Deutsche Afrika Stiftung e.V.
Fondation Allemande pour l'Afrique
German Africa Foundation

PRESS RELEASE

Wawira Njiru receives the 2026 German Africa Prize

Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development Reem Alabali Radovan presents the award in recognition of Njiru's pioneering work in school feeding, educational opportunities and economic development.

Berlin, [5 November 2026] – Kenyan nutrition expert and social entrepreneur Wawira Njiru was awarded the 2026 German Africa Prize on Wednesday evening, 4 November. Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development Reem Alabali Radovan presented the award at a ceremony held at the Allianz Forum in Berlin. With the prize, the German Africa Foundation recognises Njiru's pioneering approach to combining school feeding with educational support and local economic development.

"The business model behind Food4Education is both socially responsible and logical," said jury president Claus Stäcker in his laudatory speech. Logical because Njiru does not view school feeding in isolation, but as part of an entire system: it not only improves educational opportunities for Kenyan children, but also creates economic cycles that benefit many – from children and their families to local businesses.

Through her organisation Food4Education, the 35-year-old now provides around 730,000 children in Kenya with nutritious and affordable school meals every day. In schools participating in Food4Education's programs, attendance has increased by up to 10%, enrolment by 27%, and national examination performance has improved by 20%. At the same time, the organisation creates employment opportunities and prospects for local economic development: around 80 per cent of the food used is sourced from producers and suppliers in Kenya and the surrounding region, and the organisation has already created more than 6,000 jobs. As a result, more than 200 million US dollars has already flowed into the Kenyan economy, with an estimated 150 million US dollars in income expected to be generated for local farmers by 2030. This, as President of the German Africa Foundation Dr Uschi Eid emphasised, is precisely how economic development can reach people and be driven by them – through collaboration between local businesses, civil society and public authorities.

In her speech, Federal Minister Alabali Radovan highlighted that Wawira Njiru demonstrates how a school meal is much more than just a plate of food. "It is an investment in the future of entire societies." Through Food4Education, Njiru has built structures that are sustainable in the long term and can grow in line with demand – including beyond Kenya.

For Njiru, this is also one of the key messages underpinning her work: "African solutions can serve as a blueprint not only for Africa, but for the entire world." The continent is full of creativity, resourcefulness and ideas. By 2050, one in four people worldwide will be of African descent. However, this potential will not realise itself. Targeted investment in young people and their economic participation is essential. This requires partnerships built on local expertise and enabling mutual learning.

The German Africa Prize has been awarded by the **German Africa Foundation** since 1993. It honours outstanding individuals from African countries who make exceptional contributions to democracy, peace, sustainable development, environment, research and innovation, cultural exchange and human rights. The recipients are selected by an independent 20-member jury. The Chair of the Jury is Claus

Stäcker, Head of Africa Programmes at Deutsche Welle. The award ceremony is conducted by high-ranking representatives of Germany's constitutional bodies. Through the prize, the Foundation highlights individuals whose ideas and work provide inspiration for global challenges beyond their countries of origin. The German Africa Foundation is a non-partisan foundation committed to promoting a nuanced understanding of Africa in political discourse and among the German public.

Press contact

Larissa Pflüger
Senior Adviser for Political Communication and Public Relations
German Africa Foundation
Phone: +49 152 27418693
Email: pflueger@deutsche-afrika-stiftung.de