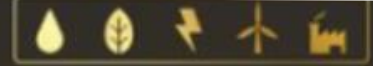


# Voices of MECS

Name: Awuor Dorothy Otieno

Title: Founder & CEO at Nyalore Impact Ltd.

Interview by Mani Thompson



Africa **QUEEN** OF  
**ENERGY**  
awards

ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
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Awour Dorothy Otieno

Entrepreneurship Award  
Winner 2023



Image Courtesy of Africa Queen of Energy Awards

[www.africaqueenofenergyawards.org](http://www.africaqueenofenergyawards.org)



[www.mecs.org.uk](http://www.mecs.org.uk)

**Please introduce yourself and tell us how you started your clean cooking business.**

My name is Awuor Dorothy Otieno and I am the founder and CEO of Nyalore Impact since 2016, and I am based in Homa Bay, Kenya. My love of clean cooking business took me to Strathmore University's 2019 Kenya eCookbook launch, where I got the opportunity to witness firsthand the revolutionary possibilities of modern cooking technologies. I was particularly drawn to the expertly prepared Ugali among the other cooking demonstrations.

**You work with a lot of women groups in rural areas empowering them by providing Clean Cooking training and capacity building, can you elaborate on this?**

Indeed! It has been a rewarding experience to collaborate with more than thirty women's organizations, which has enabled us to improve our neighbourhood significantly. These women, such as Pendo women group in Bungoma County Kenya, come from a variety of backgrounds and have distinct strengths, perspectives, and aspirations. We work with them and help them to achieve economic empowerment and gender equality. We provide opportunities for training and capacity-building through our DigiShe program which trains women as clean cooking Trainers of Trainers (ToTs) as well as easier access to resources and markets. The DigiShe programme will be officially launched next month.

**As a Clean Cooking advocate how do you help women to afford EPCs?**



Dorothy Otieno. Image Courtesy of Shamba shape Up TV series, 2023.

As proponents of clean cooking and electric cooking, we want to make sure that women can purchase Electric Pressure Cookers (EPCs) by providing them with a variety of financing options, such as table banking, paying in installment, PAYGO model, and Equity Loan options. Through these tactics, we increase women's access to and affordability of Electric Pressure Cookers (EPCs), allowing them to switch to healthier cooking options that boost safety, improve health, and encourage sustainability in their households and communities. We now have a strong presence throughout Kenya by forming strategic alliances with Equity Bank groups and SNV, tackling clean cooking issues.

**You mentioned table banking, for those who might not know, could you please explain what it is and how does that help women to adopt electric cooking?**

Table banking is a type of community-based lending strategy and saving program in which women come together to pool their funds and resources which can then be used to lend money to individual members who require capital for a variety of needs such as starting a business, financing household expenses, or purchasing clean energy solutions like Electric Pressure Cookers. Group members usually get together once a month and can get a loan from the combined funds, which is then accepted by the group based on pre-established requirements and payback terms.

Apart from the financial support, we also organize activities to strengthen women's abilities to fully utilize EPCs and maximize their investment in clean cooking technologies; these include demonstrations on cooking methods, recipe adaption, kitchen wiring inspections and electric cooking device maintenance.

**This gives women a sense of belonging and support from their community too...**

Yes, it allows women to obtain capital locally rather than depending on traditional financial institutions and encourages them to adopt electric cooking which



has positive impact on the social, economic, and environmental aspects of their life.

**It seems that your partnership with Kenya Equity Bank is an important factor in uptake of Electric Cooking.**

Yes, we work in conjunction with Equity Bank to offer small-scale financing options, such as microloans that are tailored especially for the purchase of EPCs. Women who might not be eligible for conventional bank loans can receive financial support by utilizing the assets and know-how of Equity Bank.

We also investigate ways of obtaining subsidies to help women afford EPCs, which encourages adoption. Development organizations such as GIZ that support clean cooking technologies, may offer these subsidies.

**You are one of the winners of MECS SC2 competition looking at how to develop and strengthen the supply chain for eCooking appliances, can you tell us more about it please?**

By adopting a proactive and comprehensive strategy in the design and implementation of sustainable supply chain planning, our business can enhance its competitiveness, create value, and construct a more sustainable and resilient future for society, the environment, and ourselves.

Here are some examples of how we are managing our strategies for a sustainable supply chain:

- **Assessment and goal-setting:** We began by analysing the state of the supply chain and the market to identify opportunities for our company to become more sustainable.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** We are maintaining connections, and promoting cooperation by interacting with partners, suppliers, customers, and communities, to guarantee buy-in and interest alignment.
- **Risk control and adaptability:** We are aware of potential threats to our supply chain



Pendo Women Group, Kenya. Image Courtesy of Shamba shape Up TV series, 2023.



Dorothy Otieno. Image Courtesy of Shamba shape Up TV series, 2023.

strategies, including resource scarcity, digitalization, and regulatory changes. A continual process within the business involves identifying internal strategies to improve resilience, decrease risks, to ensure operations sustainability.

The circular economy and resource efficiency are ideas that we intend to spread across our supply chain by encouraging recycling, reuse, and remanufacturing in addition to minimizing waste while making the most use of available resources.

**Dorothy, I hear congratulations are in order as you have recently won the Entrepreneurship Award at the 2023 African Queen of Energy Awards, you must be so proud of this achievement. What does this award mean to you?**

Thank you so much for that! It was an honour to have won the Entrepreneurship Award at the 2023 African Queen of Energy Awards. It signifies acknowledgment of our diligence and commitment to promoting sustainable energy solutions throughout Africa. Transforming cooking practices across a nation is an enormous and intense task, I believe continuous

education and awareness raising, and community cooking demonstrations of local dishes are effective ways of behaviour change and moving towards adopting electric cooking.

**Dorothy, thank you for taking the time to talk to me during this interview; we appreciate your insights and contribution.**