

A total of US\$85,000 in grant funding was awarded to the four winners announced during a live ceremony, in the categories: Young Female Agripreneur, Female Ag Tech Innovator, Outstanding Value Adding Enterprise, and Overall Grand Prize.

An important part of AGRA's VALUE4Her program, WAYA recognizes women agripreneurs from across the continent who have excelled in different segments of the agricultural value chain and shown remarkable innovation in their businesses.

Launched in 2018, the awards aim to promote female success stories and role models, trigger innovation and spur ambition among women agripreneurs.

This year, the competition has grown, welcoming applications from a total of 1,478 women from 38 countries across Africa.

A shortlist of 15 finalists from seven countries was drawn up following several rounds of rigorous evaluation which appraised the candidates' vision, innovations, business impact on the community and their growth potential.

The awards were judged by an esteemed panel comprising: Irene Ochem, Irene, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Africa Women Innovation and Entrepreneurship Forum (AWIEF); Marieme Esther Dassanou, Manager of the African Development Bank's Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa programme (AFAWA); Betty Kiplagat, the Lead of Government and Industry Affairs, Africa and Middle East at Corteva; Everlyn Musyoka, Smallholder Strategy Lead for Africa at Bayer Crop Science, Robynne Anderson, President and CEO of Emerging ag inc; and, Binta Toure Ndoye, Independent Non-Executive Board Director within the Attijariwafa Group in Senegal.

Dr. Agnes Kalibata, president of AGRA said, 'I would like to congratulate our 2022 WAYA winners. Each is a remarkable role model to the thousands of women across Africa working to make their mark on African agriculture, and embodies the ambitions of VALUE4Her.

"Although women comprise around 40% of Africa's rural workforce and contribute up to 70% of food production, their efforts are still significantly under-recognised when it comes to business opportunities and investment" She said.

Adding, "The unique stories of our four winners will help us to inspire and enhance advocacy for female agripreneurs across Africa, to build an environment that

supports women to catalyse the needed transformation of Africa's food systems.”