

KEMRI Strengthens Global Scientific Ties as It Hosts Delegation from TWAS

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The Institute on Friday, 24th October 2025, hosted a high-level delegation from the World Academy of Sciences (TWAS), which visited the Institute to engage with KEMRI scientists supported under the TWAS Capacity Building Programmes.

The delegation was formally received by Dr. Martin Bundi, the Ag. Director of Research and Capacity Building, on behalf of the Ag. Director General, Prof. Elijah Songok.

TWAS, a programme unit of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), was established in 1983 and formally inaugurated in 1985. Its mission is to promote scientific capacity, collaboration, and excellence in the Global South by supporting research, training, and skill development.

Through its Capacity Building initiatives, TWAS has played a key role in strengthening scientific capability at KEMRI, complementing the Institute's mandate to drive world-class research and innovation while developing local expertise.

Since 1993, TWAS has awarded 17 research grants to KEMRI scientists, 14 of whom are based at the Nairobi campus, according to Payal Patel, Associate Programme Officer at TWAS. Among the more recent grantees are Dr. Beatrice Irungu (a two-time recipient), Dr. Luna Kamau (TWAS Fellow), Dr. Jeremiah Gathirwa, Dr. Elizabeth Kigundu, Dr. Cameline Orlando, and Dr. James Nguge. Notably, KEMRI's Director General, Prof. Elijah Songok, is also an alumnus of the TWAS programme.

During the visit, the TWAS delegation toured some of KEMRI's leading research facilities, including the Centre for Virus Research (CVR) and the Centre for Traditional Medicine and Drug Research (CTMDR) laboratories. The tour provided insights into the Institute's cutting-edge work in pathogen research, drug discovery, and traditional medicine innovation. Both institutions reaffirmed their commitment to deepening collaboration in scientific research, innovation, and capacity building to drive sustainable development in Africa and beyond.



TWAS, Associate Programme Officer, Payal Patel making a point during the meeting while Ag. Director, Research Capacity Building, Dr. Martin Bundi takes notes.

Through such strategic engagements, KEMRI and TWAS continue to nurture the next generation of African scientists—ensuring that scientific excellence is not only achieved but also translated into meaningful institutional growth, innovation, and global impact.



PIC 1: TWAS, Associate Programme Officer, Payal Patel presenting a gift to Principal research scientist Professor Sammy Njenga
 PIC 2&3: Dr. Beatrice Irungu during the conducted tour of KEMRI Facilities
 PIC 4&5: Conducted tour of CTMDR and CVR Laboratories
 PIC 6: TWAS program manager Memoth Kanniakonil (left) and Giovanni Ortolani (right)