

BIOGRAPHY

Dr Akinwumi Ayodeji Adesina **President, African Development Bank Group**

Dr Adesina is a globally renowned development economist and agricultural development expert, with 30 years of international experience.

He graduated with a Bachelor's degree in agricultural economics (**First Class Honours**) from the University of Ife (Now, Obafemi Awolowo University), Nigeria, in 1981. He was the **first student** to obtain a First Class Honours in Agricultural Economics **in the history** of the University. He holds a master's degree (1985) and a PhD in Agricultural Economics (1988) from **Purdue University, USA**, where he won the **Outstanding PhD thesis award** for that year. He won the prestigious **Rockefeller Foundation Social Science Fellowship** in 1988, which launched him into his international career.

A bold reformer, as **Minister of Agriculture in Nigeria** from 2011-2015, Dr Adesina turned the agriculture sector of Nigeria around within four years. Under his tenure, Nigeria ended 40 years of corruption in the fertiliser sector by developing and implementing an innovative electronic wallet system, which directly provides farmers with subsidised farm inputs at scale, using their mobile phones. Within the first four years of its launch, this electronic wallet system reached **15 million farmers**, dramatically transforming their lives. The electronic wallet system has now gone global and is currently being implemented in Afghanistan and several African countries.

A firm believer in private sector-led growth, Dr Adesina radically changed the perception of agriculture in Nigeria from that of subsistence to a viable business that successfully attracted **\$ 5.6 billion** in private sector investments. He also led financing initiatives to support youth engagement in agriculture and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Ultimately, under his leadership, Nigeria's food production expanded by an **additional 21 million metric tonnes**.

Prior to his appointment as Minister of Agriculture, Dr Adesina was the **Vice President (Policy and Partnerships) of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)**, where he led several bold and innovative policy and finance

initiatives that leveraged **over \$ 4 billion** in bank finance commitments to Africa's agriculture sector. Working with African Heads of State and Ministers of Finance, leaders in the commercial banking industry and Central Bank Governors across several African countries, Dr Adesina successfully **led one of the largest global efforts** to leverage domestic bank finance for the agricultural sector.

A consummate and highly effective builder of strategic partnerships, Dr Adesina has worked effectively across several sectors of the economy to lift millions of people out of poverty. Before joining AGRA in 2008, he served as **Associate Director and Regional Director for the Southern Africa Office of the Rockefeller Foundation** for over a decade. At the Rockefeller Foundation, he initiated programs to develop markets for African farmers, philanthropy for African business leaders and improved access to education. He also served on the Technical Board of the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE).

Dr Adesina was Principal Economist for the West Africa Rice Development Association (1990-1995), Senior Economist and Social Science Coordinator for the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (1995-1998) and Assistant Principal Economist of the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (1988-1990).

A prolific writer, Dr Adesina has authored over **70 scholarly publications** on policy, agricultural development and African development issues. He is a globally respected economist and has served as the **President of the African Association of Agricultural Economists**, as well as on the Editorial Board of several academic journals, including the International Journal of Agricultural Economists. He was awarded the **Outstanding Black Agricultural Economist Award** by the American Association of Agricultural Economists. He was a **Distinguished Africanist Scholar** at Cornell University, USA.

In 2007, Dr Adesina was awarded the prestigious **YARA Prize** in Oslo, Norway, for his leadership in pioneering innovative approaches to improve access to agricultural inputs for African farmers.

He received the **Distinguished Alumni Award from Purdue University, USA, in 2008**. He received the **Distinguished Alumni Award in 2009 and the Grand Commander of Great Ife in 2013, both from the Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria**.

He was awarded the Borlaug CAST Communications Award in 2010 by the Council for Agricultural Science and Technology, USA, for his global leadership on agricultural science and technology.

In May 2011, **Franklin and Marshall College, USA**, awarded Dr. Adesina an **Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters** for his innovative reforms and global leadership in improving the lives and livelihoods of the poor.

In November 2014, he was awarded an **Honorary Doctorate of Agriculture by Purdue University, USA**, for his application of economic principles and the power of markets to public policy that resulted in improved livelihoods for millions of Nigerian rural households through his agricultural reforms.

In December 2015, Dr Adesina was awarded an **Honorary Doctorate of Science from the Adekunle Ajasin University, Nigeria**.

In the same year, he received an **Honorary Doctorate of Science from the Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria**.

In March 2017, **Dr. Adesina received an Honorary Doctorate of Management from the Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria**.

In October 2017, **Purdue University, USA** decorated Dr Adesina with its highest honour, the **Order of the Griffin**, a rare honour **given only to 50 persons since 1893, including to Neil Armstrong, the first man to walk on the moon**.

In May 2018, **Michigan State University, USA**, awarded Dr Adesina an **Honorary Doctorate of Agriculture**.

In October 2018, Dr. Adesina received an **Honorary Doctor of Management Science of the National Defence Academy, Nigeria**.

In October 2018, Dr. Adesina received an **Honorary Doctor of Letters awarded by Afe Babalola University, Nigeria.**

In June 2019, Dr. Adesina was awarded an **Honorary Doctor of Science from the University of Alberta, Canada.**

In November 2019, Dr. Adesina was awarded an **Honorary Doctorate of Entrepreneurship by Bowen University, Nigeria.**

Dr Adesina is a globally renowned leader. In 2010, Dr Adesina was appointed by the United Nations Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, **as one of 17 world leaders** to galvanize international support for the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

In 2019, the United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres appointed Dr. Adesina as **one of the 23 global leaders** to help end hunger and malnutrition. He also serves globally as one of the Commissioners for the Global Climate Commission, co-Chaired by Bill Gates and former United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, to tackle global climate change. Dr Adesina also serves on the **Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition.**

In 2013, Dr Adesina won the **Forbes Africa Person of the Year** award for his bold reforms in Nigeria's agriculture sector. He is the first public sector Minister in Africa to win the award.

The influential Leadership Newspaper in Nigeria selected Dr. Adesina as the **2013 Public Servant of the Year** for his bold policy reforms, transparency and public accountability.

Dr. Adesina was awarded the **Extra-Ordinary Achievement Award** by the Silverbird Television, Nigeria, in recognition of his sterling performance and achievements as Nigeria's Minister of Agriculture.

Around the world, nations have continued to celebrate Dr Adesina's accomplishments. In 2012, Dr Adesina was conferred with Nigeria's second highest National Honour, the **Commander of the Order of the Niger**, for his outstanding service to his country, Nigeria. In recognition of his outstanding

leadership, passion and dedication to accelerating African development, he was awarded **the highest national honours of Senegal, Cameroon, Madagascar, Togo, Liberia and Niger.**

In October 2017, the World Food Prize Foundation awarded Dr Akinwumi Adesina the **World Food Prize**, generally known as the “**Nobel Prize for Agriculture**”. Dr Adesina devoted his **\$250,000 Laureates award** to establish the **World Hunger Fighters Foundation** to support the youth in agriculture and to develop a new generation of world hunger fighters.

In December 2017, Bill Gates listed Dr Adesina’s award of the World Food Prize and his gesture to use it to support the youth in Africa as one of the seven most encouraging moments of 2017. In December 2017, Dr Adesina was ranked in the **top 15 of the 100 most influential global leaders of multilateral development organisations.**

In February 2019, Dr Adesina was awarded the prestigious **Sunhak Peace Prize** in Seoul, South Korea for his global leadership on agriculture, food security, transparency and good governance. **He dedicated his \$500,000 award prize to the World Hunger Fighters Foundation** that he established to fight global hunger.

In April 2019, the leading reputation management firm, Reputation Poll International listed Dr Adesina **was ranked among the 100 most reputable people in the world.**

In October 2019, Dr. Adesina was awarded the **Emeka Anyaoku Lifetime Achievement Award of “Outstanding International Icon”** by the Hallmarks of Labour Foundation, where Chief Anyaoku, the former Commonwealth Secretary General said Dr. Adesina’s work and leadership is “**legendary, unprecedented and worthy of emulation**”.

On October 31, 2019, Dr Adesina led the African Development Bank to achieve the highest capital increase since the Bank’s establishment in 1964, when shareholders from **80 member countries** raised the general capital of the Bank by **125%**. This increased the Bank’s capital by **\$115 billion**, from **\$93 billion** to **\$208 billion**, a historic achievement for Africa.

On December 6, 2019, Dr Adesina was named the **African of the Year** by the All Africa Business Leaders Awards (AABLA™) in recognition of his bold leadership and the innovation of the **Africa Investment Forum**, which opened up billions of dollars of investment into the continent. He was recognized as the **Forbes Africa Person of the Year 2019**.

Dr Adesina and his wife, Grace, have two sons, Rotimi and Segun, and are blessed with a granddaughter, Noemi.