Alele-Williams is Nigerian, and spent many years as professor of mathematics education in the University of Lagos before becoming the first woman Vice Chancellor of any African university (at the University of Benin). Her PhD from the University of Chicago (1963) made her the first Nigerian woman to earn a doctorate in any subject. She is recognized as a visionary and effective leader in education in Nigeria, and her numerous awards include the Order of the Niger (1987), the Merit Award of Bendel State in Nigeria, and being elected a Fellow of the Mathematical Association of Nigeria and the Nigerian Academy of Education.