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Climate-tech entrepreneurs, women delegates, government officials, private organisations proffer solutions to end climate-related issues

Delegates from women-led organizations, climate-tech entrepreneurs, government officials, private sectors, NGOs conveyed at the maiden Nigeria edition of Lagos Climate Resilience Salon on Wednesday 26 July 2023 at 21st Century Technologies, Lekki Phase 1, Lagos to discuss climate change issues, climate technology and cultivated solutions to critical and potential climate problems. The salon attracted an impressive group of attendees including the Acting Political and Economic Section Chief of the U.S. Consulate General Kenise Hill, Omotunde Adeola, the Deputy Director of the Federal Ministry of the Environment, the Director General of NEMA, Mustapha Habib Ahmed, Ini Umoh, Lagos State Ministry of the Environment & Water Resources and several dignitaries.

Shelley Taylor, Silicon Valley technology veteran and the convener of the Climate Resilience Salons during her welcome address spoke on the need for Lagos Climate Salon as women are often the most negatively impacted by the climate crisis and are also most often the first in their community to respond to the crisis. “One of the goals of the Climate Resilience Salons is to help some of the women working in nonprofits to transform their work into businesses where they can generate profits from climate solutions, increasing their family wealth and influence in society. Existing climate tech founders need help scaling their solutions into other regions and across borders too,” she said.

Kenise Hill, Acting Political and Economic Section Chief of the U.S. Consulate General emphasized that climate change crisis is a challenge that leads to loss of lives and properties. She spoke on the need to develop sustainable strategies to curb this menace.

Speaking on behalf of the Director-General of NEMA, the Deputy Director, Research and Forecasting, Mr. Abdullahi Adamu Usur, thanked the organisers and noted that Lagos Climate Resilience Salon comes at a critical time in Nigeria’s history where we are faced with climate-related hazards causing serious threats. He guaranteed that more strategies such as effective disaster management, building of skills will be adopted to promote climate resilience.

Omotunde Adeola, the Deputy Director of the Federal Ministry of the Environment highlighted that “If we don't take responsibility as individuals, we will not see the change we desire”. She emphasized the need to bridge the awareness gap, advocates for other means of power generation to reduce anthropogenic emission sources and assured that the government will do more in ensuring the sustainability of the environment.

Blessing Irabor, President of Organization of Women in Trade (OWIT) thanked Shelley for the initiative and spoke on the need for government to collaborate more with the private organizations and NGOs and called for policy reforms that will help women navigate through disasters caused by climate change as they contribute immeasurably to the growth of every nation.

The female led organizations who attended the Salon included founders of climate tech companies in Nigeria, like Doyinsola Ogunye, Founder of Kids Beach Garden Founder Shoreline Euphoria, and Joy Egbe, Co-Founder of Newdigit Technology. They shared their experiences with other women like Baliqees Salaudeen-Ibrahim, Green Republic Farms, a farmer and climate activist, Olasimbo Sojinrin, the founding Country Director/Nigeria, of Solar Sister and Folawemi Umunna, founder of CEPI/Climate and Ecological Protection Initiative.

Glory Oguegbu, Founder of Renewable Energy Technology Training Institute (RETTI) highlighted the need for collaborations to address climate change. In her words “Climate change has gone beyond what any one person can do. Galvanizing female climate leaders from diverse industries to proffer solutions for the changing climate is a sure way to speed up a sustainable Africa beginning from Nigeria,” explained.

During the breakout sessions, delegates and participants at the salon identified high level of food insecurity, pollution, drought, increased temperature, forced migration, Flooding, erratic rainfall patterns, marginalization of youths in climate change industry, desertification, rising sea levels, flooding and herder–farmer conflicts over arable land resources as some of the issues of climate change. Nigeria has one of the highest numbers of internally displaced people.

Exchange programs, flood resistant roads, jobs from recycling, soilless farming, startup funding and training, connecting enterprises with farms, knowledge on, advocacy, pre-positioned shelter packs, community engagement, seedlings of lands for tress, app to track tree planting were some of the solutions the delegates proffered.

Some of the timely interventions suggested by the participants were better waste management, more temporary displaced facilities, use of food banks to counter food waste, encouragement of green entrepreneurship, timely interventions system to fix problems of climate change, promote use of organic fertilizer, advance climate change education; proactive climate policy implementation, encouraging individuals to grow food at home, implementation of strict laws guiding factory and industrial building to reduce air pollution and proper drainage system to tackle flooding.

The Salon showcased an incredible group of women rapidly prototyping solutions, building relationships for success, and actively listening to each other. Women hold the keys to saving the planet. It is rare that so many different stakeholders come together to help them – people working in government, those in the private sector and academia, and venture capitalists.

Lagos Climate Resilience Salon is an initiative of trelyz Ref|Aid in partnership with Women Radio 91.7, OWIT Nigeria, Environmax, CCEPI, Clean Technology Hub, ACCREC, supported by US Consulate General.

Contact: Shelley Taylor, +44 7904 383 252; email: shelley@trelyz.com