

IAF SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)
Space Education Outreach and Workforce Development for Emerging Communities (10-E11.2)

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ADVANCING SPACE EXPLORATION WHILE CULTIVATING INCLUSIVITY AND RECOGNIZING
IMPACT ON AFRICAN WOMEN AND GIRLS

Abstract

Space-based capabilities are vital to the global way of life for billions around the world. What appears to be a simple ask for directions on your phone or the daily weather forecast are just not possible without space-based technologies. For Africa, Space based technologies can have a significant impact on challenges like wildlife tracking, deforestation, illegal mining, and agriculture. Africa is poised to lead the New Space Economy with expansion of satellite communications to connect billions of people to new opportunities. The New Space economy now gives rise to developing countries to enhance their workforce and build to future capabilities and collaboration. Within this framework, the quest to empower African women in the realm of space exploration leads to the poignant journey of the untapped potential, unlocked reservoir of creativity and unique problem-solving capabilities that women uniquely have. We center on fostering inclusivity, acknowledging the influential role of women, and emphasizing the critical need for international partnership and collaboration, particularly within the African context. We aim to show their multifaceted impact on the global space sector. This initiative transcends the call for diversity, resonating with the acknowledgment of women's influence in the space. It serves as a cornerstone in addressing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially those that affect African women. Empowering African women in space and around space technology becomes more than a regional necessity; it evolves into a catalyst for global advancements, a new perspective that transcend geographical boundaries. This effort envisions the creation of a Space Technology and Innovation Hub designed to focus on the aspirations of women in STEM. Fueled by international collaboration and emphasize on the imperative of creating a space where African women participate in the global landscape of space exploration and it will allow for tech transfer between space focused nations under the umbrella of the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) context. There is a need to navigate the cosmic landscape, where the empowerment of African women in space not only shows regional progress but becomes a testament to a global odyssey of innovation, strength, and inclusivity. Space like the ocean is shared by all and each countries actions within space can have a significant effect on the globe, therefore, it's critical that we include all space faring nations and those citizens to include women aspiring to be in the dialogue as crucial to continued space development.