

# WECYCLER EMERGES 2018-19 KING BAUDOIN FOUNDATION AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT PRIZE WINNERS

By **Ijeoma Nelly Iwuoha** - March 24, 2019



*Wecyclers*

One of Nigeria's fast growing recycling company, Wecyclers are proud of its works as they have just won the 2018-19 King Baudouin Foundation African Development Prize.

WeCyclers' model is designed to help fill this gap and reduce solid waste in the street of Lagos, improving both the environment and the well-being of populations.

The organisation utilises low and high technology solutions that comprise of a mobile application and SMS technology, as well as innovative low-cost bicycle-powered collection vehicles, which collect recyclable waste directly from households, to sell it on to recycling plants before it is made into new products. Households are sent an SMS by WeCyclers informing them of any "points" earned, which may be redeemed for food, household items and other goods.

According to Wecyclers while announcing their prize, "The Prize recognises our work in leveraging the power of communities and generating impact by redistributing the

benefits from recycled waste.”

“We are proud to grant WeCyclers for their unique model”, said Hervé Lisoir from the King Baudouin Foundation. “We selected the enterprise out of 200 applications for its innovative approach to engaging the community turning recycling into an economic driver for communities and turning citizens into agents of change.”

Since WeCyclers launched its initiative, awareness around the issue has risen among the general public, spurring several other companies to develop new solutions to recycling. WeCyclers have also recently partnered with major corporations, such as Unilever and Nigerian Bottling Company, to launch “kiosks” in places where there are no collection routes.

Through its financial support of €200,000, the Prize will allow WeCyclers to upscale their model and increase their footprint, with plans to expand in Lagos, other Nigerian cities and neighbouring countries. The Prize also provides access to a wide network of stakeholders in Europe and the US, who will support them as they grow. With current growth projections, WeCyclers aim to collect 5k tons of recyclables by 2020 and could be serving 500k households by 2023.

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The biennial award ceremony in the presence of King Philippe and Queen Mathilde of Belgium at the Royal Palace in Brussels will take place June 12.

The aim of the King Baudouin African Development Prize is to acknowledge the work of African individuals or organisations which have made an exemplary contribution to development in Africa. It also seeks to draw public attention to the many inspirational stories of hope, struggle and success which emanate from the development field in Africa.



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