

# Young Women for Biosecurity Fellowship 2025



# Marjana Akter

Bangladesh



YOUTH FOR BIOSecurity

**Marjana Akter** is an early-career scientist working on virology, antimicrobial resistance, and infectious diseases. She holds an M.Sc. in Microbiology from Bangladesh Agricultural University and a B.Sc. in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology from Shahjalal University of Science and Technology.

Her recent work characterized the first genotype IIIb chicken infectious anemia virus in Bangladesh. She is also an active member of the Bangladesh Biosafety and Biosecurity Society.

# Whitney Arneaud

Trinidad & Tobago



**Whitney Arneaud** is a Medical Microbiologist specializing in Biosafety and Biosecurity. She is a founding member and General Secretary of the Caribbean Society for Biosafety and Biosecurity (CSBB).

She has led efforts to strengthen laboratory systems at institutional, national, and regional levels, while actively advocating for sustainable Biosafety and Biosecurity frameworks.

# Avantika Bhaduri

India



**Avantika Bhaduri** is passionate about bridging biosecurity, technology convergence, and governance. She is a Policy Fellow at the National Security Commission on Emerging Biotechnology.

She holds an MPH, as well as an M.S. in Biohazardous Threat Agents and Emerging Infectious Diseases from Case Western Reserve and Georgetown University, respectively.

# Marissa El Hajje

Brazil/Lebanon



**Marissa El Hajje** is a dedicated pharmacist, who graduated in June 2022 with a bachelor of Pharmacy degree from the Lebanese American University. Currently pursuing a PhD in Drug Design at the prestigious Universidade de São Paulo (USP) in Brazil, she is in the third year of a rigorous program focused on drug design and discovery.

As the Pan American Chairperson in the international pharmaceutical students federation for the 2024/2025 mandate, she represented pharmacy and pharmaceutical students across the States, Canada, and Latin America.

# Ayaulym Maksatova

Kazakhstan



**Ayaulym Maksatova** serves as Head of Laboratory at the National Scientific Center for Especially Dangerous Infections (NSCEDI) under the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Kazakhstan. She holds advanced degrees in chemical technology and pharmaceutical production.

Her scientific research focuses on the development of diagnostic tools and bacteriophages for the detection and control of especially dangerous infectious diseases.



# Martha Nyairabu

Kenya



A Research Coordinator at Partners for Health and Development in Africa, **Martha Nyairabu** is passionate about infectious diseases research with experience in biosafety, pathogen surveillance, and mentorship.

Martha is particularly enthusiastic about strengthening laboratory systems and advancing biosecurity through implementation and linking research to policy to improve global health preparedness.



# Coleen M. Pangilinan

The Philippines



**Coleen Pangilinan** is a Senior Research Associate at the UP Manila National Center for Biosafety and Biosecurity in the Philippines.

With 11 years of experience, she manages research on pathogen genomics, diagnostics, and AMR, supports molecular biology and biosafety trainings, and advocates for inclusive and science-based national biosecurity systems.



# Liz Romero

Peru



**Liz Romero** is a Peruvian biologist and British Council Women in STEM awardee, holding an MSc. in Biomedical Sciences from the University of York, UK.

She has extensive experience in research and outreach, advancing biosecurity via pathogen characterization, autogenous vaccine development, and pandemic preparedness training. She is dedicated to connecting science, policy, and mentoring future leaders.

# Jackline Denis Somi

Tanzania



**Jackline Somi** is a Laboratory Administrator at the KCRI Biotechnology Laboratory in Tanzania with extensive experience in research coordination and lab operations.

She is committed to advancing global health security and passionate about strengthening biosecurity systems while promoting women's leadership and innovation in science through collaborative research.



# Cibele Zolnier

Brazil



**Cibele Zolnier** is a Brazilian biochemical engineer dedicated to advancing responsible biotechnology and community building in Latin America.

As Co-founder and Executive Director of SynBioBR, and Community Manager at Reclone, she promotes equitable access to biotech tools and fosters collaboration for biosafety, biosecurity, and sustainable scientific innovation.