

## Woman Working For Kenyan Rights Honoured In New York

27 July 2011

Jane Weru, the head of the NGO Akiba Mashinan Trust is to receive an innovation award from the Rockefeller Foundation for Her Progressive Work with the Poor and vulnerable in Kenya.

Kenya's Jane Weru, who has worked to build a movement of self-empowerment and community-led solutions for slum dwellers, has since last year through her non-profit organisation Akiba Mashinani Trust, provided slum dwellers with loans and financing as they strive to raise their quality of life.

She is to be honoured for her work at The Rockefeller Foundation's first annual Innovation Awards ceremony on July 27, 2011 in New York.

Beginning in the 1990s, Jane Weru helped found Muungano Wa Wanavijiji – the Kenyan Federation of Slum dwellers—drawing on the experience of Slum dwellers International. The Federation now includes more than 60,000 households in 400 informal settlements nationwide.

Dr. Judith Rodin, the President of the Rockefeller Foundation, said: 'At the Rockefeller Foundation, we are on a constant search for innovative solutions with a social impact and that means not just new products, but also new ways of organizing people, processes and markets to meet today's human needs.'

She continued: 'The Rockefeller Foundation has been following the innovative organizational changes of Jane Weru and her team for many years, and we applaud her efforts in helping the poor and vulnerable within Kenya.'

Innovation has been the hallmark of Ms. Weru's career. She has dedicated herself to promoting community-led savings federations and bringing slum residents, landlords and local governments together to agree on novel approaches to upgrading settlements in a mutually supportive way. As part of her recognition, the Rockefeller Foundation will award a \$100,000 grant to her organization because the Foundation wishes to support her future innovative humanitarian work.

The Rockefeller Foundation Innovation Forum convenes some of the most creative and inventive minds from the worlds of business, government, the non-profit sector and journalism to bring innovation to bear on urgent challenges facing poor and vulnerable people around the world.

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