

# Heifer International Announces Winners at AYuTe NextGen 2025: Youth-Led Innovation Set to Transform Africa's Agriculture

*Four young AgriTech innovators have emerged as the winners of the AYuTe NextGen 2025 competition*

KAMPALA, UGANDA, June 23, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Four young agricultural technology (AgriTech) innovators have emerged as the winners of the AYuTe NextGen 2025 competition, following three days of presentations, open dialogue, and bold ideas in Kampala, Uganda. Developed and hosted by [Heifer International](#), AYuTe NextGen is Africa's premier platform for youth-led agricultural innovation, designed to empower young people in shaping the future of food.



AYuTe NextGen 2025 Winners (L-R): Carolyn Mwangi, Founder and CEO of Kimplanter Seedlings and Nurseries (Kenya), Nana Opoku, CEO of Grow For Me (Ghana), Richies Attai, Co-Founder and CEO of Winich Farms (Nigeria), and Maryanne Gichanga, CEO of Agritechs A

This year's event, held under the theme 'AgTech Generation Rising,' brought together emerging leaders, investors, policymakers, and development partners from across the continent. Their shared mission: to spotlight and scale solutions that are transforming small-scale farming and accelerating agricultural progress across Africa, especially for smallholder farmers.

## Innovation on the Rise: Meet the 2025 Winners

Following a rigorous selection process that evaluated over 100 applications from 10 African countries, 11 finalists earned the opportunity to pitch their innovations live before a panel of investors and policy leaders. Representing sectors ranging from finance and microfinance to agriculture, climate innovation, and telecommunications, the judges assessed each solution based on its value to smallholder farmers, technological soundness and data security, social impact, scalability, team capacity, and overall financial viability.

Finalists competed in two core categories: Climate-Smart Agriculture and Access to Finance and Markets. In the Climate-Smart Agriculture Category, the overall winner was Carolyn Mwangi, Founder and CEO of Kimplanter Seedlings and Nurseries (Kenya), whose data-driven enterprise supplies climate-resilient vegetable, fruit, and tree seedlings tailored for smallholder farmers. The first runner-up was Maryanne Gichanga, CEO of Agritech Analytics (Kenya), recognized for her solar-powered farm sensors that enable pest alerts, soil health monitoring, and remote farm management via mobile tools.



Heifer International staff and young innovators at the AYuTe NextGen Conference 2025

In the Access to Finance and Markets Category, the overall winner was Nana Opoku, CEO of Grow For Me (Ghana), whose digital platform empowers individuals to invest in crops managed by experienced farmers, sharing profits post-harvest. The first runner-up was Richies Attai, Co-Founder and CEO of Winich Farms (Nigeria), whose end-to-end tech platform connects farmers directly to factories and provides bundled credit and insurance solutions.

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*Adesuwa Ifedi*

Speaking after receiving the award, Carolyn Mwangi said: "This recognition means so much, not just to me, but to our entire team at Kimplanter. We have always believed that building resilience for smallholder farmers starts with something as simple, yet powerful, as the right seedlings. Winning AYuTe NextGen is not just a milestone for our

team, it's a sign that Africa's agricultural future will be shaped by innovation, data, and the determination of young entrepreneurs like us."

Reflecting on the impact of the award, Nana Opoku said: "This opportunity validates our work and marks the beginning of a major shift for Ghana's smallholder farmers. It will go a long way in unlocking financial opportunities, bringing greater stability, increasing incomes, and providing protection against crop losses. This win is not just ours, it is a win for smallholder farmers across Ghana."

A Movement, Not Just a Competition

“Across the continent, more than 2,000 agritech startups are operating today, many of them led by young Africans,” said [Adesuwa Ifedi](#), Senior Vice President, Africa Programs at Heifer International. “These young agripreneurs are unlocking opportunities at every stage of the agricultural value chain. They are driving a revolution in how we grow food, share information, and respond to climate challenges. We are here to help connect the dots in this powerful movement, because when youth and technology come together, they become catalysts for change.”

## Voices from the Youth

Beyond the pitches, AYuTe NextGen featured powerful discussions led by young people. These sessions offered insights into the challenges, opportunities, and urgent need for changes in food systems. Highlights included:

- Growing a Unicorn in Agriculture, exploring how high-growth agricultural startups can expand their impact across the continent.
- Same Soil, Many Paths: Africa for Africa, showing how local contexts drive unique agricultural technology solutions with a shared purpose.
- Not Just Founders: Youth as Architects of the Agri-Future, reframing young people as system builders, not just startup owners.
- Who is Shaping Africa’s Food Story? A direct call for bold action from funders, policymakers, and institutions.

## From Kampala to the Continent

AYuTe NextGen 2025 united innovators and partners from across Africa, including Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, Ghana, Tanzania, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Malawi, and Senegal, fostering crucial collaboration for the future of food. As the event concluded, a united call to action emerged for all stakeholders to empower Africa's agricultural transformation.

Various speakers urged investors to provide catalytic capital for early-stage AgriTech; governments to create supportive policies and regulations; the private sector to build essential digital and physical infrastructure through partnerships; and mentors to offer technical expertise and market access. This collective effort, according to them, will unlock the full potential of African agriculture, driven by its dynamic youth and centered on the resilience of smallholder farmers.

## About Heifer International

Since 1944, Heifer International has worked with more than 52 million people around the world to end hunger and poverty in a sustainable way, while caring for the Earth. Heifer currently operates in 19 countries across Africa, Asia, and the Americas, supporting farmers and food

producers to strengthen local economies and build secure livelihoods that provide a living income. For more information, visit <https://www.heifer.org>

Media Contact:

Muthoni Ngure  
Regional Communications Coordinator  
Heifer International, Africa.  
[Muthoni.Ngure@heifer.org](mailto:Muthoni.Ngure@heifer.org)

Mark Foxwell  
Lantern Comitas  
[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

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