

---

## INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

Press Release No:

Date: 12 June 2026

Venue: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

### **African Union Showcases 30 High-Impact African Startups Driving Food & Energy Sovereignty Challenge 2026**

The African Union Commission (AUC), Department of Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals (ETTİM) in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment (ARBE), the Department of Infrastructure and Energy (IED), and the Department of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (ESTI) launched the [Call for Applications for the Food and Energy Sovereignty Challenge 2026](#) on 11 May 2026.

The Challenge has culminated in the selection of **30 pioneering African startups and SMEs** as the inaugural cohort of the Food and Energy Sovereignty Challenge 2026: ***“Rooted and Powered in Resilience.”***

The selected innovators, known as **“Sovereignty Builders,”** were chosen for their demonstrated capacity to create African Solution to African Problem and transform locally developed technologies into scalable industrial solutions that strengthen Africa’s food security, energy independence, and economic resilience. The Challenge was launched in response to growing global supply chain disruptions and the urgent need to accelerate Africa’s strategic autonomy in food and energy systems. The initiative aligns with the [aspirations of Agenda 2063](#) and seeks to bridge the gap between innovation and large-scale deployment by connecting high-maturity African enterprises with governments, financial institutions, investors, and industrial partners. Selected solutions meet the Challenge’s requirement of Technology Readiness Level (validated prototype or above) and demonstrate strong potential for continental scale-up.

#### **Transforming Food Sovereignty**

The Food Sovereignty Track showcases innovators tackling critical challenges across agricultural productivity, climate resilience, food processing, storage, water management, circular bio-economy, and precision agriculture. Solutions include technologies for industrializing indigenous crops, deploying AI-powered irrigation systems, converting organic waste into bio-inputs, solar-powered pest detection, decentralized agro-processing, AI-driven logistics, and smart grain storage.

This cohort demonstrates how African innovation can reduce dependence on imported fertilizers, pesticides, seeds, and food processing technologies while strengthening resilient domestic value chains.

#### **Accelerating Energy Sovereignty**

The Energy Sovereignty Track highlights startups building African-owned solutions for renewable energy, smart grids, e-mobility, energy efficiency, bioenergy, circular energy systems, and critical mineral value chains. Solutions include AI-powered grid intelligence, locally assembled electric mobility infrastructure, decentralized solar power systems, mineral recovery from waste, clean cooking fuels, integrated solar cold chains, waste-to-fuel innovations, and modernized bioenergy systems.

These solutions demonstrate Africa’s capacity to reduce reliance on imported hydrocarbons while building resilient, locally driven energy ecosystems capable of powering industry, agriculture, and transport.

### Building Africa’s Sovereign Industrial Future

The selected startups represent Africa’s rich entrepreneurial diversity and technological ingenuity. Through the Challenge, the African Union aims to facilitate access to financing, strengthen Business-to-Government (B2G) partnerships, promote regulatory harmonization and market integration, and support the industrial scaling of African solutions capable of replacing imports and strengthening continental resilience.

The Sovereignty Builders will participate in the upcoming African Business Summit, benefiting from strategic matchmaking with investors, development finance institutions, industry leaders, and Member States, while gaining visibility through the forthcoming ***Africa Food & Energy Sovereignty Catalog 2026***.

### Selected "Sovereignty Builders" (Top 30)

Track A: Food Sovereignty Company	Country	Name
Qareeb / Q-Farming	Algeria	Adam Debba
Agro-Eco Services SSaFe / WaTAIR	Benin	Noël Obognon Marielle Yasmine Agbahoungbata
General Biotech Sarl	Cameroon	Mouafo Foguieng Stephen
P-Vita Green Technology	Egypt	Mohamed Abdelzaher
Seven Lakes Green Solutions Plc Lucy Enset	Ethiopia	Yohannes Woldekidan Gebreyohannes Lucy Enset
Ecorich Solutions Silo Africa	Kenya	Joyce Rugano Nathan Rugut

MAMLO FOODS CropScanAI Farmer Lifeline Technologies Ltd		Irene Etyang Jacob Rugano Esther Kimani
Qiqi Farms Global	Nigeria	Favour Adeleke
Leruo Smart Food Growing Technologies (SFG Box)	South Africa	Tumelo Makgaka Cebie Nkambule
Ngwilago / Plant-Talk Ngwala / Circular Bio-Input	Tanzania	Edmond Ngwalago Cornel Mtavangu
Retist Solutions Limited	Zambia	Mutale Mumba

<b>Track B: Energy Sovereignty</b> <b>Company</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Name</b>
ARNIO	Côte d'Ivoire	Jean Hontinfinde Avohou
UMOJA SARL Owanga	DR Congo	Victor Materanya Benedict Owanga
Green Scene Energy Plc	Ethiopia	Rekik Ayele
Collarosta Technologies Progreen Innovations	Kenya	Ivan Omondi James Muritu
WE SOLUTIONS-SAS	Mali	Vieux Zana Coulibaly
Taka Energy	Mozambique	Yury Francisco
Electricity Analysis / Electra Fizzle Power Tech Smokeless Briqs Energy	Nigeria	Kayode Alade Kehinde Fasola Eunice Adewale
Feeding Africa Aqua Farming (FAAF)	South Africa	Hendrik Jacobs

## Statement

The Food and Energy Sovereignty Challenge demonstrates that Africa possesses the innovation, talent, and entrepreneurial leadership necessary to build resilient food and energy systems from within. These Sovereignty Builders are not merely startups; they are architects of Africa's industrial future and strategic autonomy.

The African Union Commission congratulates all selected innovators and looks forward to working with Member States, investors, development partners, and industry stakeholders to accelerate the deployment of African-made solutions that will drive sustainable growth, strengthen sovereignty, and advance the aspirations of Agenda 2063.

**For further inquires, please contact:**

**Email:** [FoodEnergySovereignty@AfricanUnion.org](mailto:FoodEnergySovereignty@AfricanUnion.org)

**Information and Communication Directorate,** African Union Commission | **E-mail:** [Media@africanunion.org](mailto:Media@africanunion.org)  
**Web:** [au.int](http://au.int) | Addis Ababa, Ethiopia | **Follow Us:** [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [YouTube](#)