

# CELEBRATING A PAN AFRICAN ICON

14 YEARS AT THE HELM OF  
EDUCATION IN THE AFRICAN  
UNION COMMISSION



## CELEBRATING A PAN AFRICAN ICON

# FOREWORD

### FOREWORD TO THE TESTIMONIALS OF DR. BEATRICE KHAMATI NJENGA



Dr Beatrice Khamati Njenga retires at the diamond age of 60 from the enviable position of Head of Education Division, Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology at the African Union Commission, a position she held for over 14 years. She has transformed the division and implemented the mandate of her division with her positive vision and commitment. She has gone the extra mile to work above office hours, dedicating time and sacrificing personal pleasure to make sure concrete actions are taken at the level of the continent on CESA 16-25.

Dr. Njenga, an erudite scholar has launched all the thematic clusters of CESA16-25 leading her team through collective action. She has been a force in foregrounding CESA16-25 and changing the rhythm of education continentally. Wherever the story of Education in the continent will be told, Dr Njenga, your name will be mentioned. You oversaw the launch of

12 CESA Clusters namely; STEM Education, Women and Girls Education, ICT in Education, Peace and Education, Teacher Development, Early Childhood Education and Development, School Feeding, Higher Education, Education Planning, Curriculum, Technical and Vocational Education and Training and Life Skills and Career Guidance. Also, you worked tirelessly to see the birth of the Innovating Education Expo that has bore two editions and also the African Union Teacher Award. Your leadership cannot be undermined as you have proven this quality with the successes achieved in the division. Indeed you have left indelible footprints. I always said you are a great resource in continental Education. I hope you will write this book that I always said you must write as a legacy. Little did I know when I met you in 2014 that I will work at the AUC. Then I admired your technical Know-How. So, when I was elected to this position, I was happy that I had a friend and a sister. You helped me to integrate and understand the dynamics of the department.

God bless your heart. It has been such a blessing to have worked with you and implemented major continental Education Agenda. I wished you accepted the extension we proposed even for a while. But you said, time has come to move on. Today, we celebrate you Dr Njenga, a collaborator & an icon in education. Today one of our finest gems leaves us. My sincere prayers is that you walk into a new dawn in your career as Emeri-

tus consultant in Education policies and strategies. I pray as you go, the Lord will envelope you, your spouse and family in His presence and catapult you to the next level of your career and life. This is my prayer because you are still very strong, Young and not tired. On behalf of the African Union Commission, I say thank you for your tremendous contribution in the achievement of Agenda 2063. Aspiration 6 of Agenda 2063 talks of an Africa whose development is people driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children. Clearly you have proven that this aspiration has been attained as through your potential, you have led the development of Education in the African continent. On behalf of the AUC-HRST Department, we say lasting gratitude to you Dr Beatrice Njenga, collaborator, supervisor, sister and friend for everything you have done, which neither words nor deeds can ever quantify. Shalom.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Anyang Agbor'.

**H.E. Professor Sarah Anyang  
Agbor  
Commissioner for Human  
Resources, Science and  
Technology, AUC**

CELEBRATING A PAN AFRICAN ICON

# BIOGRAPHY



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The challenges of achieving the education and skills revolution called for by Agenda 2063 are immense. We therefore cannot afford to be side tracked by other people's visions, but we continue to seek and engage with those of compatible and complementary outlook. —Dr. Beatrice Khamati Njenga, 2019

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# DR. BEATRICE KHAMATI NJENGA

## THE PAN AFRICAN ICON WHO CHANGED THE FACE OF EDUCATION IN AFRICA THROUGH HER SELFLESS SERVICE AS THE HEAD OF EDUCATION OF THE HRST DEPARTMENT OF THE AFRICAN UNION

Beatrice Khamati Njenga is an educationist and environmental scientist with many years working locally and internationally in the areas of education, energy, environment and sustainable development with government, non-government and community institutions. Before joining the AUC-HRST Department, she taught at the Appropriate Technology Centre of Kenyatta University for many years, where her major areas of research and teaching were Renewable Energy and Technology Development. She has done significant work in youth mentoring and empowerment, as well as gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment. For example Dr. Njenga has supported young people in developing their capacity as lobbyists and change agents in the area of climate change and sustainable development. She has supported Women's development, particularly in the area of sustainable energy development and appropriate technology through her work with the Kenya Energy and Environment Organisation (KENGO), the Intermediate Technology Development Group, and as a freelance expert. Dr. Njenga was instrumental in the development, and dissemination of energy saving wood burning stoves in the 1980's, which have now become household items in urban and rural areas in many African countries. Dr. Beatrice Njenga served as the Head of Education Division at the African Union Commission, where she managed the

African Union's Continental Education Programme covering all African Union Member States: working with African ministries and institutions responsible for all levels of education in articulating African common positions in education development. She coordinated the implementation of the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (2016-2025) which follows on from the Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Education for Africa (2006 – 2015) which she also led in its development and implementation. Dr. Njenga works to ensure that education development is aligned with the aspirations of Africans towards an integrated, peaceful, prosperous Africa, driven by its own competent citizens as an influential force in the global community. She has supported the work of the Youth Division at the African Union Commission, assisting in training youth, promoting youth mainstreaming and strengthening the AU Youth Volunteer programme for promoting youth leadership, responsible citizenship, employability and entrepreneurial mindsets. Some of the major programmes which Dr.

Njenga has developed at the AUC include the Mwalimu Nyerere AU Scholarship and Academic Mobility Scheme; Harmonization and Quality Rating in African Higher Education and Research; and the Pan African University; as well as support to Continental Education Management Information Systems, among others. Dr. Njenga also initiated the annual Innovating Education in Africa Expo whereby education innovations are identified and showcased for wider adoption and replication, while the innovators are celebrated and rewarded. She further initiated the African Union Continental Teacher Prize which honors distinguished Teachers on the African Continent as a means of raising the status of the teaching profession and facilitate sharing of best practices in teacher excellence in Africa. Dr. Njenga is keen to see that education development ensures inclusive access, quality, relevance and responsiveness to contribute to attainment of the knowledge, skills, values and mind-sets required for attaining the Africa We Want.



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HER WORK IN SOME PICTURES

**DR. NJENGA  
(4TH RIGHT)  
AT  
THE SECOND  
CESA CLUSTERS  
COORDINATION  
MEETING**



**DR. NJENGA  
(8TH LEFT)  
AT  
THE FIRST  
CESA CLUSTERS  
COORDINATION  
MEETING**





HER WORK IN SOME PICTURES

**DR. NJENGA  
(4TH LOWER  
RIGHT) AT THE  
LAUNCH OF THE  
CESA STEM  
EDUCATION  
CLUSTER**



**DR. NJENGA  
(1ST LOWER  
RIGHT) AT AN  
EVALUATION  
VISIT TO  
AWARDED  
STUDENTS WITH  
DISABILITIES**



**DR. NJENGA  
SPEAKING  
AT THE  
INNOVATING  
EDUCATION IN  
AFRICA EXPO  
2019**



**DR. NJENGA  
(7TH LEFT)  
WITH INNOVA-  
TORS AT THE  
INNOVATING  
EDUCATION IN  
AFRICA EXPO  
2018**





HER WORK IN SOME PICTURES

**DR. NJENGA  
(1ST LEFT)  
APPLAUDS  
WINNING  
TEACHER OF AU  
CONTINENTAL  
TEACHER PRIZE**



**DR. NJENGA  
(2ND RIGHT)  
AT THE  
VALIDATION  
MEETING  
OF TEACHER  
INSTRUMENTS**



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**DR. NJENGA  
(1ST LEFT)  
APPLAUDS  
WINNING  
TEACHER OF AU  
CONTINENTAL  
TEACHER PRIZE**



**DR. NJENGA  
(FAR END)  
WITH SOME  
STAFF AT  
WEEKLY  
EDUCATION  
DIVISION  
MEETING**



TESTIMONIALS FROM COLLEAGUES AND PARTNERS



I would like to join the numerous admirers in saying that you have conquered during your stay in Addis Ababa at the African Union.

I can still see you, always the same, polite, quiet but stubborn and ready to defend your opinion during our trips or in the course of discussions we had in groups or just the two of us.

We have indeed conducted so many projects. I will long keep the life lesson that I learnt from your friendship and behaviour.

As you are bidding farewell to AU which you served and helped grow, I would like to say a BIG THANK YOU for all your relentless efforts and commitment.

You are retiring from AU being more qualified to perform duties in your home country Kenya, that you love so much, but also elsewhere in Africa and around the changing world.

I sincerely wish that you achieve your goals.  
Take good care of yourself,

**H.E. Dr. Martial De-Paul IKOUNGA**  
**Former Commissioner for Human Resources, Science and Technology, AUC**



No one is irreplaceable. But Dr. Beatrice Njenga, you put your signature on the Education Division and the HRST department during the years you served the African Union.

We all learned from you as a colleague and a sister. You were always emphasizing on the need to be all inclusive, to share the information to all and of course to deliver together and bridging the division divide. Finding someone to succeed you in your job is going to be a challenge for this department.

We will miss you terribly! But your deserved retirement will also allow others to benefit from your talents. Take time to enjoy the children, grandchildren and the family at large.

Congratulations as you reach another chapter of your career and being.

**Dr. Mahama Ouedraogo**  
**Director**  
**Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology, AUC**



TESTIMONIALS FROM COLLEAGUES AND PARTNERS



It's been such a great experience working with you and learning from you on various things, both in work and in life.

Your work ethic is to be admired, and you have been a worthy champion for education in Africa, and a great friend of youth on this continent.

As you close this chapter, I wish you greater days ahead, with an abundance of blessings and peace for life.

**Ms. Prudence Ngwenya**  
**Head of Youth Division**  
**HRST Department, AUC**

When I step back and reflect on you, Dr. Beatrice Njenga, and that you're going on retirement, my heart fills up with profound joy and great appreciation, of how working with you has transformed so many of us around you. You worked so hard building our careers, and at the same time changing the landscape of education in Africa. Your guidance and encouragement have helped me and so many other coworkers to thrive in this very competitive, challenging and sometimes uncertain environment. We've been so fortunate to have your expertise and generosity to rely on.

You embody hard work, leadership and optimism. You delivered on your job description and you carried us along, even during the time when you were low, come on, you would pray! I am not going to attempt to enlist the achievement you accomplished, because they are so many! That's what I know!

With the advent of social media and very vibrant technology platforms, I will definitely be tweeting or stalking you on Facebook. It's hard to imagine our workplace without you! But time always catches up with us all. I hope retirement brings you the chance to do whatever it is that you always wanted to do but didn't get to. God bless you and your beautiful family abundantly. Don't forget us too. Working with you was such a pleasure!

**Mr. Hambani Masheleni**  
**Ag. Head of Science and Technology**  
**Division**  
**HRST Department, AUC**

TESTIMONIALS FROM COLLEAGUES AND PARTNERS



The greatest gift anyone can give another person is believing in them. This is exactly what you did when I started working with you. You gave me the courage to go out there and do it. This was a turning point in my career.

You taught me that there is always another road that will open when one is closed.

Your writing skills is an asset that has always inspired me to be like you. I appreciate all your words of encouragement and everything I have learned from you.

It has been an honor working with you these past years. Thank you for your help and support. I wish you the best of luck and continued success wherever you may be.

Thank you for everything.

**Dr. Rita Bissoonauth**  
**AU/CIEFFA Coordinator**  
**HRST Department, AUC**



My dear sister and friend, my family and I rejoice with you for a successful career at the AUC. We can't but bless the Lord that you are leaving the commission strong and still able to wear your 'high heels', ever elegant as always.

You have been a great support to my family and I, several occasions you have been a blessing to us, you never refused any of my requests for help even when we disagree on issues or maintain our rigid conflicting positions, it never affected our relationship, we moved on joyfully the next moment, respecting each other's opinion and prayed together with sincerity and love.

I have gained a lot from your vast knowledge of the word of God, you had scriptures ready in your lips for all occasions. You motivated me with your evangelistic drive, boldness to speak about the love of God anytime anywhere and more also willingness to invest in the work of God. These are attributes that build treasures in heaven for us as Christians and I believe you will not go unrewarded.

Beloved sister, you will be missed, I pray that your later years will be far greater than your former, be assured that you are retiring to greater glory.

And because you trust in the LORD, you are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever. I pray that as the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds you and your family both now and forevermore (Psalm 125:2). It shall be well with you.

**Dr. Monica Ebele Idinoba**  
**Principal Scientific Officer**  
**HRST Department, AUC**



TESTIMONIALS FROM COLLEAGUES AND PARTNERS

Dear Bea, as I always called you, retirement marks the end of a journey, and the transition into another. You retire with much to celebrate about at the AUC. But I also know it has not been an easy ride. I vividly remember the challenges we underwent to get the PAU curriculum developed, validated and the PAU launched within just a few months, with meagre staff and without budget. PAU is alive and vibrant today.

But perhaps, few today remember, or even try to acknowledge that you are the mother of PAU. This sure shall go into the Annals of History.

Over the years, I noticed your conviction, sense of purpose and steadfastness even when things seemed impossible. You have always demonstrated clarity of mind coupled with eloquence and grace. But you also never hid your displeasure or disapproval and bravely and openly expressed it even if offended some. You have steered the Education Division with steady hands and bequeathed it with CESAT16/25 which is not a "sound byte", but one you innovatively designed and adopted a novel approach towards its realization. CONGRATULATIONS are in order. You are truly a winner and an achiever who can walk with her head high and shoulders square.

My special personal gratitude to you in taking time to visit me a few years back when I was hospitalized for days and empathizing with me and family. I cannot also forget the many times you engaged me on phone and social media to find out how I was coping when I had unexpectedly lost my job. You are truly a decent human being.

Your open-door policy, readiness to listen, advice, readiness to listen and also to positively seek and take advice from us gave us much comfort and confidence.

Your affection, loyalty and faithfulness was unquestionable. You nurtured and mentored the youth. I always noticed that you had high expectations from all of us and sometimes 'over-tasked' us, but fortunately not on things we could not perform, for you understood our respective capacities, and assigned responsibility with equal measure.

Madam Beatrice Khamati Njenga, you surely deserve a Continental Award for achievement, or Medal for Distinguished Service. We thank God for being at the heart of the Education Division family and pray for God's Continuous blessing for you and family as you pursue other worthy interest. As you would say.....By God's Grace!!!!

**Prof. Callistus Ogol**  
**Education Policy Officer**  
**HRST Department, AUC**



I worked with Dr. Beatrice Njenga for over eight years as she has been my direct supervisor as the Head of Education Division at the African Union Commission.

During this time, I could able to witness that she demonstrated excellent professional competence with an innovative mind-set.

Dr. Njenga has been instrumental in the development and implementation of key continental education policy frameworks and strategies including the Second Decade of Education and the Continental Education Strategy for Africa. She served the HRST Department with diligence and effectively managed several education initiatives ranging from Early Childhood to Higher Education. It is my sincere opinion that Dr. Beatrice Njenga provided substantive contribution and value addition to the development of education in Africa.

Indeed she is a valuable asset to the HRST Department.

**Dr. Yohannes Woldetensae**  
**Senior Education Expert**  
**HRST Department, AUC**

TESTIMONIALS FROM COLLEAGUES AND PARTNERS



I have the pleasure to work with Dr. Beatrice Njenga who is a great woman and a role model, very supportive, and always ready to give the right initiative for positive results. In my opinion, she has demonstrated great leadership skills, and has always gone out of her way to help others grow.

She loves her job and is committed to it, and also to whatever she does outside her job. She loves people around her, has always accepted to teach everyone that comes across her way how to work hard and love people around them. She will be rewarded.

**Mr. Caseley Olabode Stephens**  
**Education Policy Officer**  
**HRST Department, AUC**



Words cannot describe my emotions right now. It would be impossible to count all the ways that you've helped me in my career. You have been a wonderful leader and a mother to me. You are everything one could look for in a good mentor. You groomed me to be a sound professional and made working with you an interesting and memorable experience.

Your perseverance, integrity and people-loving nature are just a few of your qualities that continue to inspire me. Thank you for being there for me over the years.

I hope you have a very happy retirement and enjoy every minute of it!

**Ms. Woudase Abebe**  
**Documentalist**  
**HRST Department, AUC**



TESTIMONIALS FROM COLLEAGUES AND PARTNERS



I have had the pleasure of knowing Dr Njenga for ten years. Dr Njenga is an intelligent, capable, dedicated and personable woman. She is my boss, my best boss I ever had. She is good leader who makes right decisions at the right time with excellent professional skills.

Above all her professional qualities and achievements, the thing that I admire the most in Dr Njenga is that she is a good human being. Her helpful nature is not restricted to matters of leadership or work, but is extended to personal matters too. Dr. Njenga good listener and this makes people approach her with their problems, which she solves with intelligence and care.

**Ms. Olga Alexandrovna Kebede**  
**Education Program Assistant**  
**HRST Department, AUC**



It is really difficult to say a few words, but let me try. I have known her for the last three (3) years. Studies on Social Relationships recently calculated that, on average, it takes 90 hours to closely know someone. That means I know her very well at this 3 years' time.

So I can witness that she is:

The daughter of God who has an authority to inherit the Kingdom of God through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Dependable: The same treatment and character for all at all times.

Trustworthy: No staff thinks that one day Dr Beatrice might hurt her/him. She criticizes constructively in a manner which contributes to one's personal development.

Pan-Africanist: People who ridicule Africa on their hidden hearts fear her. She is not corrupt.

Top professional, expert, and manager: I can't tell you that how meticulous she is regarding her work, from very minor thing to very major policy level issues.

I wish her a very blessed retirement time! I wish blessings to all her generations and her family. I wish such blessed supervisor for us.

**Mr. Abraham Asha**  
**Education Program Officer**  
**HRST Department, AUC**

## TESTIMONIALS FROM COLLEAGUES AND PARTNERS

Dear Dr Njenga

Thank you very much for your service over the years. For the initiatives I got a chance to work with you on.

Thank you very much for the light you shone onto my path, for the public accolades and the secretive reprimands. Thank you for teaching me about the power that lies with being loyal to Africa, loyalty that manifest itself in putting Africa first.

Thank you for the second decade. For Pan African University. For CESA 16-25. For the Innovating Education Expo.

Thank you for the partnerships you have left for us to consolidate, to ensure that the foundation for your legacies are improved upon.

Thank you for being a boss, and a supervisor, and a leader and teacher all at once. Most importantly, thank you very much for being a mother.

History shall be kind to you.

I wish you the best in all your future endeavors

**Mr. Lukman Jaji**  
**Policy Officer, IPED**  
**HRST Department, AUC**



I have been greatly honoured and fortunate to have had the opportunity of working with Dr. Njenga when I joined the African Union Commission. I learnt the nuances of wading through African Union Commission's sometimes complicated processes from Dr. Njenga's consistent dedication to working with all-rounded attention to details. Her Pan Africanist ideals have been remarkable. I remember being surprised and inspired by these ideals when she one time during a meeting politely but firmly called out a partner for denigrating and deriding the AUC.

In the professional sphere, Dr. Njenga has been a role model for me and for many others. This has been through relentless examination of a range of issues impacting on policy and practice in the entire Education and Skills Development ecosystem in Africa. Her contribution to the African Education Space has been admirable and will be cherished by those of us who intend to follow in her footsteps.

The lessons you've imparted, both explicitly and by example, are many, and I value them tremendously.

All best wishes to a great colleague, a very knowledgeable expert and an enthusiastic promoter of Pan Africanism.

**Mr. Nicholas Ouma**  
**Senior Youth Advisor**  
**HRST Department, AUC**



TESTIMONIALS FROM COLLEAGUES AND PARTNERS



I consider myself immensely blessed to have crossed paths with Dr. Beatrice Khamati Njenga. When I started working at the AU, there was so much I needed to learn since I had come from a different professional background. But Dr. Njenga believed in me and mentored me. She gave me opportunities to learn and corrected me when I was wrong. The dent that she has made in my life and career is one that I have no doubt will stand the test of time.

She taught me the true meaning of Pan Africanism through her unwavering position to see Africa lifted at all times.

Furthermore, Dr. Njenga is the hardest worker I've ever had the privilege to work with. One who rejects staying in her comfort zone and constantly pushes herself and those she works with to strive towards meeting set goals, no matter what.

To describe Dr. Njenga as a kind person would be an understatement. She is the kind of person who takes others' concerns to heart and looks for genuine ways to assist them, albeit not expecting any favour or praise in return.

Surely, as the Good Book says, your reward is in Heaven.

May your life continue to be filled with health, peace, happiness and fulfillment as God gives.

**Mr. Mich-Seth Owusu**  
**Education Program Liaison Officer**  
**HRST Department, AUC**



The first time I met Dr. Njenga was at my job interview 13 years ago while we were all still very young. Needless to say I was anxious about what kind of organization this African Union was and what kind of complex job I was being interviewed for. The Director then and a representative of the partner institution were also my interviewers alongside Dr. Njenga. When I ran out of the English language to express in depth the knowledge I had on the subject matter, I held my breath pleading understanding of my interviewers, Dr. Njenga offered a warm smile that was reassuring and understanding which helped me go on with confidence. Since that point in time, Dr. Njenga has been an inspiration single handedly leading and entire division of Education with big aspirations and the zeal and commitment to back it up which is a rare quality to often see.

Dr. Njenga ensured that whoever worked with her understood what she was about professionally. She was a hard worker but also had a lot of empathy which made her relatable and a go-to-person whenever faced with professional or personal challenges. If Dr. Njenga has your back then you can rest assured you are good.

Dr. Njenga is a fundamental part of the history of the Department of HRST. She has duly made her contributions to the growth of not just her Division but of the entire Department. It will be difficult to get used to being without Dr. Njenga as a key mover and shaker in the Department.

I wish God's blessing over her and her family and wish her so much goodness in the next chapter of her life. It is definitely not goodbye but just good luck Dr. Njenga as we will continue to look up to you.

**Ms. Mahlet Teshome Kebede**  
**Biosafety Expert-Legal Officer**  
**HRST Department, AUC**

TESTIMONIALS FROM COLLEAGUES AND PARTNERS



I have interacted with Dr. Njenga since day 1 of joining the Commission. She welcomed me with a joyful and a humble heart and I felt at home. For about four years now, we have kept the interactions and I don't remember any single time that we ever had a conflict. I can testify that she is a peaceable, respectful lady with a motherly heart. She offered me guidance on several issues, not only work related but also social. For sure I will miss her presence and her smiling face.

And to Dr. Njenga I wish you long life that is joyful and satisfactory. May God guide your ways and lead you to profitable places. You have given your best to uplift the status of education in Africa, and that legacy will remain to benefit many generations.

Thank you for offering your energy, your resources, your time and skills to Mother Africa. Shine even the more in future endeavors!

**Mr. Meshack Kinyua Ndiritu**  
**GMES Training Officer**  
**HRST Department, AUC**



Dr. Beatrice Njenga is a pan-African and passionate about her job. For more than a decade, this lady has been in charge of the Education Division within the Department of HRST.

Who does not know that education is the central pillar of Africa's development? Who does not know that more educated Africans means: " the end of poverty, calamities and wars? In Africa"! Dr. Njenga is this lady who understood the importance of using education as the strongest weapon to emancipate Africa. Her leadership has conducted to the conception and adoption of various AU Policies and Frameworks pertaining to Education in Africa such as the CESA (16-25), establishment and operationalization of the Pan African Universities, the IPED and finally the current AU Expo on Education Innovations in 'Africa s Sectors.

Dr. Njenga is a very diligent person in her work with specific ideas, a consistent and sustained drafting skills that has built the capacity for those who has benefited from her experience.

Finally, Dr. Njenga is a mother and a grand-mother who knows how to combine her family life to her professional life despite her work's constraints.

Her great Christian faith led her to compose songs that she hums to brighten our ears and de-stress us during overworking time!!

Dr. Beatrice Njenga, I wish you all the best and long life!

**Ms. Simone Yankey-Ouattara**  
**AU/CIEFFA Senior Policy Officer**  
**HRST Department, AUC**

TESTIMONIALS FROM COLLEAGUES AND PARTNERS

Let me begin by noting that retirement is an exciting time in a person's life. By the time you retire, you must have worked hard to build your career and then step back and appreciate how far you have come. Retirement is a time for reflection, and also a time to look forward and spend time with the people you care about, doing the things they love.

I have worked with Dr Njenga since 2007, not too long after she arrived in the AU to head the Education Division. As the professional in charge of coordinating communication in the area of education and development in Africa, I was concerned about the state of implementation of the African Union's Second Decade of Education for Africa. In particular, the fact that the Member States were not familiar with what this Decade entailed. So Dr Njenga and I met a few times to discuss this. So that is how I came to work closely with her and other colleagues in the HRST Department.

We collaborated reasonably well as I made several missions from my base in Cotonou, Benin to Addis Ababa. Her support and encouragement allowed me to attempt to build up an extensive network of journalists and experts across Africa and beyond and which were to popularize the Second Decade of Education in Africa later. I started with about 250 journalists and experts around the continent. Today, we have been able to count over 2,000 members in the network. This network of specialists has given birth to CAFOR.

At the time, so many of the people I was working with never understood the importance of communication to advance economic and social development in Africa. I want to assert that the support of Dr Beatrice Njenga with few others I met along the line of my operations in the AU encouraged me to continue to attempt something that I would otherwise not do. Strictly speaking, I was at the time a professional expert in education who focused mainly on curriculum development and educational planning. I was not a communication person at all.

Dr Njenga, as you are fondly known here, as one of the best people in the HRST Department, I congratulate you on your retirement. You have embodied hard work and optimism, and I wish you all the best in this next stage of your life. Let me also thank you for everything you have done for me directly and indirectly. I appreciate you, and if you decide that retirement means you have time to follow some of your altruistic dreams, you will be most welcome to work with us at CAFOR. You are already a member of the Executive Board of CAFOR.

**Dr. Lawalley Cole**  
**CAFOR Executive Director**  
**HRST Department, AUC**



The relationship between the Association of African Universities (AAU) and Dr. Beatrice Njenga dates back more than ten years ago. We are privileged to be associated with Dr. Njenga and to benefit from her rich professional experience. Her significant contribution to Africa Union's developmental agenda instruments including Agenda 2063 and CESA, Addis Convention and PAQAAF, is well known. Her mastery of organizational bureaucracy, hard work, attention to detail, and deep religious disposition are qualities that distinguish her as a remarkable individual. Her retirement is a natural and inevitable result that awaits any and everyone who enters the job market and is alive till the time of disengagement.

The AAU wishes Dr. Njenga well in her retirement and other future endeavours.

**Prof. Etienne Ehile**  
**Secretary General**  
**Association of African Universities**



## TESTIMONIALS FROM COLLEAGUES AND PARTNERS



I had a decade of official relationship with Dr Beatrice Njenga. This started in 2010 with the birth of the Africa Federation of Teaching Regulatory Authorities (AFTRA). Then AFTRA joined the Education Partners of the African Union to participate in several continental events. The foothold of AFTRA on the continental education events hosted by the African Union was nurtured by Dr Beatrice Njenga. She has a knack for discovering organisations and individuals with the right talents for the advancement of education in the continent, and never missed the opportunity to motivate, support and showcase the talents. This equally speaks of her open-heartedness, sincerity of purpose and pan-African spirit. She networks perfectly with everyone from anywhere on the continent with absolutely no inhibitions of language, religion, culture or other personal considerations. The ultimate of these is her selflessness and total devotion of her time, focus and emotion to the job. She is a human dynamo and working with her gave me opportunity to draw from her accomplished experiences and extraordinary skills at work. It was only deserving that in 2019, she was honoured with AFTRA's esteemed FELLOWSHIP as a CONTINENTAL CHAMPION OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION. Indeed, it is difficult to think of the Education Division of the AUC without Dr Njenga. AFTRA wishes her success in her future endeavours.

**Prof. Steve Nwokeocha**  
**Executive Director - Academics**  
**Africa Federation of Teaching Regulatory**  
**Authorities**



I have had the pleasure of working with Dr. Njenga over the past year on the development and implementation of the new CESA Cluster on Early Childhood Education and Development. I have appreciated her openness to this agenda and have welcomed her advice on how best to advance on Early Childhood Development in Africa. Dr. Njenga is passionate about Africa and its children and she has sought out many opportunities – using existing AU mechanisms – to bring the issue of Early Childhood Development into the spotlight. I will miss her partnership, her warmth and her leadership. I wish her all the best for her retirement and I hope we can make her proud by achieving better results for Africa's youngest citizens and putting them all onto the right track for growth and development.

**Ms. Maniza Ntekim**  
**Regional Adviser for Early Childhood**  
**Development,**  
**UNICEF ESARO**

TESTIMONIALS FROM COLLEAGUES AND PARTNERS



Thank you, Beatrice and best wishes!  
 I recall meeting you for the first time in Addis Ababa in early 2007 when I was with UNICEF ESARO based in Nairobi. Since then, while I moved to UNICEF WACRO and then to UNESCO IICBA, we have been meeting and working together for quality education in Africa. We traveled to several meetings and conferences together. Your contribution to IICBA's Governing Board has been greatly appreciated. You will always be a part of the institutional memory for the education sector in AUC HRST, serving four commissioners if not more. It is difficult to imagine HRST without you as you have been the face of education in AUC for so long. We recently realized that I had taught in western Kenya in the early 1980s where you are from. Mulembe, mulembe, mulembe muno. May peace be with you on your retirement from AUC. Every best wish for you and your family. Your family will be happy to receive you after all the busy work and missions.

**Dr. Yumiko Yokozeki**  
**Director**  
**UNESCO Institute for Capacity Building**  
**in Africa**

My Sister Dr Beatrice,  
 I write this note with mixed feelings- a bitter reality of life. Where ever you go, whatever you do in your next years- remember that, to me, my WFP colleagues and others we shared work and partnership, you were and will continue to be upheld for being a great and strong engine in HRST and AUC as a whole for promoting education and skills revolution in Africa. It's really been great working with you as you have vigorously moved the African Education Pre-primary, Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary including TVET to the next higher level.

You are highly acknowledged in promoting Home Grown School Feeding as a key policy tool for Agenda 2063 within the framework of Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16-25), and has effectively managed its adoption by Heads of State and government and its operations in 55 member states. As a WFP Director, I have highly enjoyed working with you and mostly respected you for your tremendous dedication and professionalism .

Dr Beatrice, I can't count all your commendable qualities and attributes but greatly appreciate your Christianity, Integrity, honesty, loyalty, respectfulness, Humility, Fairnes...

May all the years ahead bring you and your loved ones great joy, relaxation and blessings from Above.

**Ms Angelline RUDAKUBANA**  
**Director and Representative to**  
**the African Union**  
**World Food Programme**

## TESTIMONIALS FROM COLLEAGUES AND PARTNERS

On behalf of the entire ONE Africa team, we would like to express our deepest gratitude for the wonderful partnership we have enjoyed with the AU Human Resources Science and Technology (HRST) Commission over the last couple of years. We are particularly mindful of the central role that you played in forging this partnership. It has been a humbling experience working with you. Your dedication and hard work has been an example to us. We are particularly grateful for your selfless service and unassuming manner. In spite of your many years of experience in the Education sector you engaged with me and my team members as equals and as valued partners to the Commission.

You have left a great legacy of humility, servant leadership and a commendable work ethic that will always be part of the memories we have of you. May you be blessed in this new chapter of your life and we hope this next season is filled with good health and contentment.

We are really going to miss you Beatrice!

Wishing you and your family the very best as you enter into a season of rest!

**Ms. Rudo Kwaramba-Kayombo**  
Executive Director  
ONE Africa

We, at the ADEA Inter Country Quality Node for Early Childhood Development, wish to put on record our deep heart-felt appreciation of your remarkable contribution as Head of the Education Division Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology African Union Commission.

We have been most impressed by your professionalism, your 'savoir-faire' and relentless commitment to the cause of education and especially the African Child, that has earned you the high esteem, respect and admiration of all those who had the privilege to interact and network with you. You have been a source of inspiration for so many of us.

You are a true pan Africanist, always ensuring the transformation of African Union values and principles into practical policies and initiatives.

As you prepare to enjoy your retirement, you will look back with pride and a sense of accomplishment. We will certainly miss your resourcefulness, your readiness to provide support and, above all, your elegance.

Dear Beatrice, enjoy your well-deserved retirement and Godspeed for all the future ventures that you will embark on, especially alongside your family and loved ones.

Good luck in whatever you pursue  
May you be always blessed.

**Dr. Maya Soonrane**  
Coordinator, ADEA ICQN-ECD  
Director of Strategic Planning and  
International Relations  
Ministry of Education and Human Resources,  
Tertiary Education and  
Scientific Research



## TESTIMONIALS FROM COLLEAGUES AND PARTNERS

Dr. Njenga has been a strong force on matters quality education and an inspiration to the fraternity of educators in Africa. She alongside others spearheaded the first (1997-2006) and second (2006-2015) decade of education in Africa and the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA, 2016-2025). Her name became synonymous in education circles with CESA, 2016-25 and her legacy will outlive her tenure in AUC. The decade-based educational strategies greatly influenced education development and policies for instance the Strengthening of Mathematics and Science Education in Western, Eastern, Central and Southern Africa (SMASE-WECSA, 2001 - 2013); and the Conference on Mathematics, Science and Technology Education in Africa (COMSTEDA, 2014-Date).

She coordinated launch of the first CESA cluster on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) hosted by CEMASTEAM in 2016 setting pace for clusters launched later in Africa. Her selfless commitment to quality education saw her traverse various forums to reiterate the position of AUC on matters science, technology and innovation policies with resolute and focus to the admiration of forward looking organizations.

As we join AUC Human Resource, Science and Technology (HRST) Department and Education Division in applauding her exemplary service to Africa and her upcoming retirement, we lack words to describe the gap left behind.

We remember her passion for Africa as captured in her words, "Science, technology and Innovation will not happen by chance" and also said, "Science, technology and innovation can assist us to convert our existing natural resources as well as intellectual capital in our youthful population to generate wealth, add value and improve our living conditions in Africa", (Dr. Njenga, Workshop on Design and Evaluation of Innovation policies (DEIP) in African Countries; Kenya, 2014).

God Almighty will rejuvenate her energies even in retirement to provide consultancy in education for Africa's development.

**Ms. Mary Sichangi**  
**Head, Partnerships and Linkages**  
**CEMASTEAM**

Dearest Dr. Njenga,

Congratulations on a richly deserved retirement! It has been great pleasure to have worked with you over the past four years. Your commitment to the protection of children in conflict including through the promotion of the Safe Schools and the Peace Education agendas has left a lasting mark on all of us at Save the Children and played a critical role in the adoption of related policies at the AU Commission. Thank you very much for unparalleled collaboration and friendship. You will be greatly missed.

**Ms. Doris Mpoumou**  
**AU Representative**  
**Save the Children International**

## TESTIMONIALS FROM COLLEAGUES AND PARTNERS

As a Secretary General and Coordinator of ACA and a Coordinator representative of CESA curriculum cluster, it's my pleasure on behalf of African Curriculum Association (ACA) to provide this testimonial for Dr. Njenga.

African Curriculum Association (ACA) is an umbrella body registered as a continental organization that focuses on curriculum design, development, implementation, assessment and evaluation. Its Mandate is to improve the quality of education on the African continent using all possible avenues. ACA is the coordinator of the CESA curriculum cluster. Its role as a coordinator is to coordinate and support all education interventions to Africa by aligning them to the common African vision to ensure a more Afr-centric, quality, inclusive, equitable relevant and transformative curriculum.

As a coordinator representative of the CESA Curriculum cluster, I've worked closely with Dr. Njenga over the past nine months, sharing the same open space during AU organized meetings. During my interactions with her, she showed excellent communication skills and consistently exceeded my expectations. She has been exceptionally responsive to everyone in her department

I hope so. On the other hand she is charismatic and well-spoken, both qualities have served well in her position as a head of AU education department. The period I have been close to her I have found her an approachable person, a good listener, a person who gives time to everyone at any possible time.

It is just unfortunate that the soft spoken, hardworking lady is retiring when the CESA Curriculum cluster is trying to organize itself. CESA Curriculum cluster will never forget the day Dr. Njenga demonstrated her passion to quality education in Africa when she worked so hard to have the cluster launched. Indeed your service will be missed dearly by all of us.

The CESA Curriculum cluster will sadly miss you especially when you have left the unfinished work of curriculum mapping and baseline survey and developing the curriculum framework for Africa.

**Dr. Gertrude Namubiru**  
Secretary General,  
African Curriculum Association

Dear Beatrice,

Congratulations on your retirement from the AUC. During my time working with you on education, you have been instrumental in pushing forward partnerships with key education actors and keeping education high on the political and development agenda of the Africa Union. You have advocated with passion and vigor the education of all children and at all levels and your leadership over the development of CESA 16-25, its cluster coordination mechanisms and promoting a closer working relationship with external partners has been central to a transformative education agenda in the continent. One that promotes strengthening education systems to deliver, promoting more and better financing, improved collection and use of data, building capacities, promoting innovation, equity and inclusion.

In working with you in my role at the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), your leadership enabled the AU and GPE to collaborate in technical and strategic advocacy areas on education - the first ever High Level Heads of State Dialogue on Financing Education in Africa, promoting pre-primary education at the 7th Tokyo International Conference on African Development, a youth blog series recognizing young education innovators in Africa as part of the Innovating Education in Africa Expo, and promoting strengthened data systems with AU as a partner on the GPE convened Data Solutions Roundtable. On gender equality in and through education, AU-CIEFA, GPE and UNGEI also collaborated on making education systems gender responsive through the Gender Responsive Education Sector Planning regional workshops. Thank you once again for the good collaboration and for your leadership to improve quality education and life prospects for children and young people in Africa.

Best wishes.

**Ms. Victoria Egbetayo**  
Partnership Specialist  
Global Partnership for Education

TESTIMONIALS FROM COLLEAGUES AND PARTNERS



Dr. Beatrice Khamati Njenga is, fundamentally, a passionate educationalist. She has vast experience of teaching and engaging with students at all levels of the education system and brought that experience to her later work as Head of Education at the African Union Commission. Not content to simply and satisfactorily carry out the functions of that role, Dr. Beatrice was determined to facilitate real change and improvement in the way African students are educated and in how they are prepared for the digitally-driven world of work. She did this, firstly, by actively driving the implementation of the AU's Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) and consistently working with the thematic clusters whose activities she rightly saw as central to CESA implementation.

She has a vision as to how the pedagogical use of technology could raise the quality and status of the teacher, enrich learning in general and can help to bring about equity for girls in accessing and benefiting for education and training. She also sees the importance of entrepreneurship and innovation as contributory to youth employment. The Innovating Education in Africa Expo and the growing number of innovative submissions from young innovators give concrete testament to her enduring work at the AU as

Head of Education  
Best wishes.

**Mr. Jerome Morrissey**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Global e-Schools and Communities**  
**Initiative**



Dr Njenga has been a strong proponent for the importance of a good start for the future development of the Continent. She has worked tirelessly to prioritize early childhood education and development at the African Union as the Head of the Education Division of the AUC. She was instrumental in the establishment of the CESA-ECED cluster in 2018 which has provided a high-level platform for the ECD agenda in the region. Dr Njenga has ensured her personal presence in all cluster meetings and has guided the cluster technically and politically to enable the cluster to successfully execute very high-level events such as, the TICAD, JEFF and the upcoming 33rd Ordinary session of the AU Assembly in 2020.

Dr Njenga is passionate about partnership building and forthright in her communications about what the AUC holds dear. At the AfECN Early Childhood Development International Conference last year, she enlightened the audience about the importance of working together to achieve a greater impact. Dr Njenga also shared an overview about Agenda 2063 and how ECD is at the heart of achieving the aspirations.

It has been a privilege to work with Dr Njenga . She has laid a strong foundation for organizations like AfECN to continue to advance ECD in the region. We appreciate her unparalleled contribution to the sector and it has been a privilege to work with her.

**Dr. Lynette Okengo**  
**Executive Director**  
**Africa Early Childhood Network**



## TESTIMONIALS FROM COLLEAGUES AND PARTNERS



Dear Beatrice,

You have been and you remain for many of us this living lesson which teaches us that "failure is not to have failed! Failure is not having given the maximum of oneself! In the evening of your visit to the AUC, the least we can say is that success, in all its forms, has smiled on you.

Knowing you and your resources, these upcoming years are, without a doubt, full of beautiful projects. Take advantage of this sweet freedom offered to you in the coming days to do all that you have not been able to achieve during all these years spent giving yourself completely to others, for the noble cause of education! Retirement, you already know it, I'm sure, it's slowing down ... to live thoroughly! Enjoy it, you deserve it so much.

My prayer for you is that God, the Creator, guides you so that at this new stage, on the path of your life, you still win more beautiful successes.

Good road to you !

Happy retirement, be it exciting and full of good surprises.

**Dr. David Blaise Ossene**  
**Education and Culture Expert**  
**Economic Community of Central African States**



I have known and worked with Dr. Beatrice Njenga since the launch of the AU Second Decade of Education for Africa (2006-2015) Plan of Action. At the time, I perceived her as a harsh and no-nonsense lady who focused on hard work... With time, however, I have come to understand Beatrice as a passionate pan-African who truly believes in the ideals of our ancestors – a unified and integrated continent capable of drawing on its own human capital to develop itself. Dr. Njenga truly embraced and genuinely championed the continental frameworks, from the Second Decade to the Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016-2025 (CESA 16-25). One cannot help but marvel at the way she advocates for CESA at every platform, articulating its mission and strategic objectives with finesse. She has been consistent in her message of the need for Africans to take the destiny of the continent in their own hands, with mutual support from internal and external partners. She has solidified, over the years, the close collaboration between ADEA and AUC. At a personal level, I have learnt a lot from her in the education landscape and I am sure our paths will continue to cross. I also know that she has a passion for singing and it is my hope that she will find time to pursue it. Beatrice may be leaving AUC as Head of Education Division, but certainly not the quest for Africa's quality education development! I wish her every success.

**Mr. Shem Bodo**  
**Senior Programme Officer**  
**Association for the Development of Education in Africa**

TESTIMONIALS FROM COLLEAGUES AND PARTNERS



Dr. Beatrice Njenga has been a very strong supporter of FAWE over the last several years.

As Head of Education at the AUC-HRST, Dr. Njenga has been very instrumental in operationalizing and giving life to the existing FAWE/AUC MOU which has contributed to the achievement of SDG4&SDG5, Agenda 2063, GES4CESA and subsequently enormously contributing to FAWE's vision, of a world in which all African girls have access to education, perform well and complete their studies, and gender disparities in education are eliminated.

Dr. Njenga played a very important facilitative role in the development of the FAWE/AU-CIEFFA Gender Equality Strategy for the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (GES4CESA) and this strategy has now been accepted at the highest levels of the AU for implementation, with Kenya and Malawi being at the pilot stages of execution.

As an education stakeholder in Africa, FAWE recognizes the important role that Dr. Njenga plays behind the scenes as secretariat to the Committee of 10 Heads of State and Government of the African Union Champions of Education, Science and Technology. This committee is very special to FAWE because the Chairperson, President Macky SALL of Senegal is also the official champion of FAWE's Strategic Plan 2019-2023, which is slated for launching during the next C10 meeting in early 2020.

On behalf of FAWE, African Girls and Women and on my own behalf, my sincere appreciation to Dr. Njenga for her tireless efforts and for her massive contribution in changing the landscape of education of girls and women on the continent.

**Ms. Martha Muhwezi**  
**Executive Director**  
**Forum for African Women**  
**Educationalists**



Dr. Njenga, as you enter the next phase of your life myself and Ashoka express our sincere gratitude for having known and worked with you and your team. Africa's education space is definitely better because you led it, we are taking the mantle!. I share the words of this master to his servant in Mathew 25:21 to remind you that you have done well, you did your part and God is entrusting you with more in your next level as you retire 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Enter into the joy of your master!'

**Ms. Peris Wakesho**  
**Director; Strategy & Network Activation**  
**Ashoka Africa**

TESTIMONIALS FROM COLLEAGUES AND PARTNERS



I met Dr Njenga at the AU less than two years ago. Since my very brief meeting at her office, I have experienced her passion for a highly collaborative way of working. Under her leadership, VSO International has moved from the periphery of engagement with the AU to more central and active position. We now feel ownership of the process.

One day on a flight to Addis, we discussed a definition of a volunteer. I have never seen a person spot on in defining who a volunteer is and who a volunteer is not.

Dr Njenga has left many unfinished business and I look forward to convincing her to give a little of her time as a vso volunteer somewhere at the frontier of marginalization and vulnerability.

**Mr. Mwangi Waituru**  
**Policy and Advocacy Advisor**  
**VSO International**



On the occasion of her retirement, the Varkey Foundation extends its deep gratitude to Dr. Njenga for her tireless efforts for the cause of education across Africa. During her tenure,

Dr. Njenga helped to shape a new direction for education in countries across the region. As a foundation that works with teachers, we thank Dr. Njenga for her support for the profession in Africa, and her important work to improve the status and standards of the teaching profession across the region.

**Mr. Vikas Pota**  
**Chairman**  
**Varkey Foundation**





Dr. Njenga speaking to President of the Republic of Kenya at PACE, 2018





Dr. Njenga with the Prime Minister of Cape Verde at UNGA, 2019



Dr. Njenga awarded by Minister of Education of Lesotho for Service to Teaching Profession in Africa, 2019



Dr. Njenga with the Minister of Education of Mauritius and Executive Director of AfECN, 2018





Dr. Njenga with Ethiopia Minister of State of Education and FAWE Director, 2019





Dr. Njenga with the Minister of Education of Botswana during IEA Evaluation Visit, 2019



Dr. Njenga at EAC Head Quarters on IPED Mission, 2019

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LASTING GRATITUDE TO ALL THE STAFF MEMBERS WHO COORDINATED THIS FAREWELL RECEPTION AND TO ALL THOSE WHO CONTRIBUTED FOR US TO SIT TOGETHER AND CELEBRATE DR. BEATRICE KHAMATI NJENGA.

DR NJENGA, GO IN PEACE TO BEGIN A NEW CAREER; AS AN "EMERITUS EDUCATION CONSULTANT". YOU HAVE LEFT A LEGACY TO EACH AND EVERYONE OF US.

A BOUQUET OF THANKS FOR HONOURING THE AUC-HRST DEPARTMENT WITH YOUR PRESENCE.

MERRY CHRISTMAS 2019 AND HAPPY NEW YEAR 2020.

—H.E. PROFESSOR SARAH ANYANG AGBOR  
HRST COMMISSIONER, AUC



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Compiled by the Department of Human Resources Science and Technology and Presented to Dr. Beatrice Khamati Njenga on her retirement after fourteen years of service to the African Union Commission

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