



Accelerator Mentorship Programme for Women-led SMEs in Africa

Cohort Two

Final Report



Key achievements of the Programme include:

- **50 mentees** from **17 African countries** were paired with **50 successful global women business leader** mentors. **41 mentees** completed the Programme.
- The mentees work across the entire value chain, including **production, processing, marketing and distribution, logistics, and digital agriculture.**
- **3 workshops** on Business Development and Marketing, Leadership and Human Resources, and Finance Access were curated. The workshops featured **28 speakers and experts.**
- A total of **4 mentors and mentees** participated and spoke at the “Case Studies: Innovations for Climate Action” event during the FAO Science and Innovation Forum (SIF) in October 2023.
- The mentees are innovating and undertaking sustainable agriculture ventures that are contributing to food systems transformation on the continent:
 - Climate-resilient seeds production
 - Crop diseases and pests’ detection devices
 - Water efficiency technologies
 - Food loss and waste – over 50% engaged in agro-processing
 - Sustainable consumption and production (SCP) – recycling, waste conversion to energy sources and other biodegradable products
 - Nutrition-sensitive agriculture – reclaiming indigenous crops, fruits, vegetables, and legumes
 - Capacity building for farmers, including e-extension and advisory
- The Programme was updated to run for **9 months** giving an opportunity for the mentees to balance their other roles as mothers, caregivers, and business owners.
- Mentees featured on the [FAO CONNECT](#) and [IAFN](#) websites. This was another opportunity to showcase their work and gain further interest from potential partners/investors.

Programme Overview

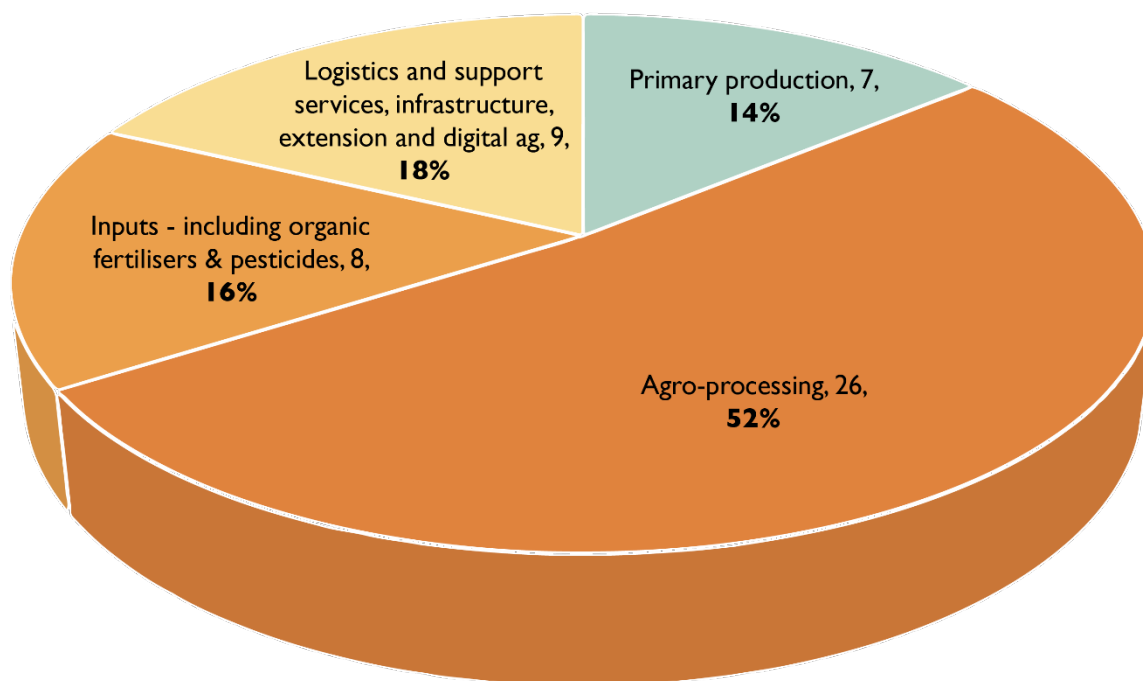
The second cohort of the [FAO-IAFN Women SME Accelerator Programme](#) ran from from October

2023 to June 2024. The program partnered with the VALUE4HER Women Agripreneurs of the Year Awards (WAYA) to select the top 50 finalists from the awards to participate in the Programme.

The program continued to receive interest with the WAYA receiving over 1000 applications. **43 English-speaking** and **7 French-speaking mentees** were selected from **17 African countries**. This brings the total number of beneficiaries to date to a total of **100 mentees** from **25 African countries** (see chart below). This year, the cohort represented a unique set of agri-enterprises strongly focused on innovations that are contributing to food systems transformation on the continent as highlighted above (see chart below). Over 50% of the mentees are engaged in agro-processing activities that are contributing immensely to managing food loss and waste and ensuring food security. The mentees went through the three main components of the program:

- **One-on-One Mentoring:** Each mentee was paired with a global woman business leader and received personal guidance and consultation across a minimum of six sessions.
- **Capacity development and tools - Tailor-made training to enhance hard skills:** Each participant completed 2 mandatory courses and an optional course on the FAO eLearning Academy.
- **Workshops & Interaction with Global Leaders:** Through interactive joint workshop sessions with experts in the field, mentees had access to knowledge exchange sessions that allowed for peer learning and networking.





Value chain activities - cohort 2023/24

One-on-one Mentoring

“We have met 18 times, and soon to meet for the 19th time. My mentor has met all my expectations from this mentorship program. She has strengthened my skills in financial management, market research and management of part time employees. With her, I managed to win a small grant to develop a prototype of another product. The innovation will co-sale with the existing product to increase the sales of the agribusiness.”
Elizabeth Kabakoyo

The one-on-one mentorship sessions have proved to be valuable to the mentees' businesses, most who need business management skills to help streamline business operations. Many of the mentees developed their skills in business plan development, fundraising, managing hires, grant writing, and preparing elevator pitches. We remain grateful to the mentors who went over and beyond the required six sessions and provided much needed support to the mentees. We are delighted to see so many of these relationships sustained after close of the programme. Some of the success stories out of these connections include:

- **Hybrid synthetic and organic fertilizer solution:** Mentee Philomina Brittain teamed up with her mentor Henritte Magnussen to develop a fertilizer solution that combines the best of chemical and organic fertilizer to come up with a hybrid product. The hybrid fertilizer product aims to reduce the environment impact of fertilizers as well as make fertilizers more accessible and affordable as raw materials are readily available and it can be locally manufactured. The product also aims to reduce health hazards as it will be safe for both plants and humans.



- **Small grants** – Mentees Adelaide Mwasoghe and Elizabeth Kabakoyo were supported by their mentors Lucy Komen and Donna Rosa to work on small grants applications that were successful. The grants were used to source for a packaging machine for Adelaide’s avocado business and an innovative prototype of Elizabeth’s products thus increasing sales.



MENTOR



Donna Rosa

Chief Entrepreneurship Officer,
Efour Enterprises LLC

MENTEE



Elizabeth Kabakoyo

Founder, CEO, Glowish Agro Solutions,
Uganda

*“Participer à ce programme a été une expérience transformante pour moi.
(Participating in this programme has been a transformative experience for me.)”
Ahokpossi S. Leez Eudoxie*

Capacity development and tools - Tailor-made training to enhance hard skills

*“Je tiens à remercier les initiateurs de ce programme de m'avoir choisi comme l'un de ses bénéficiaires. J'ai beaucoup appris et amélioré mes connaissances et mon expérience. (I'd like to thank the initiators of this program for selecting me as one of its beneficiaries. I've learned a lot and improved my knowledge and experience.)”
Holy Harinoro Raelinarivo*

The mentees completed 2 mandatory courses (business development and market access) and an optional course on the FAO eLearning Academy. The courses provided the mentees with practical skills and knowledge to manage their businesses. Topics covered included local area and market assessment, investment planning, managing hire services, rural investment, participatory data collection, among others.

Workshops & Interaction with Global Leaders



This year, the joint workshops brought together a total of **28 speakers and experts**. The workshops are an opportunity for the mentees to interact with global leaders and experts in agriculture, network with each other, and gain access to valuable knowledge exchange and peer learning. This year, the workshops took the formats of moderated panels which led to great discussions and knowledge exchange between the speakers and the mentees. The three workshops deep dived into three core topics for businesses, including:

- **Business Development and Marketing** – This first workshop brought together **7 speakers** and **53 participants**, who delved into the topics of strategic marketing, market segmentation, innovative branding, and digital marketing.
- **Leadership and Human Resources** – FAO Country Representative, Zambia, Ms. Suze Percy Filippini was among the **5 speakers** and **46 participants** at the workshop. Mentees gained insights on key topics including people-centered approach to building and leading teams, community engagement, networking, building and organization, hiring and management, and building a supportive work environment.
- **Access to Finance** – The final workshop in the series was highly anticipated and appreciated. Mentors supported their mentees in preparing elevator pitches that the mentees presented at the workshop and received practical guidance from finance experts and investors. The workshop was well attended and included a great lineup of **16 speakers** and **66 participants**, including mentors and observers.

"The HR workshop was full of insights. The speakers were loaded with powerful insights and personal experience."
Elizabeth Mbogo



More Information and Resources on Cohort 2

- Agrifood Network, [Women SME Accelerator Programme Concept Note, Mentors & Mentees](#)
- Emerging ag, [The transformative Impact of the Women SME Accelerator Program](#)
- FAO Connect, [Women Accelerator Programme](#)
- [Graduation Ceremony](#)
- Launch Event, [Female entrepreneurs and small businesses: at the crossroads of agrifood systems transformation and climate action](#)
- Workshops
 - [Business Development and Marketing](#)
 - [Leadership and Human Resource](#)
 - [Access to Finance](#)

Mentee-Mentor Pairings

	Mentee Name	Mentor Name
1	Adelaide Mwasyoghe Founder AIS Solutions Tanzania	Lucy Komen Ag. Chief Executive Officer/Registrar Warehouse Receipt System Council Kenya
2	Ahokpou S. Leez Eudoxie Founder, CEO Asel Industries Benin	Yolande Nankeng Acting CEO Extrait Vegetal Cameroon
3	Anaporka Adazabra Co-founder, CEO Farmio Limited Ghana	Martine Koopman Owner Smart Resultancy Netherlands
4	Angela Juliana Odera Director Rio Fish Ltd Kenya	Betty Kiplagat Leader, Africa & Middle East Africa Government and Industry Affairs Corteva Agriscience Kenya
5	Bamidele Owoola Seun Founder and CEO Welcome2Africa International (W2A) Nigeria	Angel Njenga Consultant Boston Consulting Group Kenya
6	Bernice Dapaah Executive Director Ghana Bamboo Bikes Initiative Ghana	Mamati Tembe Commercial Lead South Africa FMC South Africa
7	Cassandra George Vice President Value Seeds Limited Nigeria	Patience Koku Chief Executive Officer Replenish Farms Nigeria



8	Cecilia Rolence China Founder, CEO AfriTech Organic Leather Tanzania	Lauren Martin Senior Director Government Relations and Policy Canadian Meat Council Canada
9	Daniella Ushindi Virivuswagha Director ChemChemAgro DRC	Mildred Nadah Pita Head of Public Affairs Science and Sustainability, Africa Bayer AG Kenya
10	Elizabeth Kabakoyo Founder, CEO Glowish Agro Solutions Uganda	Donna Rosa Chief Entrepreneurship Officer Efour Enterprises LLC USA
11	Elizabeth Mbogo Mwenda CEO Botanic Treasures Kenya	Stella Thomas Owner Techni Seeds Limited Nigeria
12	Elizabeth Koigi Founder Ndogo Farms Kenya	Mary Ann Sayoc Public Affairs Lead East West Seed International Philippines
13	Ellen Gunda CEO Fortune Gardens Investments Malawi	Langelihle Simela Agribusiness Development Manager ABSA South Africa
14	Essey Akpénin-Mahou Naémi Director Nao Stardom Ecology Benin	Rachel Rama Senior Vice President, Head of Small Molecules Bayer Crop Science Division France
15	Eyitayo Azaratou Ogbon CEO Moradys Benin	Césarie Kantarama Farmer and Chairperson INGABO Syndicate Farmers Union Rwanda
16	Fatma Fernandes CEO Quincewood Group Limited Tanzania	Kianna Wilson Industry Relations Manager FMC USA
17	Florence Alice Mathingau Founder, Managing Director Agri Business Solutions Limited Kenya	Caroline Emond Director General International Dairy Federation Belgium
18	Fortunatha Joseph Mmari Managing Director AFCO Investment Co. Ltd Tanzania	Annapoorni Narayanan North America Finance Director FMC USA



19	Gnonwin Kossiba Odile CEO Société de Production et de Transformation des Noix Tigrées (SPTNT) Benin	Mariem Ellouze Group Lead Digital Food Safety Systems, R&D Expert Predictive Microbiology & Risk Assessment Société des Produits Nestlé S.A. Switzerland
20	Hadiza Tassiwa Mshelia Founder Tassiwa Multipurpose Services Nigeria	Yin Ling Tang Country Manager at FMC Malaysia FMC Malaysia
21	Hawa Ajuma Salifu CEO Hasanta Integrated Farm Enterprises Nigeria	Mercy Adeogun Head of Agriculture Extension Services Dept Federal College of Fisheries and Marine Technologies Nigeria
22	Holy Harinoro RAOELINARIVO Founder, Manager Agrohelo Consulting Madagascar	Jennifer Billings Global Agriculture Development Leader Corteva Agriscience USA
23	Irene Iraba Chief Operating Officer Healthy Seaweed Co. Limited (™ Seaweed Cafe) Tanzania	Kelly Green Director of Communications Canadian Canola Growers Association Canada
24	Jacqueline Joyreen Banda CEO Jeyie Foods Malawi	Johanne Ross Agriculture Sector Consultant Canada
25	Joyce Waithira Rugano Founder, CEO Ecorich Solutions Limited Kenya	Karimi Thurania Country Manager, Kenya OCP Africa Kenya
26	Judith Endelesi Karia Managing Director Ava Group Investment Ltd Tanzania	Cécile Duprez-Naudy Head of Global Public Affairs Moët-Hennessy France
27	Juliet Kakwerre N Tumusiime CEO, Co-founder Cheveux Organique Int'l Uganda	Carmen Iliescu
28	Laila Ayman Co-founder, CEO Messori Tech Egypt	Veronica Tiburcio Country Manager and Site Leader FMC Philippines



29	Lily Singelengele CEO Green Agriculture Youth Organization Zambia	Margaret Munene CEO Palmhouse Dairies Ltd Kenya
30	Lucy Chioma Aniagolu Founder Agrodemey Enterprises Nigeria	Joanna Kiesel Business Director for Central Europe FMC <i>AND</i> Ashley Mutiso Chief of Staff Future Africa Forum Kenya
31	Lydia Nakayenze-Schubert Founder, CEO OncaPlanta Uganda Ltd Uganda	Lynda McDonald Project Manager Dairy Development TetraLaval International Sweden
32	Mary Cherop Maritim CEO Cherubet Foods Kenya	Susan Mwangi Program Officer Uwezo Fund Kenya
33	Maryanne Gichanga Founder, CEO Agritech Analytics Kenya	Alima Bawah Co-founder Cowtribe Ghana
34	Matilda Ntsetse Mpai Founder, CEO Divine Morula (Pty)Ltd Botswana	Tatiana De Paula Campos International and Institutional Relations Manager Brazilian Association of Citrus Exporters Brazil
35	Mercy Chatyoka Co-founder & CEO Pik It Fresh Farms Zimbabwe	Kailey Purvis Controller Chippewa Valley Bean Co., Inc. USA
36	Miriam Khabuli Nabakwe Founder, Chief Visionary Officer Kienyeji Stores Limited Kenya	Eunice Mwongera CEO & Founder Hillside Green Kenya
37	Miriam K Chabaari CEO, Managing Director Tharaka Honeybee Products Kenya	Stacey Klinzing Director, Food Safety Sprouts Farmers Market USA
38	Nadege Uwamahoro Founder and CEO Braimpire Ltd Rwanda	Sara Canada R&D Operations Leader Corteva Agriscience USA



39	Niza Aritha Zulu Co-founder, CEO Biogreen Technology Limited Zambia	Rejane Souza SVP Global Innovation Yara International Norway
40	Nolwazi Zama Owner Eri Eats Foods South Africa	Kantha Shelke Founder / Senior Lecturer Corvus Blue LLC / Johns Hopkins University USA
41	Nompumelelo Maesela CEO Servicios Empresariales Holdings (PTY) LTD South Africa	Eunice Mwangera CEO & Founder Hillside Green Kenya
42	Philomina Brittain Managing Director Green-Gro Ltd Ghana	Henriette Magnussen Global Director for High Value Crops & Fertigation Solutions Yara International Denmark
43	Rashidat Ayoola Oluwafemi CEO Middlebrook farms Nigeria	Marion Martinez Senior Vice President for South Europe Yara International Italy
44	Sabiha Rashid Co-founder and Director Rosho Mastermind Ventures Ltd Tanzania	Michele Lee Schwerha Research and Development Director Barry Callebaut USA
45	Salma Adam Director Salmarg Enterprises Limited Tanzania	Jelica Kujundzic Commercial and Risk Director CAFI - Commodity and Freight Integrators DMCC United Arab Emirates (UAE)
46	Siny Samba Founder, CEO Le Lionceau Senegal	Anne Sarfo CEO Anne's Perfections Ghana
47	Soukaina Bouba Dalil Founder, CEO Energy of Africa Cameroon	Marie Martens Managing Director Twist Consulting Belgium
48	Tolulope Aina Founder, Project Lead Agrolearn LTD Nigeria	Monica Githige Program Manager TechnoServe Kenya
49	Azeb Assefa Gudissa Managing Director Yiblu Foods Ethiopia	Yaa Kusi Binka CEO Pepper Delight Ghana



50	Mwende Gatabaki Founder, Managing Director Africa Aquaculture Resource Center Kenya	Joanna Kiesel Business Director for Central Europe FMC
51	Tracy Vongai Mapfumo Founder, Managing Eny's Treats (Private) Ltd	Celina Contreras Aguilar Finance Manager FMC Mexico