

Sports Queen Awards - Zimbabwe

Grace Chirumanzu (Women's Sport Leadership Academy 2018 graduate) was awarded a £500 AWF Catalyst Grant contribution toward the organisation of the inaugural Sports Queen Awards in Zimbabwe on International Women's Day 2019.



In Zimbabwe, female athletes succeed in sport yet fail to receive recognition from the media, administrators and fans. Grace is a passionate supporter of women in sport and one of her pledges from WSLA was to continue to advocate from a media standpoint. The Sports Queen Awards was the first event of its kind to bring female athletes in the country together to celebrate their success.

There were ten awards available and the winners were Rosemary Mugadza (Sports Legend Award), Ellina Mhlanga (Journalism Champion Award), Joyce Mucheni (Technical Official of The Year), Barbra Jambwa (Fitness Award), Mazvita Musakwa (Young Champion Award), Anna Mguni (Trailblazer Award), Margaret Bangajena (Perseverance Award), Precious Marange (Daring Champion Award) and the World Cup-bound Zimbabwe Netball Team (Team of the Year).

Grace was keen to honour women in sport who are often overlooked at the Annual National Sports Awards. This included sport administrator Angela Nyaundi (pictured left), winner of the Women Empowerment Award, who said, "It has taken 36 years for me to win an award in sports. It means I have no words to explain how happy I am."

The event generated national media attention across television, radio, newspaper, social networks and digital platforms.



Grace reflected that the event had grown her confidence in public speaking, widened her network with women in sport and contributed to building her personal brand. She also experienced the benefits and constraints of project management and dealing with the various stakeholders involved in organizing such an event.

She stated, "In such economically-struggling nations like Zimbabwe, it can be depressing to come back home after WSLA and not be able to change the world one lives in. WSLA is life-changing and when one settles back home, you want to share that vibe, inspire and empower others. I am glad I did manage to do that and pledge to continue doing so."

Find out more about The Sports Queen by following @thesportsqueen on Twitter.