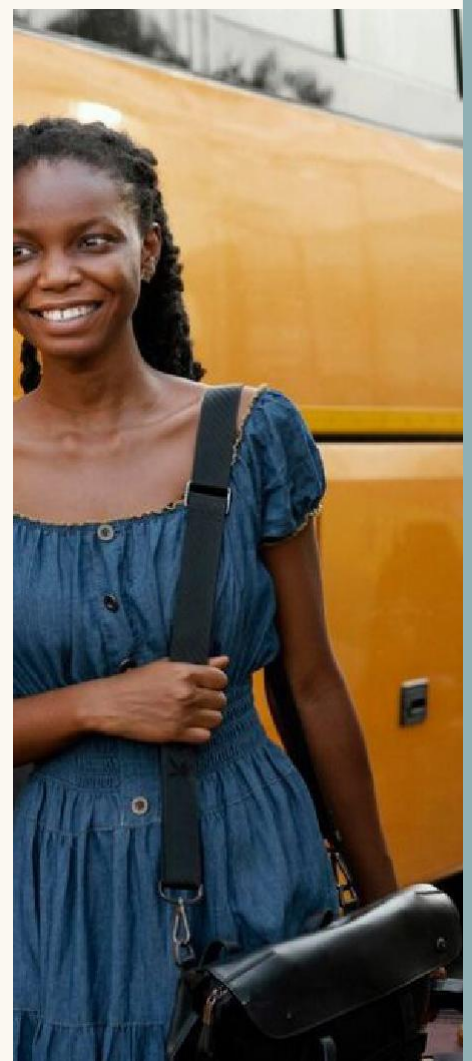
## E-Mobility solution for a sustainable Transport sector

In the wake of increasing environmental challenges, embracing electric mobility is a crucial step towards mitigating carbon emissions and building a more sustainable transport sector in Kenya and globally. These efforts, spreading over many modes of transport, e.g., vehicles, motorbikes, etc, call for improved infrastructure for ease of access to charging points and integration of green energy for a transformative leap towards sustainability. The launch of the Draft National E-Mobility Policy is a significant milestone in the transition towards a sustainable transport sector. Kenya now embarks on a journey towards partnerships and innovation. Circular economy investment tends to be capital-intensive compared to other sectors.

Lack of data and policy gaps are key challenges that are hindering investment within the e-mobility space. The draft e-mobility policy is not a document that can be used for investment purposes, and relying on global reports does not fully address our local solutions.

“Lack of financing is one of the biggest obstacles to innovation. Its key to understand the type of financing is needed and available and are able to take advantage of when planning to invest. Take advantage of existing partners, relations as the first consideration. As an SME, you need to want to have a partner who’s willing to walk the journey with you and understand your problems, because each and every SME will have those challenges”

**Patrick Kimathi- Co-Founder and CEO - Carbon Zero Mobility**



## Circular Economy Funding

Small businesses grapple with many other challenges, one of which is access to funding. Despite this the available fund are not concessional and also not circular economy targeted.

"I believe we need to have harmony, harmonization, synergies, on how we can be able to speak within KEPSA because this is an ecosystem that is there can work with financial institutions so that share knowledge on the circular economy, climate action and ensure that money is flowing to SMEs."

**Raymond Obare, Impact Investment Kenya**

Having the right products focused on circular economy needs concerted efforts that will drive the right policy to create resilience within this sector. Financial institutions have

"Unless we push for domestic resource mobilization, we will remain disadvantaged as long as the West controls the funding pipeline. Therefore, we should explore opportunities within the country to ensure resources are available for SMEs."

**Amakove Wala**

money for climate change and sustainability, and this money mostly goes to tree planting; this is the main concept of climate change sustainability that most organizations understand.

"The agribusiness space was a sector that no one wanted to touch, but now banks themselves have products suitable for the agribusiness sector."

**Laila Kassam Investment Officer – Grassroots Business Fund**



## Patrick Kimathi



Co-Founder & CEO –  
Carbon Zero Mobility

Patrick Kimathi is a cleantech enthusiast with passion for a sustainable approach to climate solutions. He is the Co-founder and CEO of carbon Zero Mobility (CZM), a Kenyan e-mobility Startup founded in 2021 with the aim of providing a two-wheeler that can be charged from any 240V. He championed the customization of a 3 KW electric motorbike under the brand name Dominion-EV which is Launching in January 2025. Before Founding CZM, Patrick founded Skynotch Energy Africa, an energy generation company that has developed a 7.8MW Mutunguru small hydro in Meru and the architect of the Community- Developer Model, an approach to inclusion of communities around an energy resource that saw 1200 households become shareholders of a small hydro through social equity.

He honed social entrepreneurship skills at United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) Kenya where he was a programme coordinator for renewable energy project during the period when Kenya was changing the policy to allow private sector participation in Energy Sector Development.

Patrick Holds a MBA - Entrepreneurship and Innovation from Oxford University (Said Business School), B.A (English & Literature) from Kenyatta University and Diploma in Public Relations from Kenya Institute of Management.

## Lucy Ngorongo



CEO and founder of  
Junky Bins

Lucy Ngorongo is the CEO and founder of Junky Bins, a waste management company that has been in operation since 2014. She is a wife and mother of three. Lucy recently graduated from the European Business Institute Luxembourg with a degree in Entrepreneurship and Communication.

Under her leadership, Junky Bins currently collects 15 tons of waste daily, with plans to significantly increase waste sorting and recycling efforts, particularly focusing on organic waste and Black Soldier Fly (BSF) production and converting Organic Waste to Protein Feeds and Organic Fertilizer. Junky Bins generates income from recycling materials like plastics, cartons, and glass and aims to empower more women in its workforce.

Lucy is also recognized for her commitment to environmental sustainability. She has received several awards, including the Environmental Conservation Leader of the Year award from Women In Business Network (WIB) 2022, the Best SME Women-Led Innovation Award from KEPSA in August 2024, and the Double Gold Sustainability Award in October 2024 in London during the Global Awards at the GWIIN Conference 2024.

## Gregor Pannike



Founder & Managing  
Partner – Agema Analysts

Mr. Gregor Pannike obtained his degree Master of Laws from the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University in Frankfurt am Main and from the Ministry of Justice of Baden Wuerttemberg in Germany after finalization of his legal clerkship at the district court of Freiburg i.

Brsq./Germany.

He completed his LL.M. studies at Suffolk University Law School in Boston, Massachusetts, where he was awarded the academic degree Master of Laws - LL.M. in U.S. and Global Business Laws. Since 2007 Mr. Gregor Pannike is admitted the courts of Germany and to the German Bar Association in Freiburg i. Brsq./Germany. In 2018 he graduated from the London Business School where he was awarded the degree of Master of Business Administration (MBA). Mr. Gregor Pannike is a licensed legal consultant in the UAE.

## Laila Kassam



Investment Officer –  
Grassroots Business  
Funds

Laila is a seasoned Investment Officer at GBF, bringing over eight years of specialized experience in SME lending and blended finance. She holds an MBA from the United States International University (USIU) and has further honed her expertise with a certificate in carbon finance from the Renewable Energy Institute UK, as well as an accounting certificate from Wharton Business School Online. Laila's depth of knowledge in finance is matched by her passion for her work, and she is dedicated to driving impactful financial solutions for SMEs.

## Karina Faßbender



Managing Director –  
Circle Innovation

Karina is a systems innovation expert with more than 10 years of experience working with innovators, entrepreneurs and intrapreneurs to develop, launch and scale innovations that are tackling some of the biggest challenges in Africa. She is passionate about working with creative and dedicated minds to develop and scale impactful innovations in East Africa. She is the founder and Managing Director of Circle Innovation, a climate innovation catalyst headquartered in Nairobi. Circle Innovation is actively building thriving, sustainable and resilient communities through systems transformation, entrepreneurship and innovation. Karina holds a Master of Science in Business and Development Studies from Copenhagen Business School, and a Bachelor of Science in International Business Administration and Management from WHU - Otto Beisheim School of Management.

## Peris Wangui



Project Officer – Jiinue  
Growth Program

Peris holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree in Finance and is a Certified Public Accountant. With over 10 years of experience in project management, youth empowerment, enterprise development, and business incubation, she is especially passionate about harnessing the power of entrepreneurship to foster sustainable change. As the Project Officer in SME and Enterprise Development at KEPSA, she has been instrumental in designing market-driven programs that bolster economic resilience and support MSMEs in thriving. Her work has focused on building pathways for young people and MSMEs to access opportunities, reach their potential, and create lasting impact within their communities. With deep insights into both financing and skill-building for enterprises, Peris brings a valuable perspective on closing the gap between investor expectations and SME readiness, understanding the role of new financing models, and identifying government policies that can catalyze growth in the circular economy. She is committed to advancing initiatives that equip SMEs to integrate circular practices, supporting Kenya's broader goals for sustainable economic development.

Nairobi, Kenya  
November 14, 2024

# THE INAUGURAL CIRCULAR ECONOMY AWARDS

Circular economy trailblazers feted at the 9th circular economy conference and inaugural circular economy awards



[Read more on category winners](#)

The 2024 Inaugural Circular Economy Awards by incredible partnership between Sustainable Inclusive Business Kenya, under the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), and the Rondure Advisory recognized and celebrated the trailblazers accelerating the transition to a circular economy in Kenya, at 9th Circular Economy Conference and Awards held at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa Learning and Resource Center.

The awards received over 200 applicants, and the judges settled on 23 entries for the finalist. These inaugural awards had categories including:

- 🏆 The Circular Economy Campaign/Community Action of the Year,
- 🏆 The Circular Economy's Most Innovative Project of the Year,
- 🏆 The Circular Economy Best EPR Scheme of the Year,
- 🏆 The Circular Economy SME of the Year (Food, Agriculture, textiles),
- 🏆 The Circular Economy Technology Disruptor of the Year,
- 🏆 The Circular Economy Financier of the Year,
- 🏆 The Circular Economy Leader of the Year and
- 🏆 The Circular Economy Young Champion of the Year Award.



## CIRCULAR AWARDS MOMENTS



[Read more on category winners](#)

## CONFERENCE PARTNERS



**SUSTAINABLE  
INCLUSIVE** BUSINESS  
THE KNOWLEDGE CENTRE KENYA

### SUSTAINABLE INCLUSIVE BUSINESS

Sustainable Inclusive Business Kenya is a knowledge Center established through a fruitful partnership between the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) and MVO Nederland with the support of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Kenya. SIB-K spearheads the adoption of sustainable and circular business practices in Kenya through impactful knowledge-sharing and strategic collaborations.



## KENYA PRIVATE SECTOR ALLIANCE (KEPSA)

The Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) is the apex body for the private sector in Kenya. KEPSA brings together local and foreign business associations, federations, chambers of commerce, professional bodies that are sectoral umbrella bodies and individual sectoral business membership organizations, corporates, from multinationals to large and medium sized companies, SMEs, and start-ups from all sectors of the economy, across all parts of the country. This gives KEPSA a reach of over 2 million businesses directly and indirectly. KEPSA also serves as the national focal point of the East Africa Business Council (EABC), the umbrella body of businesses in East Africa. It hosts the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Kenya Chapter, a member of the ICC with a reach of over 45 million businesses globally.



# TheRockGroup

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## **THEROCKGROUP (TRG)**

TheRockGroup (TRG) is an ambitious agency driving the transition towards a sustainable economy and society. We believe that fair and sustainable business can and should accelerate this transition. Therefore, we work on entrepreneurial solutions with innovators, companies, civil society, knowledge institutes and policymakers.

TRG has decades of experience in supporting businesses with their Sustainability Strategy, ESG, Compliance, Impact measurement and Improvement plans, Materiality Matrices, Development of new sustainable businesses and sustainability education (academia, masters).



# A HIGHLIGHT OF GOOD PRACTICES IN CIRCULAR ECONOMY

At our recent Circular Economy Conference, we were privileged to witness a vibrant showcase of innovation and sustainability, highlighted by the enthusiastic participation of numerous companies and organisations who are in the circular economy space and have seamlessly integrated Circular Economy models into their business practices.

These visionary enterprises demonstrated not only their commitment to reducing waste

and promoting sustainable resource use but also their ability to turn these principles into real-world applications that benefit both the economy and the environment.

In our special edition of good practices [\[click here to read\]](#), we spotlight these forward-thinking exhibitors, celebrating their remarkable contributions and inspiring good practices in the evolving circular economy landscape.



**[Learn more about the impact of these best practices](#)**

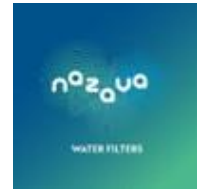


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brown's  
food co



green<sup>thing</sup>



Practical  
ACTION



Momix Enterprises



## VOICES FROM THE FRONTLINE: INSIGHTS FROM OUR DELEGATES

During our 9th Circular Economy Conference on November 14th, we had the pleasure of hosting ICON Radio's Sustainability Connect Show on-site. The show conducted insightful interviews with our delegates, capturing their thoughts, experiences, and visions for a sustainable future. This segment highlights the key takeaways and inspiring messages shared by our conference attendees.



Watch Dr. Amakove Wala Interview

### **Dr Amakove Wala - Chief Visionary Officer Wanderlust Diaries Ltd**

Dr. Makove, advocates passionately for sustainable travel and awareness in the tourism sector. Her mission focuses on connecting travelers with trade partners who embrace sustainability. she emphasizes the importance of understanding the sustainability language among travelers, particularly addressing pressing issues like plastic waste in the industry.

i



Watch Saitoti Meitamei interview

### **Mr. Saitoti Meitamei - Director - Delight Technical College & Delight Africa Corporate Training Solutions**

At the Circular Economy Conference & Awards 2024, Saitoti Meitamei shed light on vocational training's crucial role in shaping a sustainable future. Saitoti Meitamei shares insights on how vocational training is vital for sustainable development. Delight Technical College, founded in 2015, is dedicated to equipping Kenyans with essential technical skills that address gaps in vocational education. Promoting self-employment and sustainable practices, the college emphasizes the use of upcycled materials in fashion. Upcycling not only fosters environmental protection but also utilizes existing resources effectively. Africa's rich history of sustainable fashion practices deserves recognition, underscoring the need for greater awareness in this area.

i



Watch Miss Earth Kenya Faith Wanyama interview

### Miss Earth Kenya Faith Wanyama

Miss Earth Kenya, Faith Wanyama, passionately addressed the importance of sustainability in driving meaningful change. On the side-lines of the conference, she underscored the critical role of environmental advocacy. Faith elaborated on her mission to promote sustainability through her shoe and clothing donation project, which aims to uplift families in need while adhering to the principles of recycling, reducing, and reusing. Her personal journey towards sustainability has been shaped by her childhood experiences, sparking a passion for creative recycling. She advocates for improved environmental practices and waste management in Kenya, emphasizing the urgency of these issues.



Watch Shanariha Evans Interview

### Shanariha Evans Young Environmentalist and Author of "The Ocean Warrior"

Shanariha Evans is a multifaceted talent: a musician, author, and ardent environmentalist whose passion for climate action and biodiversity preservation is both inspiring and necessary. Witnessing pollution at her local beach ignited her desire to conserve and restore affected ecosystems, particularly in coastal areas vulnerable to the detrimental impacts of tourism and deforestation. Shanariha's advocacy emphasizes the urgent need to address plastic waste, which often ends up in our oceans, harming marine life. Through her book, 'The Ocean Warrior,' Shanariha aims to raise awareness about plastic pollution, drawing from her personal experiences at Mombasa's beaches. By educating over 700 students on climate change and advocating for sustainability, she demonstrates the power of youth in driving change.



Watch Tatiana Interview

### Tatiana, the founder and creative director of Afro Wema

Tatiana, the founder and creative director of Afro Wema, shares her journey of empowering African artisans through sustainable fashion. Founded with the mission to care for local communities, Afro Wema collaborates with artisans in Keta to create unique fashion collections. At Afro Wema, each artisan manages their own workshop, fostering creativity and craftsmanship. The brand boasts two distinct lines: daily wear and high fashion, while also expanding into fashion events. Notably, Afro Wema is the only African label invited to showcase at a prestigious international event, emphasizing the brand's commitment to excellence in sustainable fashion.





[Learn more about Gigastream here](#)

### **Miriam Waititu - GigaStream Media**

Miriam GigaStream Media showcased their cutting-edge advertising solutions, emphasizing a commitment to sustainability in Kenya's advertising landscape.

With a focus on impactful marketing, Gig Stream Media is leading the charge in promoting eco-friendly advertising solutions. Their innovative approach stems from recognizing the current gap in sustainable advertising in Kenya, presenting a unique opportunity for growth in this crucial area.

The introduction of 'Hewa Safi' marks a significant leap forward in addressing environmental concerns linked to traditional advertising. This revolutionary material not only captures airborne pollutants but also serves as a printable branding surface, thus bridging the gap between effective marketing and environmental responsibility.



[Watch Leah Akoth Insights here](#)

### **Leah Akoth – Freelance Journalist, Graphic Designer at Practical Africa**

Leah Akoth shines a light on the vital role journalists play in advancing sustainability stories. Discover how impactful storytelling can drive change.

Journalists are instrumental in advancing the circular economy by sharing impactful stories centered on sustainability. Leah Akoth emphasizes the importance of understanding the circular economy's structure, which enables journalists to communicate its benefits effectively.

By authentically revealing sustainability issues, journalists uncover overlooked environmental impacts, such as pollution from the fashion industry. Accurate reporting allows them to act as watchdogs, fostering public awareness and accountability.



# THROUGH THE MEDIA LENS

## Conference Photos



CELEBRATING



**SUSTAINABLE  
INCLUSIVE** BUSINESS  
THE KNOWLEDGE CENTRE KENYA

10 Years  
ANNIVERSARY  
Since 2015

DRIVING SUSTAINABILITY & INCLUSION

CIRCULAR ECONOMY | CLIMATE CHANGE & BIODIVERSITY | PEOPLE POWER | REDFINING BUSINESS VALUES



**SUSTAINABLE  
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[sustainableinclusivebusiness.org](https://sustainableinclusivebusiness.org)



Circular Economy Africa

[circulareconomyafrica.org](https://circulareconomyafrica.org)



[karin@sustainableinclusivebusiness.org](mailto:karin@sustainableinclusivebusiness.org)  
[nahashon@sustainableinclusivebusiness.org](mailto:nahashon@sustainableinclusivebusiness.org)



### GIVE US A SHOUT!

TOGETHER, WE ARE NOT JUST WITNESSES TO CHANGE; WE ARE ITS ARCHITECTS, FORGING A PATH TOWARD A BETTER FUTURE FOR GENERATIONS TO COME.