



Republic of Rwanda
Ministry of Education

OPENING REMARKS BY THE GUEST SPEAKER

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**Event organized by Rwanda Association for Women in Science
and Engineering: RAWISE Second Symposium**

*Theme: “Rwandan Women’s Participation in STEM R&D - Current Status, and
Future Perspectives”.*

20th December 2021

10:00am-02:00pm

Venue: Virtually

- **Dear RAWISE Members;**
- **Distinguished Guests;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen.**

1. Once again welcome to the second Symposium of Rwanda Association for Women in Science and Engineering (RAWISE) aims at championing the goal of increasing the visibility and awareness of the work done by local women scientists & engineering.
2. Gender equality and equity is still considered as a global issue, especially in STEM-related industries. In many fields, however, women still make up a minority of the world’s workforce in STEM. For example, in 121 countries with available data, women make up 29 percent of science researchers.
3. In Rwanda, female academic staff in high education institutions and in TVETs account for only 12% of those with a doctorate and 21% of those with a master degree, still an



increase from the previous decade. In general, women make up 31.1% of the workforce in all professional, scientific and technical activities.

- ***Distinguished Guests;***
- ***Ladies and Gentlemen;***

4. This annual event has the main idea of involving more Rwandan women in scientific research by initiating real collaboration between peer groups and female research scientists. The theme of this years' symposium in 2021 is ***Rwandan Women's Participation in STEM R&D - Current Status, and Future Perspectives***. In this regard, the main objective of the symposium is to showcase the work done by Rwandan female researchers in STEM related fields.

5. There are a lot of women organizations in Rwanda, a few of them have in their mandate, to support women in various fields of STEM. To cite a few besides RAWISE, there is:

- Girls in ICT an organization whose mission is to inspire more African girls to choose a career in Science | Technology | Engineering | Mathematics.
- The Rwanda Chapter of the Organization for women scientists from the developing world (OWSD),
- Rwanda Women in Engineering
- Women in Rwandan Energy Network (WIRE).
- FAWE: It encourages girls to join Science, Engineering, and Technology
- Tech women (Rwanda cohort) etc.

- ***Distinguished Guests;***
- ***Ladies and Gentlemen;***

6. As you know RAWISE is an association of Rwandan women who aim to promote female participation in science, technology, engineering and decision-making processes. RAWISE strongly believes that women are the largest untapped reservoir of talent in Rwanda, which is why women in science decided to create this association:

- RAWISE was incepted in 2015 and launched 2018,
- It has up to now 92 active members and each of them has at least Master degree in STEM field,
- RAWISE provides workshops for the girls in STEM fields to further their skills in their respective courses, and cultivating in them the spirit of research. This is done throughout outreach activities and mentorship programs.

- ***Distinguished Guests;***
- ***Ladies and Gentlemen;***

7. In today's Symposium we will listen to the work of 20+ Rwanda women scientists and engineers, and RAWISE-led ongoing and completed research projects.
8. This Two days' event was preceded by capacity building activities aimed at empowering women in their scientific careers & studies by strengthening their skills in academic writing & publishing, professional branding and science communication and some of the presenters have benefited from these workshops.
9. Therefore, this is a good opportunity to foster & facilitate networking and the exchange of new ideas among research engineers & scientists working in Academia, Industry and in Policy making sectors.
10. Before coming to a close of these remarks, I would like to thank the organizing team and wish you a successful symposium. I sincerely hope you will enjoy today and tomorrow debate and networking.
11. With great pleasure to see all of you on board, I declare the symposium officially open.
12. Thank you!