

**54gene Pulse**

INTERNAL NEWSLETTER

Q2 2022 · ISSUE 06

# We're Building Something Real.

*Your quarterly update on where we've been, what we've done, and where we're headed.*

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FROM THE DESK

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## Hello, Team 54gene.

Every quarter, I want to take a moment to step back from the pace of daily work and say this clearly: what you're building here matters. Not in the abstract, motivational-poster sense — but in the very concrete sense that the data we're collecting, the research we're conducting, and the partnerships we're forging are actively changing what is known about African genomics. That's not small.

Q2 was a full quarter. There were challenges, and there were wins that genuinely surprised us. Here's a look at both.

— *Dr. Abasi Ene-Obong, Founder & CEO*

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## Q2 Highlights

Here are the moments that defined the last three months across science, operations, and people.

### **Sample Collection Milestone**

We crossed a significant threshold in our biobank — adding thousands of African genomic samples this quarter, expanding the breadth and quality of our dataset.

### **Research Publication**

A 54gene-led study on pharmacogenomics in West African populations was submitted to a peer-reviewed journal — a first for the team and a proud moment for our science division.

### **New Lab Infrastructure**

Our Lagos laboratory received a critical equipment upgrade, increasing our sequencing throughput capacity and reducing turnaround time for sample processing.

### **Team Expansion**

We welcomed 14 new team members across Lagos, Abuja, and our US offices this quarter — in roles spanning bioinformatics, partnerships, and operations.

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## Key Milestones This Quarter

**Partnership MOU signed** with a leading West African teaching hospital, opening access to de-identified patient data for collaborative research across three therapeutic areas.

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**Bioinformatics pipeline upgraded** — our internal data processing system now handles a 40% higher volume of samples with improved variant calling accuracy.

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**Ethics board approval secured** for two new research protocols, including our expanded sickle cell disease genetics study in partnership with regional hospitals.

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**First external advisory board session** held — five global genomics experts joined us to review our research roadmap and provide strategic scientific guidance.

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**Staff training programme completed** — 32 team members completed our updated protocols on biospecimen handling, data privacy, and participant consent.

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### PEOPLE & CULTURE

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## Employee Celebrations 🎉

This section belongs entirely to the people making this work worth doing.



### **Work Anniversaries**

Congratulations to Chidi Okonkwo (3 years), Amara Nwosu (2 years), and Fatima Al-Hassan (1 year) on their 54gene milestones. Your consistency is the backbone of this place.

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### **Academic Achievements**

Shoutout to Ngozi Eze, who successfully defended her MSc dissertation in Molecular Biology while working full-time. We see you, Ngozi.

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### **New Arrivals**

The 54gene family grew beyond the office this quarter — warm congratulations to Emeka Obi and his partner on the birth of their daughter, and to Aisha Bello on her son's arrival.

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### **Team Recognition**

The Field Collections team in Abuja went above and beyond this quarter, completing targets two weeks ahead of schedule under genuinely difficult conditions. This team is something special.

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## **STAFF SPOTLIGHT**

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### **Meet a Face Behind the Science**

## Dr. Kelechi Amadi

SENIOR BIOINFORMATICS SCIENTIST · LAGOS

Kelechi joined 54gene 18 months ago from a research post at the University of Ibadan, where she spent four years studying genomic variation in malaria parasite populations. At 54gene, she leads the quality control pipeline for our whole genome sequencing data — a role she describes as "where the science gets honest."

*"What keeps me here is that the problems are real. We're not validating models built on European populations and hoping they apply to us. We're building from the ground up, for African people. That's not something I was going to find anywhere else."*

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### WHAT'S AHEAD

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## Looking Forward to Q3

Here's what we're building toward in the months ahead — some confirmed, some in motion.

- 01** **Launch of our internal Knowledge Series** — monthly cross-team sessions where scientists, operations, and partnerships share what they're learning. First session: The ethics of population genomics.

- 02 Expansion into a new collection site** — we're confirming a third location for biospecimen collection in Q3, which will meaningfully diversify the geographic and ethnic representation of our dataset.
- 03 New HR policy rollout** — updated leave policies, flexible working guidelines, and a wellbeing initiative will be shared with all staff before the end of July.
- 04 All-hands meeting, Q3** — date TBC, but mark your calendars. Leadership will share our 18-month roadmap and there will be time for real conversation, not just slides.