

Round 3: February-October 2025

Think for Africa (TAP)- AAAWE virtual mentoring program for African Women Economists.

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November 14, 2025

This report summarizes the third round of the AAAWE-TAP virtual mentorship program for African women economists. The application portal opened on November 27, 2024, and closed on December 19, 2024. All the applicants were African women. Sixty-one women were selected from the 331 applicants, and the chosen mentees were paired with 24 mentors, all African women economists. Preference was given to applicants working on their PhD dissertations and to early-career economists (who graduated with a PhD in less than three years). Additionally, efforts were made to balance the representation between Francophone and Anglophone applicants' countries. The mentorship program ran for nine months, from February to October 2025, and selected mentees met with their mentors at least six times. Additionally, AAAWE hosted monthly webinars from March to October focused on professional development topics, including applying for grants, networking, publishing in journals, and balancing work with family commitments. The webinars were opened to all current and former applicants to the mentoring program (approximately 690 African women). Finally, the number of applicants increased from 158 in the second round to 331 in the third round.

The report is divided into four sections. Section 1 provides an overview of the applicants' profiles; Section 2 describes the mentors' and selected mentees' profiles;

Section 3 explains the mentoring activities; and Section 4 summarizes the mentees' feedback on the program.

Section 1

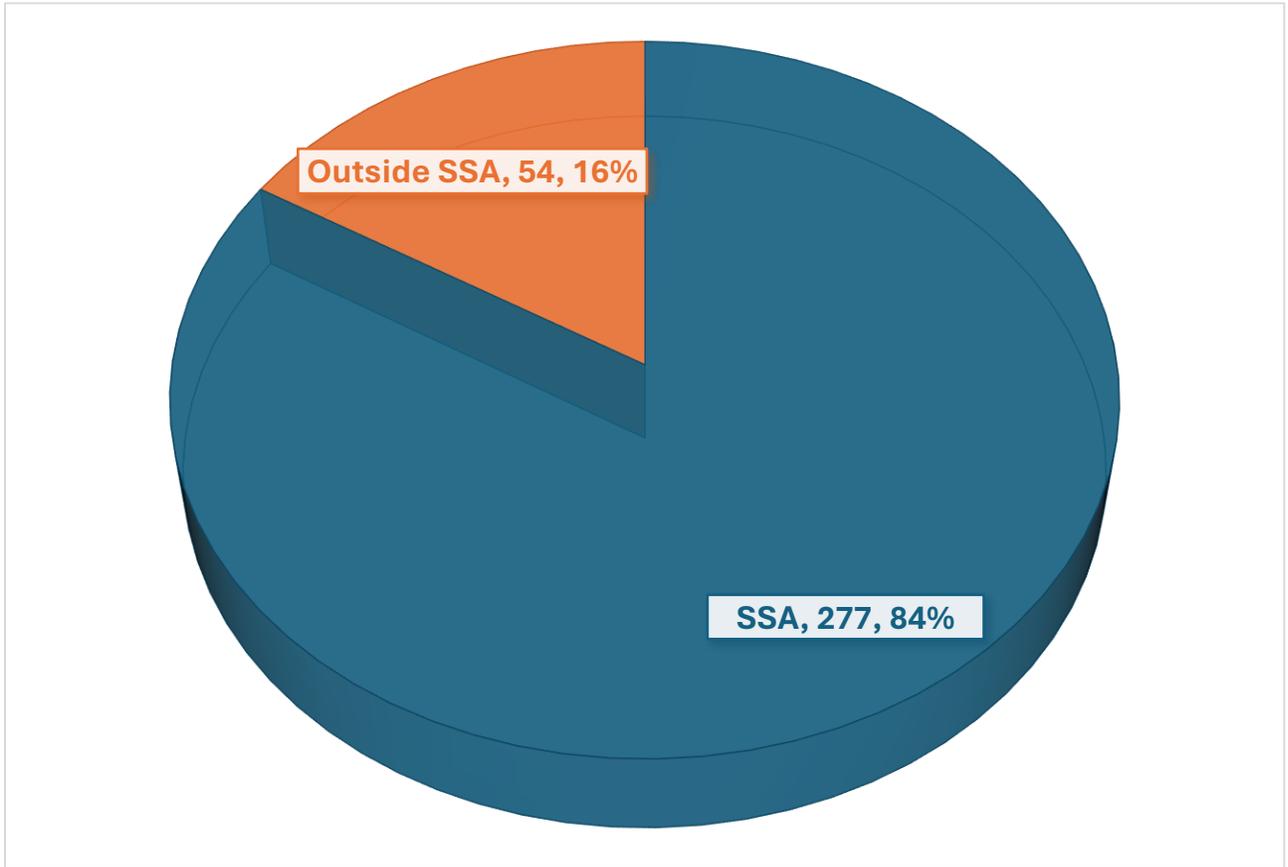
Application by country of residence

- There were 331 applicants from 44 countries (28 countries in SSA and 16 outside SSA)

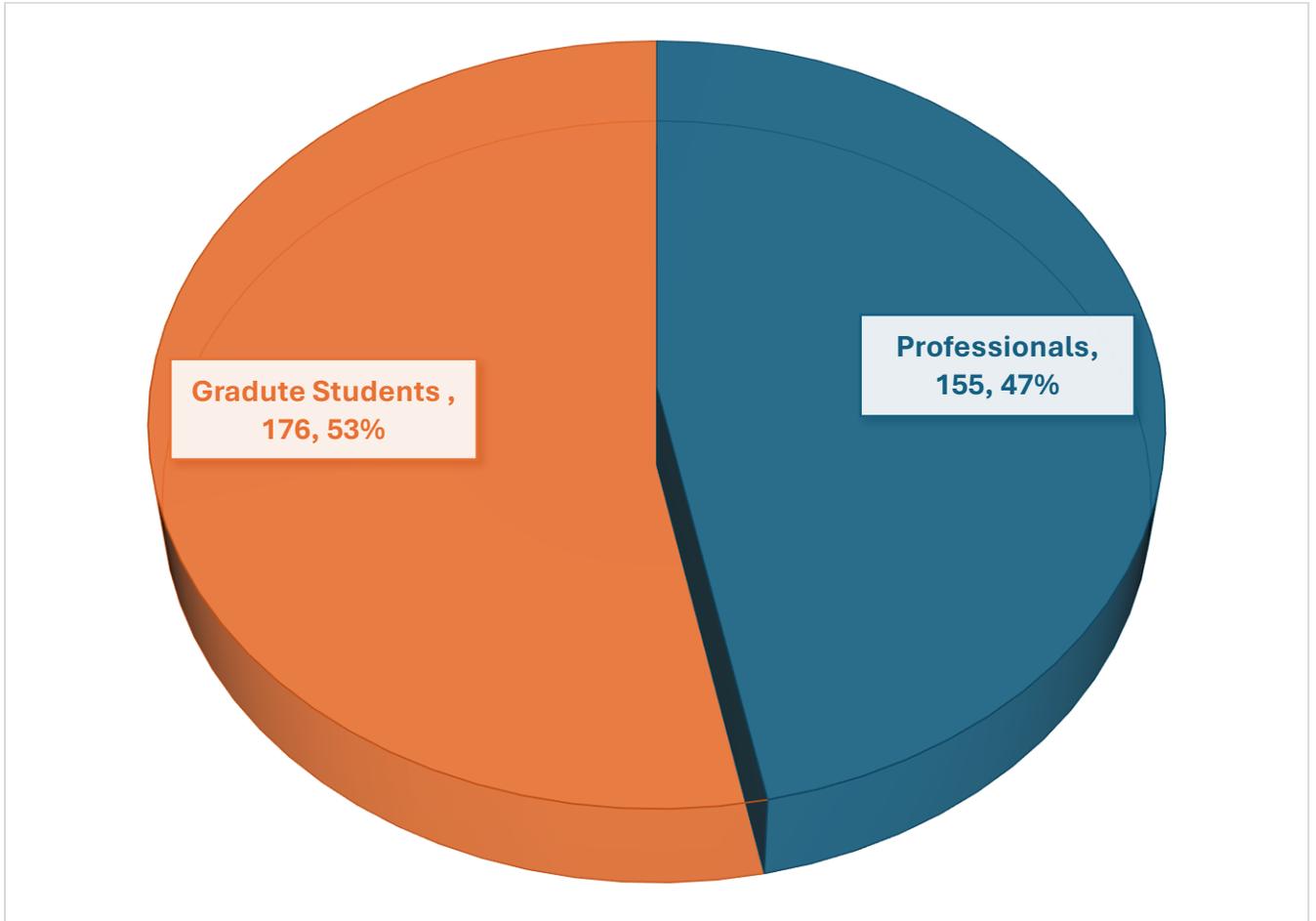
Country of Residence of Applicants	Professional	Student	Total
All countries	155	176	331
Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA)	142	135	277
Outside SSA	13	41	54
SSA Countries	142	135	277
Benin	3	3	6
Botswana	3	1	4
Burkina Faso	6	7	13
Burundi	1	0	1
Cameroon	14	20	34
Central African Rep	1	0	1
Congo	1	1	2
Côte D'Ivoire	3	6	9
DCR	1	0	1
Ethiopia	4	0	4
Gambia	1	0	1
Ghana	4	11	15
Kenya	15	13	28
Lesotho	3	4	7
Malawi	6	11	17
Mali	1	0	1
Mauritania	1	0	1
Mozambique	0	1	1
Niger	0	1	1
Nigeria	29	15	44
Rwanda	1	0	1
Senegal	4	0	4
South Africa	20	20	40
Tanzania	3	5	8
Togo	2	5	7
Uganda	9	6	15
Zambia	3	1	4
Zimbabwe	3	4	7
Outside SSA	13	41	54
Canada	1	1	2

Country of Residence of Applicants	Professional	Student	Total
Czech Republic	0	1	1
Egypt	4	1	5
France	1	4	5
Germany	1	0	1
India	1	1	2
Ireland	0	1	1
Italy	0	3	3
Japan	0	2	2
Morocco	2	1	3
Pakistan	0	2	2
Somalia	0	1	1
Russia	0	1	1
Turkey	1	0	1
UK	0	10	10
United States	2	12	14

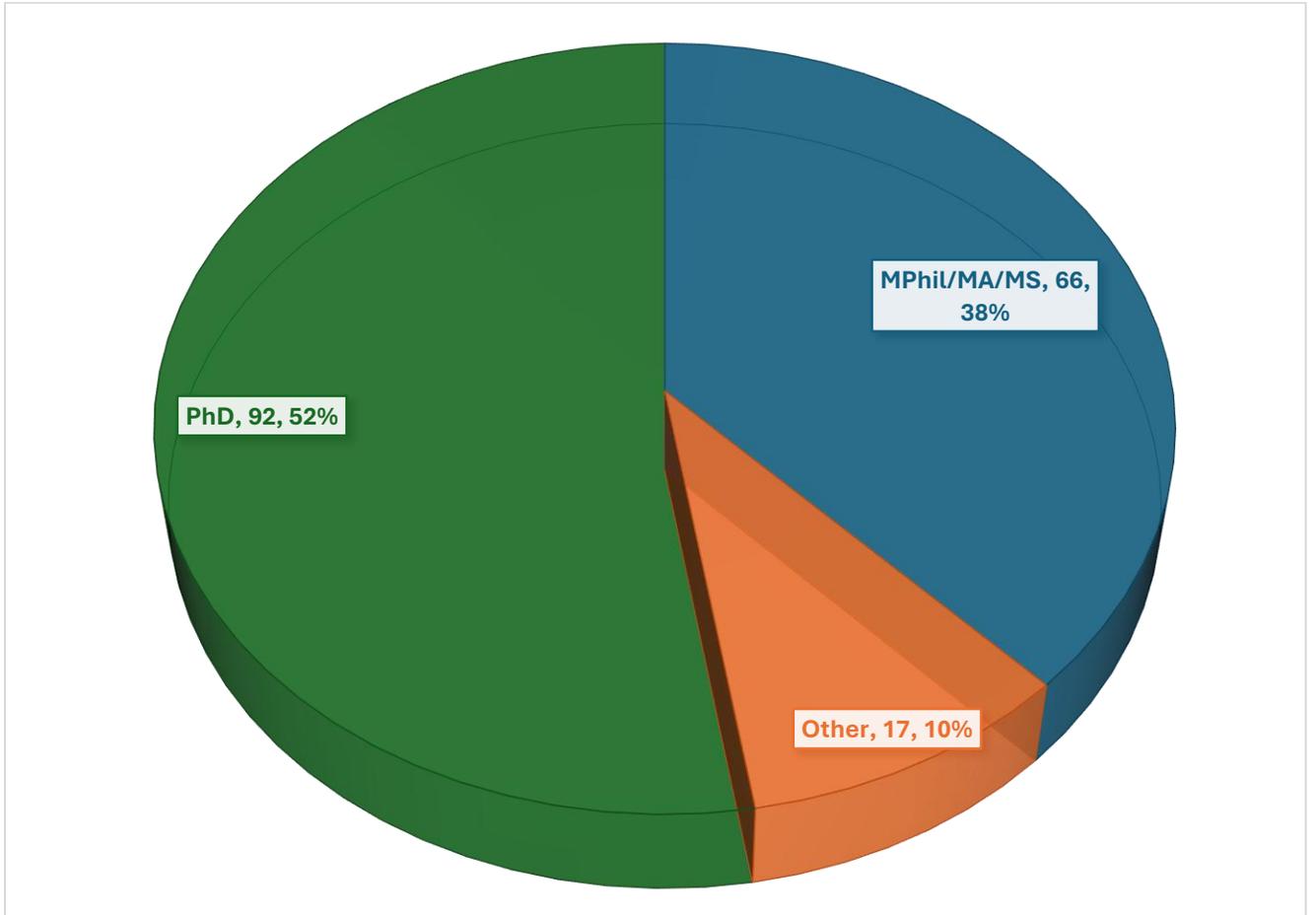
- About 84% of the applicants resided in SSA, and 16% lived outside SSA.



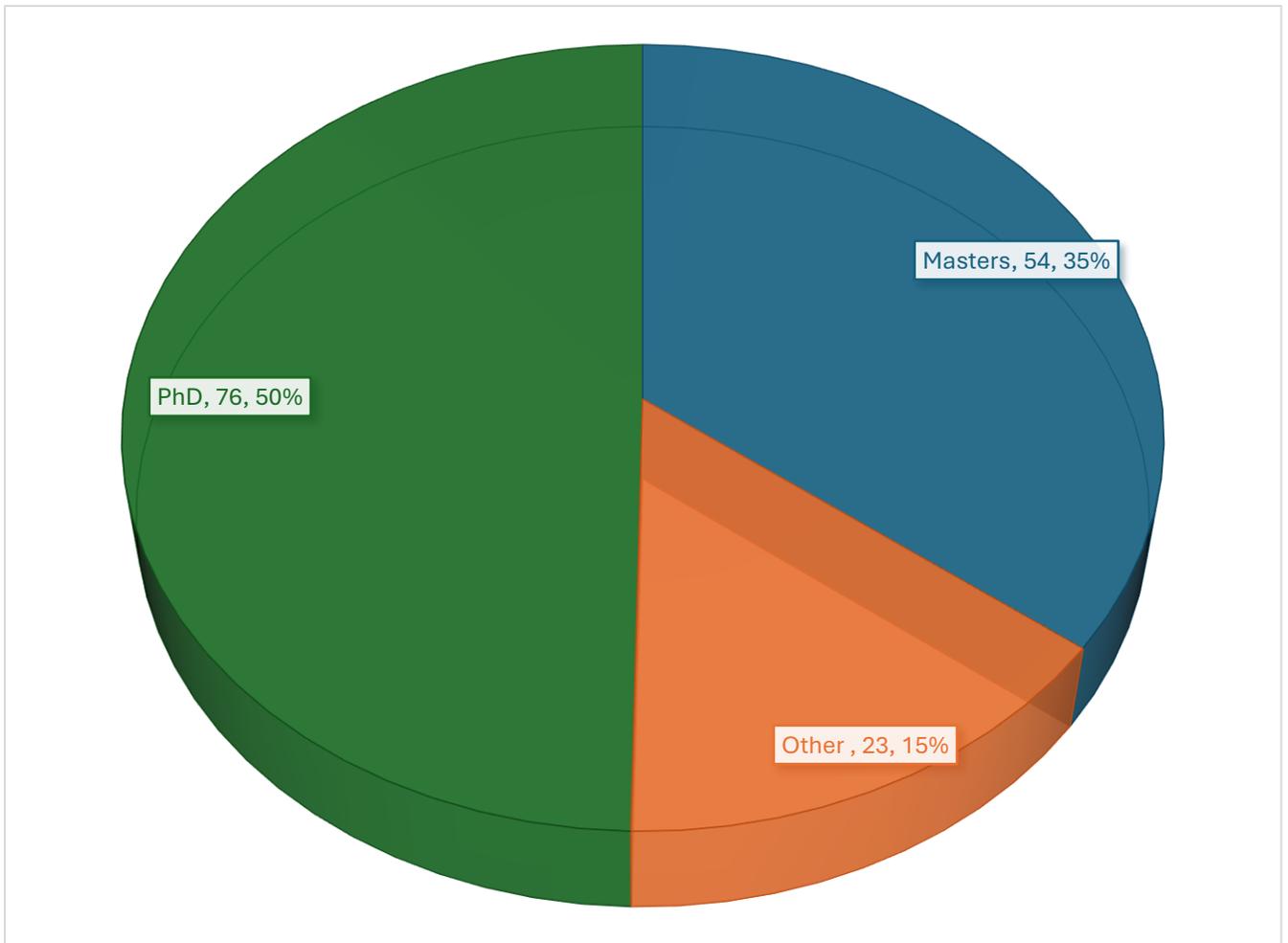
- About 53% of the applicants were graduate students and 47% were professionals.



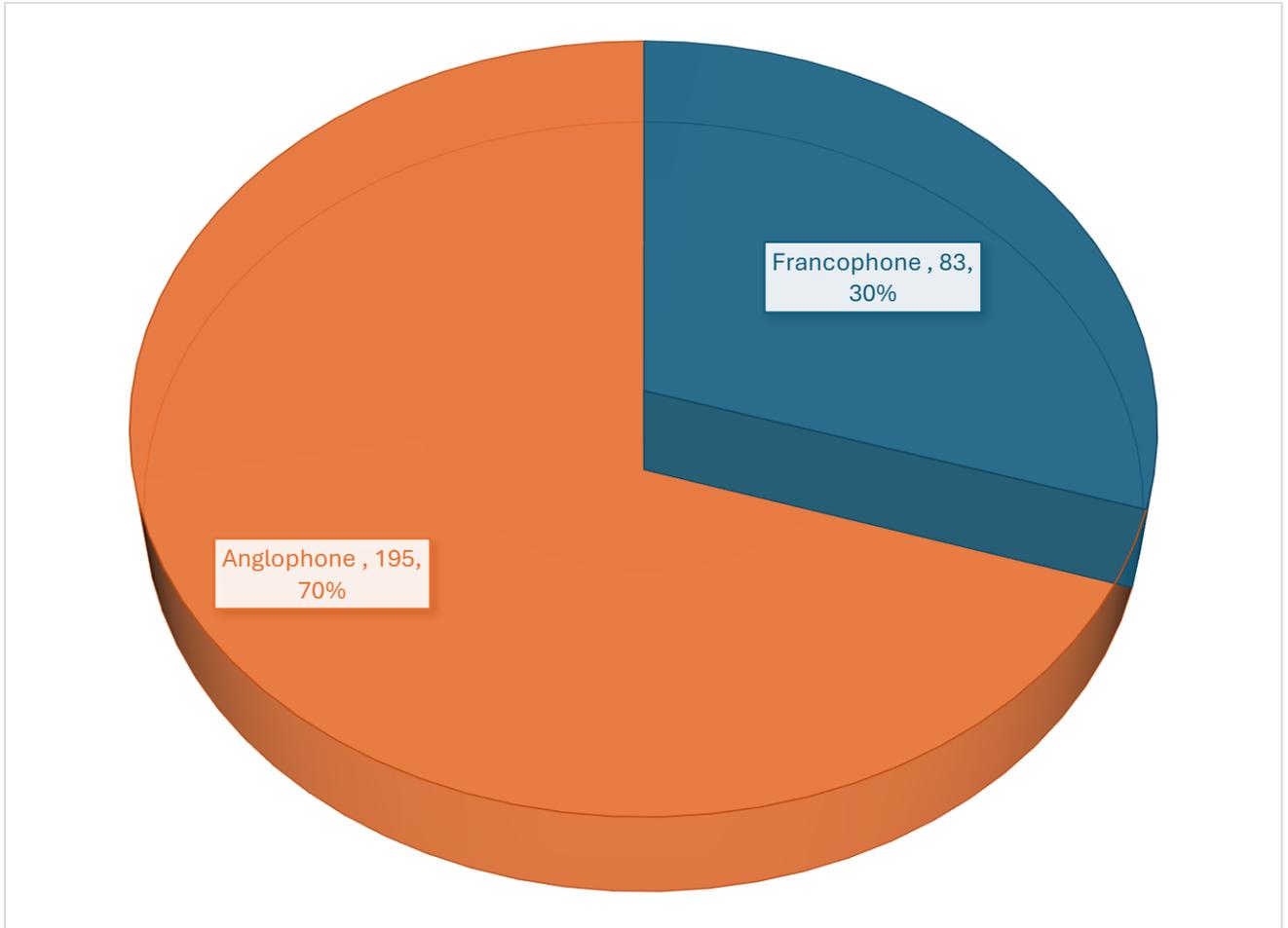
- Among the student applicants, 52% were in Ph.D. programs, and 38% were pursuing master's degrees.



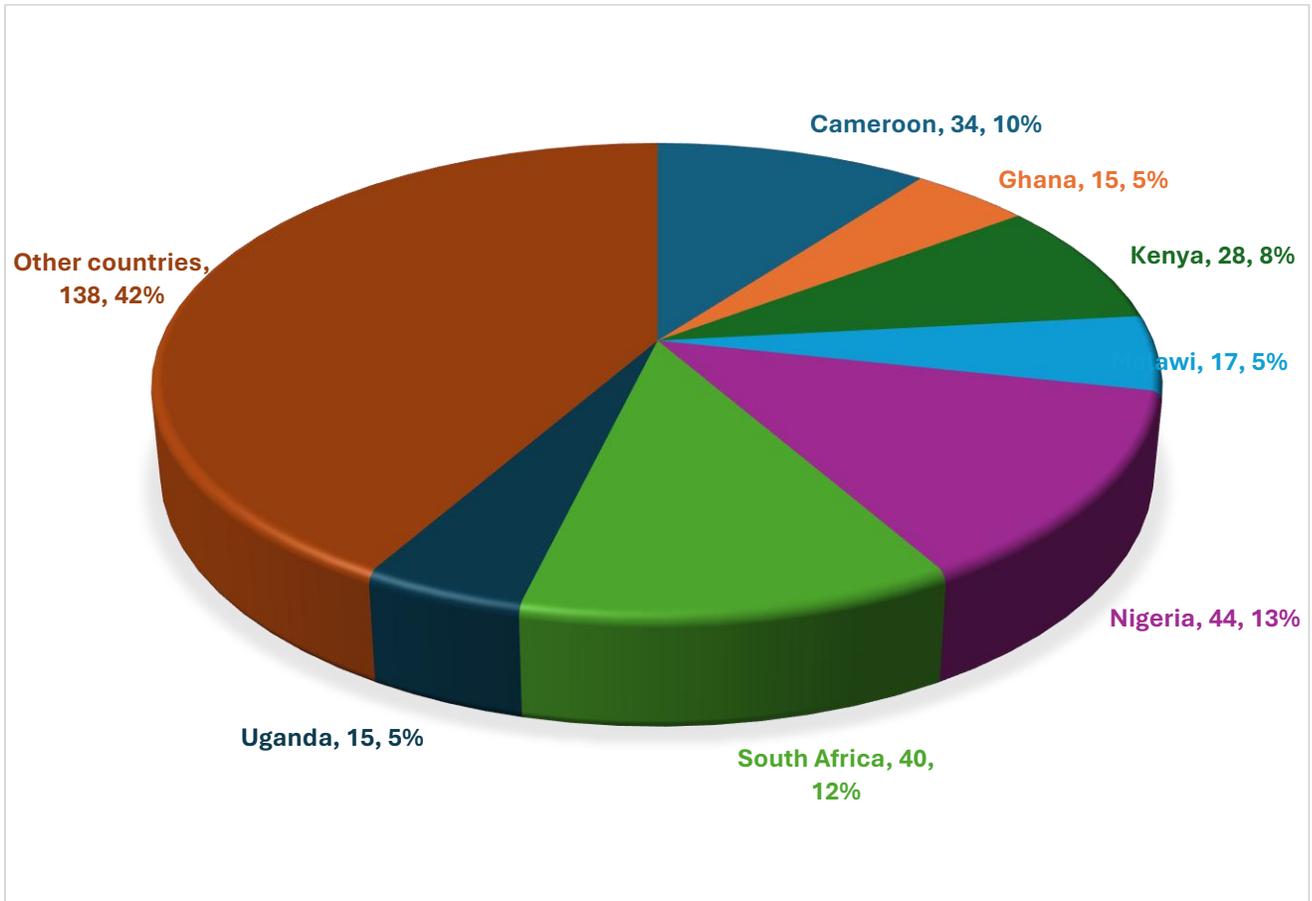
- Among the Professionals, 50% were PhDs holder and 35% had completed a master's degrees.



- About 70% of the SSA applicants were from Anglophone countries, and 30% were from Francophone countries.



- The top seven countries with the most applicants were Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, South Africa, and Uganda.



Section 2

Profile of Selected Applicants

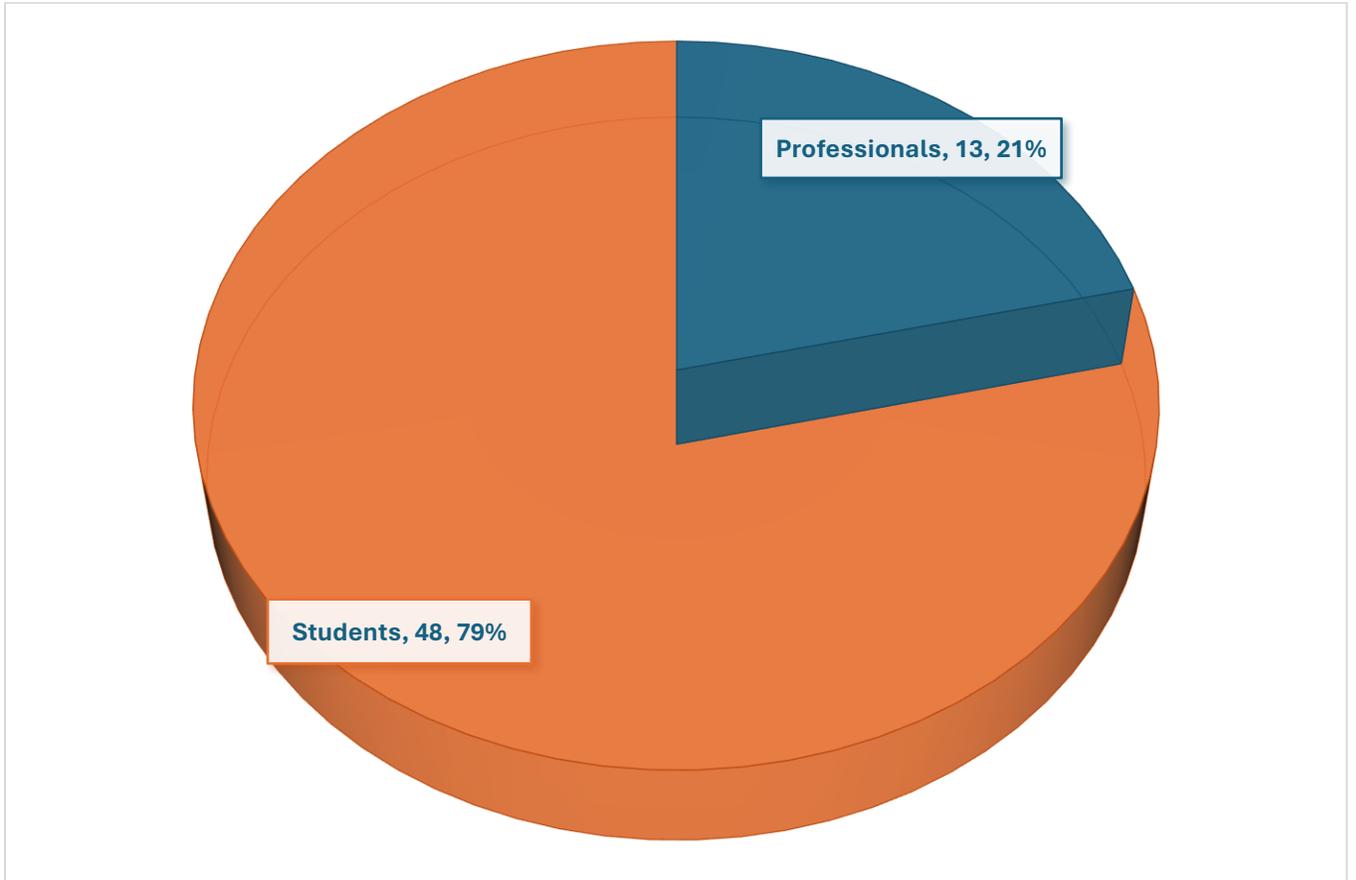
Sixty-one women were selected from the 331 applicants and paired with 24 mentors.

All the mentors are African women economists.

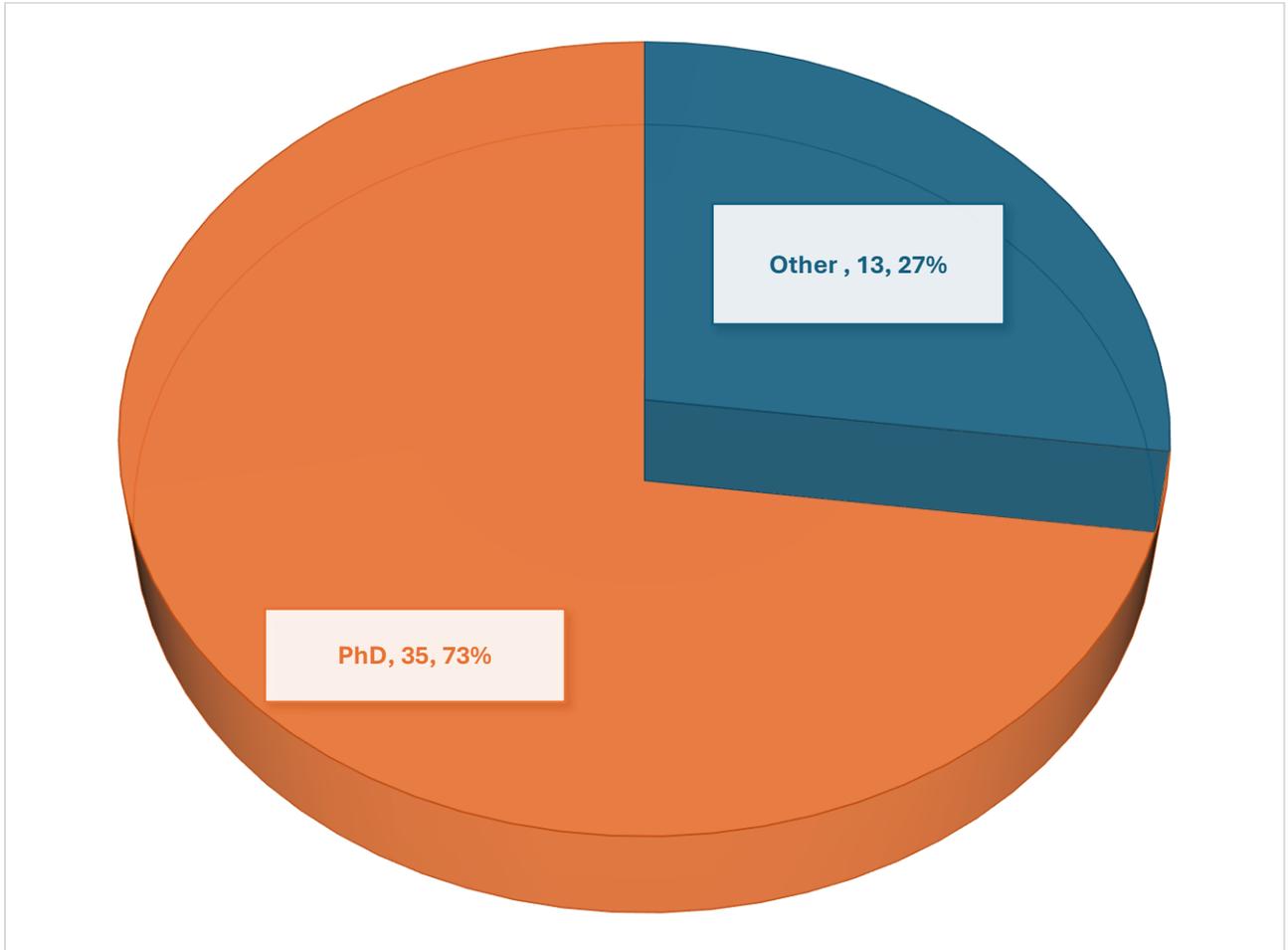
Selected applicants by country of origin

Country of Origin	Professionals	Students	Total
Benin	3	2	5
Burkina Faso	0	5	5
Burundi	1	0	1
Cameroon	1	8	9
Central African Republic	1	0	1
Congo	1	0	1
Côte D'Ivoire	1	0	1
Democratic Republic of the Congo	1	0	1
Egypt	0	3	3
Ethiopia	1	0	1
Ghana	1	5	6
Kenya	0	7	7
Lesotho	0	1	1
Malawi	0	3	3
Nigeria	1	4	5
Somalia	0	1	1
South Africa	0	4	4
Togo	1	0	1
Uganda	0	1	1
United Republic of Tanzania	0	2	2
Zimbabwe	0	2	2
Total	13	48	61

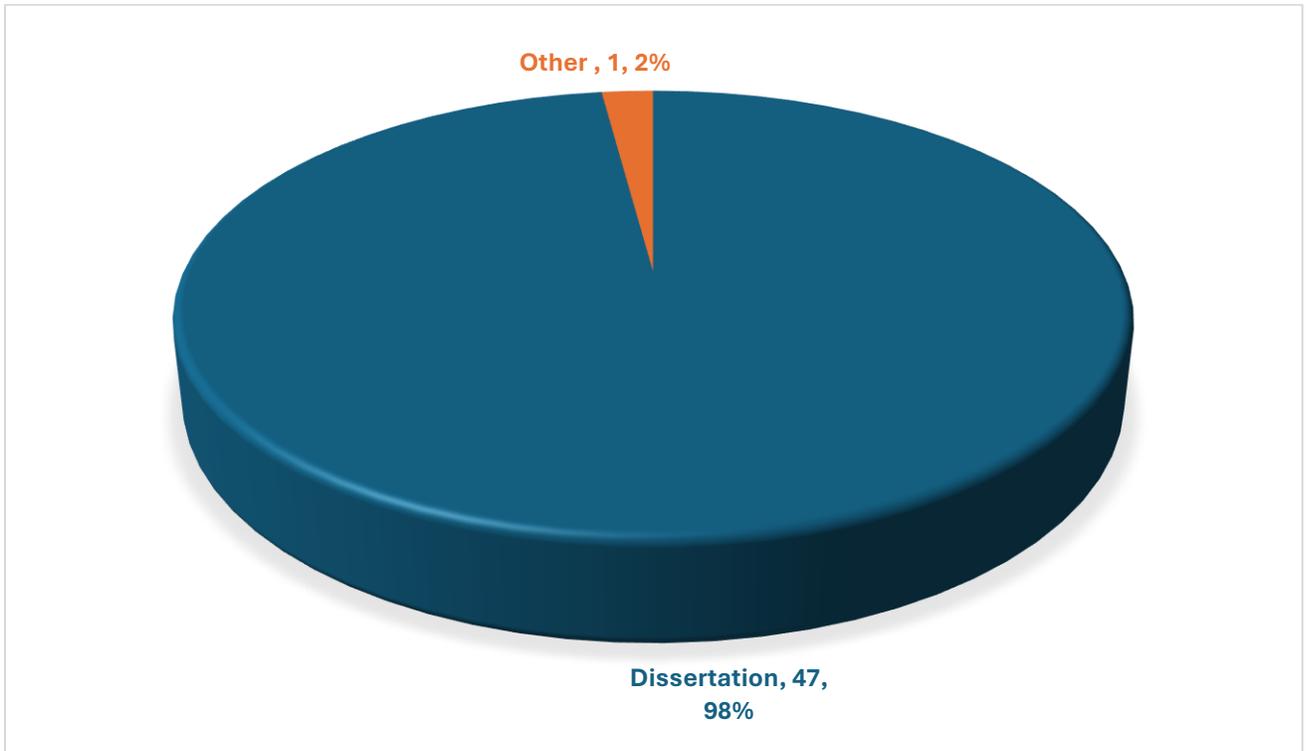
- About 79% of the selected mentees were students, and 21% were early career professionals.



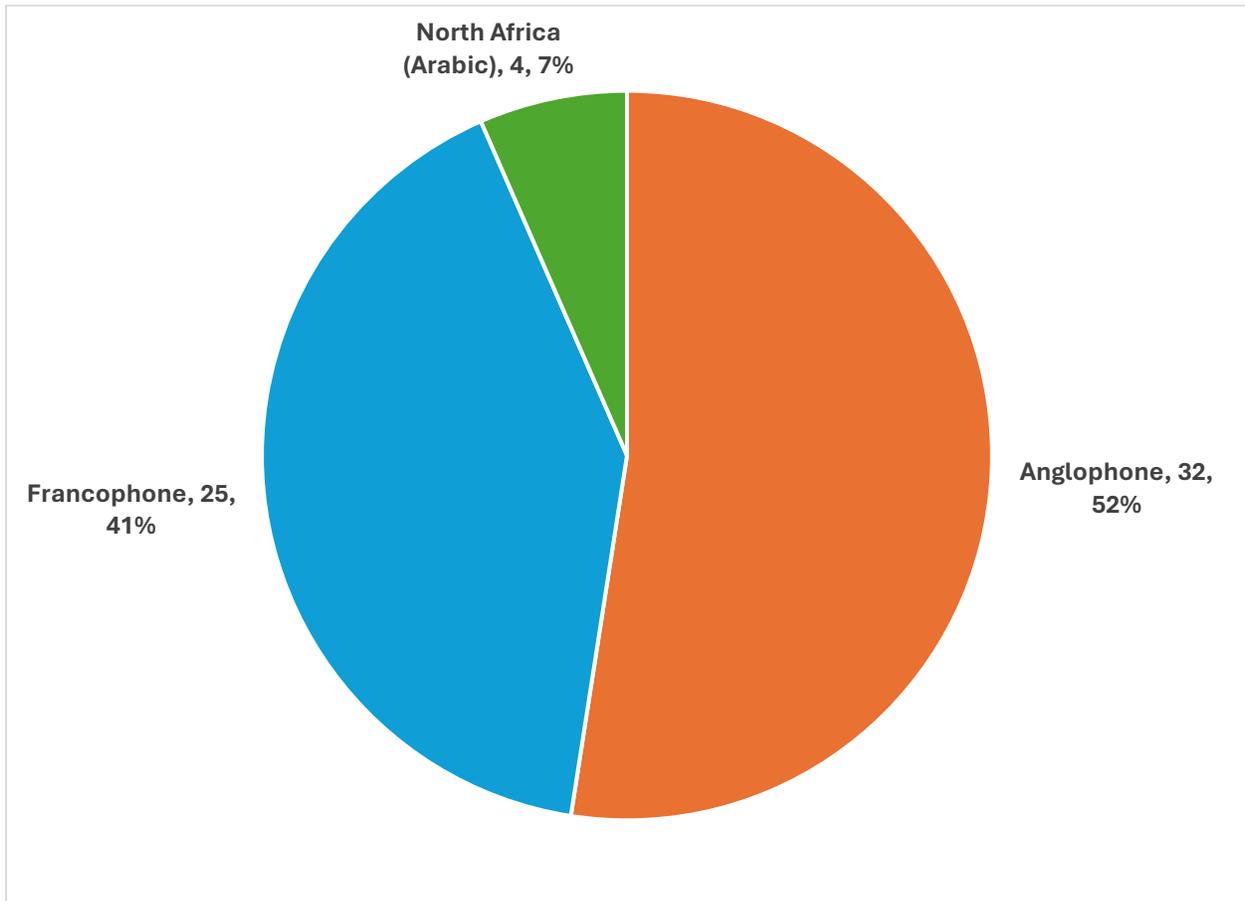
- About 73% of the students were pursuing a PhD, and 27% were pursuing other degrees (mostly master's and MPhil degrees).



- About 98% of the students were working on their dissertation, and 2% had not started writing their dissertation.



- About 52% of the mentees were from Anglophone countries, 25% were from Francophone countries, and 7% were from North Africa.



Profile of Mentors

- All the mentors were Africans and have had extensive research experience. The number of mentors increased from 18 to 24, reducing the mentee-to-mentor ratio.

Title	Affiliation	Country of Origin	Country of Residence
Associate Professor	Wellesley College	Ghana	US
Associate Professor	University of Ghana	Ghana	Ghana
Senior Lecturer	University of Pretoria	Zimbabwe	South Africa
Associate Professor	University of Pretoria	Ethiopia	South Africa
Senior Fellow	Center for Global Development	Nigeria	US
Researcher	United Nations University at Merit	Zimbabwe	Netherlands
Senior Lecturer	University of Johannesburg	Rwanda	South Africa
Economist	Institute for Sustainable Development	Cameroon	France
Lecturer	Norbert Zongo University	Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso
Senior Lecturer	University of Ghana	Ghana	Ghana
Assistant Professor	University of Ibadan	Nigeria	Nigeria
Senior Lecturer	University of Johannesburg	South Africa	South Africa
Associate Professor	University of Yaoundé II	Cameroon	Cameroon
Lecturer/Researcher	Higher Institute for Population Sciences	Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso
Lecturer	University of Doula	Cameroon	Cameroon
Economist	UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)	Cameroon	Cameroon
Associate Professor	University Thomas Sankara	Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso
Professor	University of North Carolina, Charlotte	Ghana	US
Lecturer I	Covenant University	Nigeria	Nigeria
Senior Lecturer	Federal College of Animal Health and Production Technology	Nigeria	Nigeria
Professor	University of East Paris,	Cote'd'Ivoire	France
Assistant Professor	Norbert Zongo University	Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso
CEO & Do-Director	ASPROWORDA	Cameroon	Belgium
Senior Lecturer	University of Pretoria	South Africa	South Africa

Section 3

Mentoring Activities and Conferences

Meetings with mentors: Mentors were assigned to 3-5 mentees with similar research interests. The mentors held group mentoring sessions at least seven times, with most mentors meeting once a month. These sessions provided a platform for discussing research progress, offering feedback, and providing guidance on career development.

Overall ratings and a few quotes:

Monthly Workshops: The virtual monthly workshops led by Professor Nkechi Owoh and Professor Monica Lambon-Quayefio from the University of Ghana continued. The workshops aimed to provide in-depth training on specific topics relevant to the mentees' professional growth. They covered topics including grant writing, the publication process, ethical issues, family-work life balance, networking, and postdoctoral fellowships. The sessions were engaging, with 80 former and current mentees participating.

African Finance and Economic Association Conference: AAAWE played a vital role at the African Finance and Economic Association (AFEA) conference in Nairobi from July 15-18, 2025. Specifically, AAAWE organized eight in-person sessions and supported 45 members in presenting at the conference (23 in person and 22 virtually), representing 16 countries. Of these, 21 papers were presented by PhD students, 16 by professionals, and five by Master's/MPhil students. The presentations allowed the mentees to receive feedback on their research, and it also provided an international platform to share their work and connect with other researchers in their field. Additionally, nine AAAWE members served as session chairs, 11 as discussants, and six moderated sessions. Taking on these leadership roles in an international conference boosted their confidence, which is especially important since economics is a male-dominated profession. The conference paper titles are listed in the appendix.

As part of AAAWE’s commitment to building lasting professional connections, AAAWE hosted a lively dinner networking event on the final day of the AFEA conference, bringing together 32 attendees from across Africa for an evening of meaningful dialogue and networking. The dinner also marked the official inauguration of the Kenya AAAWE chapter, a significant step in expanding AAAWE’s regional presence. The evening was designed to foster open and informal conversations around themes such as “What AAAWE means to me” and “Key experiences in AAAWE chapters.” Participants shared stories, reflected on challenges, and highlighted successful chapter initiatives. The session on sharing best practices across AAAWE chapters enabled representatives from Kenya and visiting chapters to explore opportunities, compare strategies, and spark cross-border partnerships. Throughout the evening, attendees emphasized the value of belonging to a vibrant and supportive network of women economists. The dinner served as a practical demonstration of AAAWE’s mission—to connect, empower, and advance women in the field of economics. This mix of structured planning and informal engagement underscored the importance of cultivating a sustainable and interconnected community across Africa.

The conference provided mentees with opportunities to connect with peers, mentors, and experts from various institutions and countries. Overall, most mentees expressed satisfaction with the experience, with 80% rating it as either excellent (36%) or very good (44%), while 20% assigned a fair rating. Participant feedback indicated a highly enriching experience, characterized by extensive learning and meaningful networking. Some reported building lasting professional relationships and laying the groundwork for collaborative research. The feedback from six participants summarizes the group's overall sentiments.

Lydia, Kenya: I would describe my experience as mind-blowing, eye-opening, and phenomenal. It was my first time attending a conference, and I got to learn what happens during a conference.

Chiamake, Nigeria: Transformative, empowering, and unforgettable. Attending the 2025 African Finance and Economics Association (AFEA) Conference in Nairobi was more than just a professional milestone; it was a life-defining experience.

Anita, Ghana. The panel discussions highlighted the barriers women face from access to mentorship to institutional biases, but also shared practical strategies for overcoming them. I left the session feeling inspired and empowered to take up space, mentor others, and contribute meaningfully to shaping inclusive research environments across Africa.

Djinta, Togo: The 2025 AFEA Conference was an excellent platform for building valuable professional connections. I connected with several researchers working on similar topics, particularly in the areas of digital finance, agricultural productivity, and institutional economics. The most valuable part for me was the opportunity to receive direct feedback on my research from leading African economists and fellow scholars.

Emilie, Benin: The most enriching part of the conference was the opportunity to present my paper, receive constructive feedback for its improvement, and learn from the insights shared in other research presentations.

Angélique, Côte D'Ivoire: The Evening Session titled: “Getting More Women in Research”. This session opened my eyes even more to the challenges women face in the research world and how to anticipate them in my own daily life. What made this session special was the sharing of experiences by Prof. Tabitha Kiriti, who deeply impacted me with real-life examples of the challenges women face in research.

Econometric Society African Summer School: AAAWE sponsored ten mentees to participate in the African Summer School (AFSS) organized by the Econometric Society. The AFSS was held from May 23 to 28, 2025, in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. The primary purpose of the AFSS is to promote the transfer of meaningful knowledge and methodology through a "train-the-trainers" approach, ensuring a long-term impact in the African region. Specifically, the program aims to close the gap in advanced economics and econometrics training by inviting leading academics from around the world to share their expertise with African-based researchers and students. The sponsored attendees included eight PhD students and two professionals from seven countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania).

The report from the AAAWE mentees indicates that the workshop was a transformative experience—both academically, professionally, and personally. Participants reported improved skills in impact evaluation methods, especially the Differences-in-Differences econometric technique. Despite a few logistical issues such as internet connectivity during the online sessions, the overall experience exceeded expectations. About 80% of participants reported a significant boost in their confidence to apply econometric techniques, while a smaller portion (20%) indicated a moderate impact. Additionally, 90% of the participants said the workshop had a high impact on their research skills. The feedback from three participants captures the overall sentiments of the group.

Généviève, Camerron: The experience was truly amazing. I gained new skills and understood the Difference-in-Differences (DID) method much better. I am genuinely very happy to have had the privilege of participating in this summer school. Thank you for this wonderful opportunity. I hope to have even better opportunities in the future.

Asmo, Burkina Faso: I had the chance to develop a valuable network by meeting professionals and students with whom I hope to maintain connections. This opportunity truly exceeded my expectations, and I am convinced that it will have a significant impact on my future journey.

Adechola, Senegal: The most interesting part was the application of the difference-in-differences method for natural experiments developed by Clement, as it rekindled my desire to revive one of my research projects that I had abandoned.

Section 4

Feedback from mentees

An end-of-program evaluation was conducted to assess the effectiveness of the mentoring program. Forty-Seven mentees completed the survey. The survey results indicate that mentees were very appreciative of the AAAWE Mentorship Program. All participants expressed high satisfaction with the communication and coordination of the program, and the majority strongly agreed that their mentors effectively addressed their key concerns. Additionally, the mentees' responses highlighted the educational and practical value of the monthly webinars, with most rating the webinars as excellent. Further, many mentees described the AAAWE Mentorship Program as a transformative and enriching experience that significantly enhanced their academic, professional, and personal growth. They reported improvements in their research and writing skills, including learning how to structure academic papers, conduct literature reviews, and apply advanced econometric techniques. Several mentees highlighted that the mentorship filled critical knowledge gaps they faced locally and provided individualized guidance and constructive feedback that sharpened the quality of their

work. The program also offered a strong sense of community and networking, allowing participants to connect with established women economists and peers across Africa. Mentees valued their mentors' supportive and inspiring approach, which helped them clarify their career goals, regain motivation, and navigate academic challenges with renewed confidence. Beyond technical learning, many participants emphasized the program's contribution to their personal and leadership development. They reported becoming more self-aware, confident, and organized learning to manage time effectively, balance family and academic commitments, and stay accountable to their goals. For many mentees, it was a defining moment of their professional journey, offering hope, confidence, and a renewed sense of purpose.

The mentees proposed several ways to enhance the AAAWE Mentorship Program's inclusivity and impact. A major recommendation was to address the language barrier faced by francophone mentees through French interpretation, bilingual materials, or English language support during webinars. Some also suggested providing financial assistance to cover internet costs, research activities, or conference participation. Others emphasized the need for more interactive and practical sessions, including group discussions, peer-to-peer learning, and workshops on proposal writing and career development. They also proposed extending the program duration to one year to strengthen mentor-mentee relationships and learning outcomes. Additionally, some mentees recommended organizing in-person mentor-mentees meetings or regional gatherings, creating thematic or country-based groups for continuous collaboration to maintain engagement. Finally, they suggested sharing webinar recordings to ensure that those who were unavailable during live sessions can equally benefit from the content. These sentiments were echoed in the feedback shared by several mentees.

Chiamaka, Nigeria: My experience with the AAAWE Mentorship Program 2025 has been truly transformative. It came at a defining stage of my academic and professional journey, deepening my confidence as a researcher and connecting me with a supportive community of African women economists. The monthly seminars have greatly shaped, developed, and refined me into a more excellent and well-rounded economist. My mentor's guidance was especially instrumental in helping me structure and deliver my presentation effectively at the AFEA Conference in Nairobi, my first international trip, made possible through AAAWE's generous sponsorship. This experience marked a major turning point in my career, and I remain deeply grateful to AAAWE for believing in my potential and investing in my growth.

Djinta, Togo: My overall experience with the AAAWE Mentorship Program 2025 was deeply enriching and transformative. The program offered me the opportunity to strengthen both my research and professional development through consistent guidance and constructive feedback from my mentor. Our exchanges helped me refine my research objectives, improve the clarity of my writing, and gain practical insights into publication strategies and career advancement. I particularly appreciated the supportive environment and the sense of belonging within the AAAWE network, which fostered meaningful connections with other women economists across Africa. Overall, the mentorship experience has significantly enhanced my confidence, visibility, and motivation to pursue impactful research and leadership in the field of economics.

Judith, Ghana: I am truly grateful to be part of the AAAWE Mentorship Program 2025. It has been an incredible experience that has broadened my understanding of women's roles in economics and inspired me to give back to the society. What I appreciate most is the program's impact beyond the professional realm, it has taught me valuable skills to balance work and life, prioritize tasks, and multitask effectively. I

am so thankful for the opportunity to learn from experienced professionals and connect with like-minded individuals. My mentor, Prof. Theresa Blankson, went above and beyond in sharing her knowledge and experience. Her mentorship not only enhanced my understanding of the field but also instilled in me the confidence to pursue my goals with renewed passion and purpose.

Talent, Zimbabwe: My overall experience with the AAAWE Mentorship Program 2025 was very beneficial. I did not have anyone locally who could assist me with IV regression analysis, and the mentorship filled that gap. The mentor was highly knowledgeable and also provided guidance on spatial analysis, which was extremely helpful for my research. The feedback I received was detailed, clear, and actionable, allowing me to complete my work more efficiently. Additionally, learning how someone outside my immediate network approaches presenting and describing research was invaluable. Engaging with a mentor from outside South Africa challenged me to communicate my work more clearly to an unfamiliar audience, which will strengthen my ability to present internationally. Finally, having a mentor who appreciates and has navigated challenges as a woman in economics was particularly encouraging. It provided a unique perspective and made the mentorship experience even more meaningful.

Judy, Kenya: The mentorship program was a transformative journey for me. It not only helped me to clarify my research interest or research goals but it also enriched my confidence in presenting my ideas and connecting with other scholars. The mentors' support and encouragement were instrumental in motivating me to pursue my academic ambitions more strategically. I truly value the exposure, learning, and sense of community that the AAAWE program created.

Dorcas, Ghana: My experience with the mentorship program has been truly transformative in my professional development. It gave me renewed hope and revived my passion for completing my PhD, especially after I had lost motivation and energy from being in the program for a long time. Through the mentorship, I was also able to make a well-informed decision when I considered changing my research topic. Moreover, it helped me engage in deep self-reflection, understand myself better, and learn how to plan my days in ways that align with my strengths and how my mind works. Importantly, through the guidance of my mentor, I improved my communication with my supervisor—I was able to regain his attention and rebuild our working relationship after a period of disinterest and poor communication. In addition, the program has given me the opportunity to be part of a community that provides genuine support - mentors and mentees - for my holistic development and well-being. I am very grateful to AAAWE

Lydia, Kenya: My overall experience with the AAAWE Mentorship Program 2025 has been truly transformative, both academically and professionally. The program has equipped me with invaluable skills in balancing academic responsibilities with personal and professional life, enhancing my ability to manage time and priorities effectively. I have gained confidence in scientific communication—learning how to present ideas clearly, write with precision, and engage meaningfully in academic discussions. Additionally, I have become more proficient in integrating Artificial Intelligence tools into my research and studies, which has significantly improved my efficiency and analytical capacity. One of the most memorable highlights was attending my first academic conference through AAAWE, where I had the opportunity to present my work, network with experts, and receive constructive feedback that has shaped my research direction. Overall, the mentorship experience has broadened my perspective,

strengthened my academic foundation, and inspired me to pursue my career goals with renewed focus and confidence.

Appendix

Papers presented at the African Finance and Economic (AFEA) Conference in Nairobi, July 15-18, 2025

	Paper title
1	Couples' attitudes toward domestic violence and use of reproductive health care in Sub-Saharan Africa
2	Economic Effect of Access to Health Insurance Coverage in Kenya
3	The relationship between Marital status and Wellbeing over the life course in South Africa
4	Gender, Financial Inclusion and Poverty in Cameroon
5	The Potential Impact of Green Macropprudential Policies in Mitigating Climate Risks in South Africa
6	Climate Change, Asset Ownership, and Intimate Partner Violence among Agricultural Households in Ghana
7	The nexus of climate change, migration, and conflict in Sudan
8	Livestock diversification, poverty, and climate change in Burkina Faso
9	The role of mobile money in enhancing access to finance for female-owned SMEs in Uganda
10	Social Interactions, Skills Gap, Human Capital, and Industrialization in Kenya
11	Market-based information to Predict Small Firms' Marginal Returns to Capital and Other Business Support Services
12	On Narrowing the Credit Access Gap Between Firms in Sub-Saharan Africa and Firms in Other Developing Countries: How Relevant are a Country's Financial and Legal Systems?
13	The effect of Digitalization and Technological Innovation on Agricultural Productivity and Financial Inclusion in Sub-Saharan Africa
14	Agri-Enterprise gender dynamics in the Sugar Belt Region of Kenya
15	Exploring the role of legumes in economic diversification and sustainable agriculture in Malawi

	Paper title
16	The effect of cassava cultivation on household poverty in Burkina Faso
17	Effect of Savings on Household Consumption Among Women Living with HIV/AIDS: Evidence from Uganda
18	Modeling the Impact of Malaria on Labor Market Outcome in Sub-Saharan Africa
19	Household analysis on gender digital divide, social norms and innovative agricultural practices in Nigeria
20	The Mediating Role of Maternal Mental Health in the Relationship Between Intimate Partner Violence and Child Depression
21	Temporal Dynamics of Transmission Channel of Electricity Shortages on Firm Productivity: Evidence from the World Bank Enterprise Surveys Data Over Two Distinct Periods
22	Human Capital and Entrepreneurial Performance in Benin's Informal Sector
23	The effects of digitization on technological innovation by SMEs in Sub-Saharan Africa SMEs
24	The Influence of Digital Financial Services on Financial Inclusion by Commercial Banks in Cameroon
25	The effect of parents' multidimensional poverty on the school performance of girls and boys in Burkina Faso
26	Impacts of climate change on girls' schooling in Benin
27	The Impact of Child Labour on Educational Outcomes in Lesotho: A Non-Parametric Bounds Approach
28	The impact of cash transfer programs on education and health in Ghana
29	Trade and Human Development Nexus in the COMESA Region
30	Impact of Exchange Rate on Manufacturing Sector Performance in Nigeria

	Paper title
31	Artificial Intelligence Perspectives in Kenya's Digital Lending Ecosystem
32	Effect of the tax structure on household final consumption expenditure in Burkina Faso
33	The power of skill Development in Bridging Africa's Unemployment Gap: Assessing Effectiveness and Labor Market Outcomes
34	Institutional Quality and Technological Innovation
35	Responding to Power Outages: Solar PV Adoption and Lighting Choices in South African Households
36	The feedback effect of instabilities in the banking systems on the real economy
37	TIC et commercialisation des céréales au Burundi
38	Does ICT infrastructure reduce the informal economy? Evidence of some developing countries
39	Whether it's Weather or Climate: The Link between Temperatures and Deprivation in Sub-Saharan Africa
40	The Determinants of Mobile Money Adoption in Cameroon
41	Intégration économique et chaîne de valeur mondiale en Afrique : Rôle de l'économie du savoir