



The Inaugural Social Enterprise Awards 2024: Summarized report

1. Introduction

Celebrating Excellence and Innovation in Uganda's Social Sector

In a landmark event for Uganda's vibrant social entrepreneurship landscape, Astute Strategists proudly hosted the inaugural Social Enterprise Awards 2024 on December 13th, 2024, at Four Points by Sheraton in Kampala. This groundbreaking initiative bridged a critical gap in the region by providing a locally-led platform to honor the remarkable contributions of social enterprises and NGOs, addressing unique African challenges often overlooked by external recognition programs.

Over 80 distinguished guests, including shortlisted nominees and key stakeholders, gathered to celebrate impact, foster collaboration, and inspire sustainable change.

2. Key Objectives

The awards aimed to:

- ✓ Recognize outstanding achievements and innovations in Africa's social sector.
- ✓ Offer a showcase for Ugandan enterprises and NGOs to share knowledge and network.
- ✓ Promote leadership, sustainability, and solutions to pressing social issues.
- ✓ Amplify African voices for greater visibility, credibility, and resource access.

3. Social Enterprise Awards 2024 process

Launched on September 6th, 2024, the nomination period drew 139 entries across eight categories, reflecting widespread enthusiasm. A shortlisting process (October 16–24) selected top contenders, followed by a dynamic public voting phase (October 25–November 25) that garnered over 24,000 votes. Winners were determined through a judging system (60% public votes, 40% expert panel) from November 26 to December 5.

4. Ceremony highlights

Moderated by investigative journalist Canary Mugume of NBS Television, the evening blended inspiration, dialogue, and celebration:

- **Welcome address by Mugerwa Timothy, Chief Consultant and CEO of Astute Strategists**

He highlighted the pivotal role of social entrepreneurs amid policy gaps and misinformation, urging global competitiveness. He announced the upcoming National Incubator for Social Entrepreneurs in 2025, offering training, mentorship, and funding to emerging leaders.

- **Panel Discussion. "Challenges and Opportunities of Social Enterprises in Uganda"**

Featuring David Luganda (Astute Strategists Consultant), Bonny Kagaba (Lecturer, Makerere University Business School & Co-Founder, Likana Safaris Uganda), and Prof. Namaalwa Justine (Director, Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program at Makerere University):

Key takeaways included:

- ✓ Prof. Namaalwa: Invest in youth mindset shifts, industry linkages, and inclusive ecosystems (e.g., for refugees); the government must prioritize entrepreneurial education.
- ✓ Bonny Kagaba: Balance social impact with profitability via CSR, private partnerships, and ICT-driven innovations in packaging and climate solutions.



- ✓ David Luganda: Astute Strategists is transforming challenges into opportunities through networking hubs and innovation centres.

- **Keynote address by Dr. Hillary Kisanja, Senior Presidential Advisor on Agribusiness.**

He praised young innovators for tackling social issues while generating income, stressing entrepreneurial skills as the "backbone of development" for poverty alleviation, job creation, and industrialization.

5. Summary of the Award winners and presenters.

The ceremony culminated in the announcement of winners, each recognized for blending social mission with measurable impact:

Category	Winner	Presenter
Social Enterprise of the Year	Waste Plus	Esther Magambo
Local NGO of the Year	Fridays for Future Uganda	Joseph Tibakanya
Environmental Social Enterprise of the Year	Bio Flame Africa	Bonny Kagaba
Education and Skills Social Enterprise of the Year	Karoth K Kids Foundation	Prof. Namaalwa Justine
Digital Impact Social Enterprise of the Year	M-Omulimisa Innovative Agricultural Services	Atuhaire Agather
Health and Social Care Social Enterprise of the Year	Joy for Humanity	Dr. Sekyewa Julius
Agricultural Social Enterprise of the Year	Ever Grow Organics	Dr. Hillary Kisanja
Young Social Entrepreneur of the Year	Odyek Huron	Micah Nkulabo

6. Looking ahead

The Social Enterprise Awards 2024 not only spotlighted trailblazers creating positive change but also ignited a movement toward a more resilient, coordinated social sector in Uganda. Astute Strategists remains committed to empowering social entrepreneurs through expanded outreach, professional development, and supporting innovative programs in Uganda's social enterprise sector.

7. Contact Astute Strategists

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