

AfDB names 25 finalists in AgriPitch competition

Twenty-five youth-led agriculture sector companies from 14 African countries have advanced to the finalist round of the African Development Bank Group's 2022 AgriPitch competition.

The bank, in collaboration with the implementing lead Private Equity Support and partner organisations Eldohub and the Private Finance Advisory Network, announced the 25 finalists for the competition that will award \$140,000 in grants and business skills training.



Source: Supplied

The competition is a central and recurring activity of the African Development Bank's Enable Youth Programme sponsored by the Youth Entrepreneurship and Innovation Trust Fund of the Bank, and targets African youth aged 18 to 35 years working in the agricultural value chain.

The 25 finalists include 17 women-owned or led small and medium enterprises. Thirteen are from Francophone countries, while the other 12 are from Anglophone countries.

"These young agripreneurs show great potential and are a testament to the level of innovation that exists across Africa. The bank's support, through the AgriPitch competition will boost the bankability of these projects and provide a tangible step towards enhancing agribusiness and food security on the continent," says Edson Mpyisi, the bank's chief financial economist and Enable Youth coordinator.

The competition received over 1,000 applications from African agripreneurs, including around 250 entries from women-owned or led small and medium enterprises.

Role that the agricultural sector plays

"It's reassuring to see and evaluate hundreds of great potential investment opportunities from across the

region," says Diana Gichaga, managing partner at Private Equity Support. "It reaffirms the crucial role that the agricultural sector plays in the African economy and the continued efforts to bring these initiatives to the forefront through platforms such as the AgriPitch Competition," she adds.

The 2022 edition will award three start-up categories:

- Early start-ups (zero to three years of operation),
- Mature start-ups (three or more years in operation) and
- Women-empowered businesses (firms with at least 51% share of women ownership or founded by a woman).

The 25 finalists will receive training to build business skill capacity with the requisite tools and knowledge to bolster their investor readiness, financial management, and help them pitch bankable business proposals.

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