

The Africa Young Feminist Blog “Sauti صوتي” winners

DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

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Africa’s creative young women and girls are awarded for their art and impact amid COVID-19. The African Union through the Office of the AU Youth Envoy in collaboration with the Women, Gender and Development Directorate created **Africa Young Feminist blog “Sauti صوتي”**, a first of its kind in the AU, as a platform to amplify young African women voices, feature their initiatives to address COVID-19 pandemic as well as empower and support young African women creative by showcasing their artworks and reinforce the linguistic diversity of Africa.

This project is in line with Agenda 2063 Aspiration 6 which calls for an Africa, whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth as well as Office of the Youth Envoy **2019/2020 Action** under Innovation Model and **AU strategy on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment**.

“The impact of COVID-19 on women and girls is multi-dimensional and, therefore, the responses have to be appropriate to meet the differential and multiple ways in which women may be affected. One of them is by amplifying the voices of young women on the African continent and the diaspora through Sauti صوتي publication and having their critical voices heard and responded to accordingly “MS. Lehau Victoria Maloka, Acting Director of Women, Gender and Development Directorate (WGDD)

The annual blog was launched during International Women’s Day 8 March 2020 followed by re-launch in May adjusting to COVID-19 outbreak, calling for young women from across Africa and the diaspora to share their stories, in writing, visual, audio and videos to further showcasing their innovation and impact in the community

“COVID-19 is bringing to light the profound gender disparity in the various sectors, with an increase of Gender-Based Violence as a result of the lockdowns. Therefore, the agency and experiences of young African feminists must be amplified through the first-ever blog of the African Union; *Sauti صوتي*”, African Union Chairperson’s Special Envoy on Youth, Ms. Aya Chebbi.

Following submission from about 500 young women, a review committee vetted and selected 25 outstanding young women who will be featured on the African Union website and also on the Sauti صوتي publication which will be available online and distributed to AU member states. In addition to the aforementioned honors, each winner will be awarded \$200USD cash prize. See list of winners. <https://au.int/en/sauti-blog>

The Sauti صوتي project was made possible with the support of the Children's Investment Fund Foundation and Forum for African Women Educationalists.

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About the African Union Youth Envoy

Ms Aya Chebbi, is the first African Union Youth Envoy and the youngest diplomat at the African Union Commission. The AU Youth Envoy is mandated to serve as a representative of and advocate for the voices and interests of African youth to the relevant African Union decision-making bodies. Since her appointment on November 1st, 2018, the AU Youth Envoy's office has engaged African Youth on the continent and in the diaspora to draw them towards supporting and promoting positive social change, intergenerational dialogue and concrete action for Africa's development as underscored in Agenda 2063.

The AU Office of the Youth Envoy is a Pan-African collaborative movement with a committed AU Youth Advisory Council supporting the office mandate and spearheading regional engagement. As mandated by the chairperson, the AU Youth Envoy launched the [2019/2020 Action Plan](#). The OYE supports the work of the African Union, Department Human Resources, Science and Technology Department (Youth Division) on youth mainstreaming and advocacy for the implementation of progressive policies and impactful actions that promote youth participation, engagement and leadership towards the realisation of real transformation for youth development.