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# Open 17 challenge

# The creative reuse initiative

## Dense Iradukunda

Greetings,

My name is Denyse Iradukunda, majoring in Global Health at African Leadership University. Growing up from a country that experience the effects of climate change inspired me to drive my mission in conservation and healthcare. In 2018, Rwanda's heavy rains swept away 4,560 hectares of crops and destroyed 370 housing units, according to the ministry. Some 12 roads, seven churches, and 18 bridges were destroyed. Not forgetting the number of people who lost their lives in that tragedy (Rwanda Ministry of Health, 2018). Being among the population that had such experience gave me a lesson and decided to give attention to every single thing that destroys the environment.

It was early morning when I passed at the TABA fireplace, seeing the fumes surrounding the area and having found that plastic containers from food waste are being burnt. The first thing that came into my mind was to understand the effect of burning plastic on the human body as well as the environment. From the research, I found that when plastic materials are heated, they release dangerous chemicals such as hydrochloric acid, sulfur dioxide, dioxins, furans, and heavy metals, as well as particulates (WHO,2019). These emissions are known to cause respiratory ailments and stress

human immune systems. They're potentially carcinogenic and contribute to the destruction of the ozone layer, hence cause global warming. This is basically what urged me to start the Creative Reuse Initiative in Rwanda

**Creative reuse initiative is a social enterprise that was launched in the Taba region in Jan 2020, to reduce the amount of plastic wastes being burnt every week through creativity and innovation.**

Every week, 10kg of plastic materials are collected from the garbage, by street youths and wash them for incentives. After they are clean, physically disabled youth design them into new creative materials such as flowers, toothbrush holders, vases, toys for babies, puss, and others to be sold at the market. By producing different exhibitions, people will become aware of the products from the Creative Reuse Initiative; and the raised funds will be used to expand the business and improve the well being of disabled youth in the Taba region. To ensure sustainability, the safety of the product, and the success of

the project, Creative Reuse Initiative works in partnership with Community Health Workers Program, waste collection companies, rehabilitation centers for disabled, and the local government in the Taba region. The vision for the creative Reuse Initiative is to create a healthier environment, with no one left behind in change. Today, the Creative reuse initiative is still a start-up working with volunteers, and looking for funds to be implemented well.

I, for SDG3 and SDG12



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# The New Open Seventeen Challenge

Online coaching of young innovators to tackle global challenges using crowdsourcing

## CALL APRIL 2020 // Artificial intelligence for Sustainable Development

Are you an undergraduate student with ideas about the use of Artificial Intelligence to benefit the SDGs? Do you want to tackle challenges set by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO)?

Then sign up for the Open Seventeen Challenge. If your idea is selected, you will receive five weekly 2-hour sessions of online training in how to shape and pitch your project by mentors at universities in Geneva, New York and Beijing, as well as experts from ITU and WMO.

Prizes for the best pitches include support for participation in the SDG Summer School in Geneva as well as several major UN events. Registration opens on 3 February 2020

[www.openseventeen.org](http://www.openseventeen.org)



### WHAT?

Open Seventeen is a prize-backed challenge to reward and invest in those developing innovative and implementable projects that leverage Open Data and crowdsourcing to tackle the 17 SDGs. This fall, the challenge is run in collaboration with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

### WHO?

The competition is open to undergraduate students from any field and region, and who are currently registered at a University. Students may sign up as individuals or as a team (max 3 persons). Participants receive intensive mentoring and coaching to help transform their ideas into impactful projects. The most promising projects will be eligible for travel grants for the SDG Summer School in Geneva as well as other major UN events.

### WHEN?

Online coaching will take place over five weekly 2-hour online and interactive sessions, in spring 2020. Coaching will include guest experts from partnering universities, ITU and WMO.

