

# **BeDoCare Nairobi: Purpose, Action, and Compassion**

From 1 to 3 October, Strathmore University in Nairobi (Kenya) will gather changemakers from around the world for inspiring conversations on purposeful living, bold action, and radical compassion. We spoke with Martha Ogonjo, a member of the BeDoCare 2025 Organizing Committee, about the event.

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The third edition of BeDoCare, with 250 participants from 21 countries, is a three-day global forum bringing together changemakers from across the world. Themed “Africa’s Destiny,” this year’s edition places Nairobi at the center of global conversations on purposeful living, bold action, and radical compassion.

We sat down with Martha Ogonjo, Strathmore University’s Corporate Communications Manager and a member of the BeDoCare 2025 Organizing Committee, to talk about why this conference matters, what makes it unique, and how we can take part in it.

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**Martha, in simple terms, what is BeDoCare?**

BeDoCare is a movement. A living, breathing community of people and

organizations who believe we cannot stand by while the world's problems multiply. The name says it all: *Be who you are meant to be. Do what must be done. Care enough to make a difference.*

What sets it apart is intention. BeDoCare is about the common good. From Rome to São Paulo, and now Nairobi, it has drawn together social entrepreneurs, academics, NGOs, business leaders, and students who refuse to stand on the sidelines while the world's problems multiply.

## **What was your role in the BeDoCare event?**

When we determined that BeDoCare would take place on the African continent and specifically in Nairobi, my colleagues and I at Strathmore, together with Harambee, formed an organizing committee that would help steer the planning of this important event. At the time, the

event felt far off, almost like a distant vision. But now, with just a week to go, it's incredible to see how much ground we have covered. It's been a journey of teamwork, coordination, and deep reflection on what it means to bring such a global movement to Africa.

## **What was the genesis of the BeDoCare Conference?**

The roots of BeDoCare trace back to the Prelate of Opus Dei, who is also the Chancellor of Strathmore University. In recent years, he has invited us to prepare for the centenary of Opus Dei, coming up in 2028-2030, by developing initiatives that promote human dignity and social impact.

One of these initiatives is BeDoCare. The idea took shape in Rome from 28 to 30 September 2022, during a meeting organized as part of the preparations for the centenary. It

also marked the 20th anniversary of Harambee, an initiative first launched during the canonization of St. Josemaría Escrivá.

From the start, BeDoCare was envisioned as a platform to showcase and strengthen social initiatives that combine passion with professional competence, ensuring that communities are not just inspired but also sustainably uplifted.

## **What did previous editions of the conference focus on?**

Each edition has carried a unique emphasis. The inaugural conference in Rome (2022) focused on reflecting on the sustainability and future of social initiatives and stressed that initiatives inspired by St. Josemaría must always keep the *person* at the center, combining heart with expertise to create long-term impact.

The second edition in São Paulo (2023) built on this by considering the legacy for future generations. It highlighted how social ventures across Latin America were empowering young people, addressing inequality, and finding innovative ways to create dignified work.

Now, in its third edition in Nairobi (2025), the focus is on Africa's destiny. This is both a challenge and an opportunity. How do we, as Africans, take ownership of our future and ensure that education, dignified work, and social empowerment are not dreams deferred but realities achieved? How do we make the conversation on Africa's destiny more holistic, so that through social impact initiatives, innovation, and inclusive collaboration, we create systems that uplift communities, open doors for

the next generation, and give every individual the chance to thrive?

## **Why is it significant that BeDoCare is coming to Nairobi this year?**

Africa is at a crossroads. We have the youngest population in the world, with a median age of 19, immense natural resources, and vibrant cultures. But we also face challenges like unemployment, inequality, climate pressures, and fragile governance in some places.

Bringing BeDoCare to Nairobi means Africa is no longer just a participant in these global conversations; it is the stage itself. The theme, “Africa’s Destiny,” challenges us to shape the future we want, not the one others predict for us. It’s a recognition that solutions for Africa must come from Africa, and Strathmore University is proud to host this bold dialogue.

## **Can you walk us through what participants can expect over the three days?**

Absolutely. Day one sets the tone with “Africa in 50 Years: Challenges and Opportunities.” We want participants to think long-term. What kind of Africa will our grandchildren inherit, and how do we act wisely today? Workshops will then explore how universities can become engines of social transformation and how to make quality education truly accessible.

Day two shifts to youth and the future of work. This is critical because Africa’s youth dividend can either become our greatest strength or our biggest challenge. Expect conversations on vocational training, digital innovation, and entrepreneurship, all focused on equipping young people with the skills to thrive.

On day three, the lens widens to reclaim Africa's narrative: women entrepreneurs, green technologies, arts, culture, and communication. It's about how we see ourselves and how the world sees us. Each day is designed to be interactive, hopeful, and above all, practical.

## **What voices will we hear at BeDoCare 2025?**

We are privileged to host an incredible lineup in this year's conference. Dr. Vincent Ongutu, our Vice Chancellor, will open with insights on how education can ignite purpose across Africa. Prof. Enase Okonedo will explore how educational institutions in Africa are adapting to the growing demand for entrepreneurial skills and leadership in Africa's evolving job market.

We are very happy to also have Fr. Javier del Castillo, vicar general of Opus Dei, coming from Rome and

speaking about St. Josemaría and the culture of gift. We will also hear from Dr. Julie Gichuru, a media leader and afro-optimist, who will inspire dialogue on leadership. From the Commonwealth, Prof. Luis Gabriel Franceschi will tackle governance and democracy, while Prof. Africa Ariño will speak on entrepreneurship and social cohesion. Each voice brings wisdom, diversity of experience, and a deep love for Africa.

**Finally, the theme is “Africa’s Destiny.” What does that mean to you personally?**

To me, it is about ownership. For too long, our story has been told for us. BeDoCare reminds us that destiny is not something we wait for; it’s something we shape. It’s in the hands of young innovators who dare to dream, women entrepreneurs who build resilient communities,

educators who unlock potential, and leaders who choose integrity over convenience.

Personally, it challenges me to live with a deeper sense of purpose, to keep asking, “Am I being? Am I doing? Am I caring?”

BeDoCare is an invitation to live differently. To be more intentional. To do more courageously. To care more deeply. And those three words – *be, do, care* – can change your life and those around you.

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*Karibuni Nairobi, Karibuni Strathmore!* Welcome to Nairobi, welcome to Strathmore!

Follow the event and learn more [here](#).

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