



FAO-IAFN Accelerator Mentorship Programme for Women-led SMEs in Africa Finance Access Workshop

15 April 2025 | 15:00 – 17:00 CEST | *Via Zoom Meetings*

Speakers' Biographies



Robynne Anderson

Secretariat, International Agri-Food Network

Robynne Anderson is an international thought leader on food and agriculture with expertise in issues management and strategic development across the entire value chain. Over the years, she has advised a broad range of clients from government leaders to business captains, farmers, food processors and researchers. With close to 30 years of international experience, Robynne has contributed to apex multilateral processes and negotiations helping to shape pivotal outcomes like the Sustainable Development Goals.

In 2010, Robynne founded Emerging ag, a boutique international consulting firm providing communications and public affairs services to clients in the agriculture, food and health sectors. As its President, she leads a team of 32 dynamic, international professionals providing expert services to clients around the world, with a strong focus on global policy issues and engagement with international organizations. Robynne often represents clients at the United Nations, bringing the voice of agriculture to inter-governmental processes. In this role, she is secretariat for the International Agri-Food Network (IAFN) the Private Sector Mechanism that represents agribusinesses at the UN Committee on World Food Security and led engagements in the 2021 Food Systems Summit. Prior to founding Emerging ag, Robynne established and ran for almost 20-year Issues Ink, a leading agricultural publishing company specializing in agriculture, and founded the Farming First coalition in 2007. She started her career in Canadian politics as a legislative assistant to the then Deputy Prime Minister. In addition to her role at Emerging ag, Robynne is involved in her family's farm in Dugald, Manitoba, Canada. She is also the founder of the Manyinga school project, a non-profit organization that supports orphans to learn agricultural skills through schools which in 2021 became Farmers Abroad Canada, a not-for-profit charitable organization focused on supporting agricultural education in 2 countries in Africa and growing. Passionate about food, agriculture, and diversity and inclusion, Robynne serves in a number of international boards and advisory groups and is the youngest person inducted into the Canadian Agricultural Hall of Fame in 2017, one of just 11 women in the Hall. She received the 2018 Demeter Award for Women in Agriculture.



Nomathemba Mhlanga
FAO Representative in Rwanda, FAO

Ms. Nomathemba Mhlanga (Noma), a national of Zimbabwe has been appointed to serve as FAO Representative ad interim in Rwanda effective 07 October 2024 until a substantive FAO Representative to Rwanda has been selected. Noma has been with FAO for more than 15 years in various progressive capacities both in the field as well as at HQ. Currently, she is an Agribusiness Officer at the FAO subregional Office for Eastern Africa and manages the Decent Employment in Agrifood

Systems Programme in the Regional Office for Africa. Her areas of expertise (among others) include value chain and agribusiness development, post-harvest management, agricultural finance and investment, and entrepreneurship support especially for women and youth.

Noma holds a PhD in Applied Economics and Management, an MSc Degree in agricultural Economics from Cornell University, USA, and a BSc Honours Degree in Agricultural Economics from the University of Zimbabwe.



Mr. Amath Pathe Sene
Managing Director, Africa Food Systems Forum

Amath Pathé Sene is the Managing Director of Africa's Food Systems Forum (AGRF), where he leads the Forum's strategic growth and day-to-day operations as a pan-African, multi-partner platform. With a strong vision for advancing food systems transformation across the continent, Pathé brings over 18 years of international experience in agriculture, climate change, sustainable development, and rural transformation. He continues to build on AFSF's momentum by guiding its multi-

year strategy in collaboration with AGRA and other key partners. An Agricultural Engineer by training, Pathé has held leadership roles across Africa, South America, Central Asia, and Europe. Prior to AGRF, he served as Lead Regional Environment and Climate Specialist at IFAD and Country Director for several West African nations. He also held positions with UNDP, UNEP, the EU, and the Senegalese Agricultural Research Institute. His academic background includes advanced degrees from institutions in France, Morocco, and Israel, focusing on rural development, agribusiness, and sustainability. Multilingual and widely respected, Pathé is passionate about inclusive, resilient food systems and is a proud husband and father of three.



Nungari Mwangi

Agri-SME strategy, partnerships and special initiatives, African Development Bank Group (AfDB)

Dr. Mwangi is the Strategy, Partnerships and Special Initiatives lead for the Agri-SME Development and Innovative financing team at the African Development Bank based in Nairobi. She is currently working on the development of the Africa Climate Risk Insurance Facility for Adaptation (ACRIFA), a continental climate financing facility aiming to mobilize \$1 billion to de-risk private sector investments for the development of climate insurance solutions. Nungari was formerly the Program Lead for

AGRA's Centre for African Leaders in Agriculture (CALA). At AGRA, Nungari also worked on corporate strategy development, and the design of Strategic Initiatives including the Hub for Agriculture Policy Action (HAPA). Nungari has a decade of experience in agriculture strategy, policy and research having previously worked with Dalberg Global Development Advisors. She has B.A (hons.) in Political Science from Brown University (USA) and an MPhil and PhD in Development Studies from the University of Cambridge (UK).



Richard Midikira

Senior Manager, Innovation & Partnerships, Aceli Africa

Richard envisions an Africa where a strong enabling environment empowers SMEs to succeed and improve the livelihoods of millions. With a background in management consulting at Deloitte and Ernst & Young, he spent seven years working with enterprises across East & Central Africa to improve risk management and governance and align both with business strategy. He also consulted for two years on a project for the International Trade Centre (ITC) to increase trade and

investment flows between India and East Africa. His current role at Aceli includes managing technical assistance to agricultural SMEs.



Chania Frost
Associate Partner, McKinsey & Company

Chania Frost is a consultant with McKinsey & Company's Africa Delivery Hub, based in Nairobi, Kenya. Since joining McKinsey in 2017, she has been instrumental in supporting governments and social sector institutions across the continent to improve service delivery in critical sectors such as health, education, infrastructure, energy, and agriculture. Her work focuses on driving sustainable, high-impact solutions that enhance the quality of life for African citizens and stimulate economic growth. With a strategic and collaborative approach,

Chania contributes to transformative projects that strengthen governance and improve public sector performance. Before joining McKinsey, Chania spent over six years working in strategic planning, operations, and project management within East Africa's biodiversity conservation sector, fostering her deep commitment to sustainable development. She holds an MSc from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, and a BSc from the University of Edinburgh. Her academic and professional background equips her with analytical and leadership skills to address complex challenges and drive long-term change across the continent.



Michelle Gacinya
Administration Manager, Bank of Kigali

Self-directed and driven professional expert with experience working in banking, international trade and development industries leading continuous improvement, supply chain transformation, logistics and cross functional teams to ensure success and achieve goals. I am now in banking supporting seamline running of bank operations in the most customer centric way and towards the achievement of the bank's strategy. She brings on board skills and experience in business operations management, customer relationship management,

business development, supply chain and risk management, and global logistics backed up by MSc Logistics and Supply Chain Management from Herriot Watt University & Bachelor of Business Administration (Finance).



Priya Chana
Group Strategy, Equity Group Holdings PLC

Priya Chana is the Group Strategy Associate Director at Equity Group Holdings, where she leads strategic initiatives to drive business growth, strengthen market positioning, and foster sustainable development. With a solid background in corporate strategy, marketing communications, CRM, and new business development, Priya brings extensive experience in agribusiness, resource mobilization, and improving financial access for SMEs and marginalized communities. Formerly Chair of the British Chamber of Commerce Kenya, she has a proven track record of collaborative leadership and innovation. Multilingual and entrepreneurial, Priya excels in building strategic partnerships and delivering impactful solutions that promote resilient communities and inclusive economic growth across the region.



Susan Njihia
Innovation and CX Lead, Hello Tractor

Susan Njihia is the Lead Consultant for Innovation and Customer Experience at Hello Tractor, an agri-tech company leveraging IoT technology to connect smallholder farmers with equipment owners. With over 8 years of experience supporting startup growth and innovation, Susan brings deep expertise in product design, customer experience, and the innovation ecosystem across Eastern Africa. She also serves on the board of the Digital Agricultural Association, where she explores the agricultural market system and its impact on economic growth and stakeholder livelihoods. Passionate about leveraging frontier technologies like AI, Susan is committed to developing customer-centric solutions that drive agricultural innovation and enhance food security.



Jehiel Oliver
CEO, Hello Tractor

Jehiel Oliver is the founder of Hello Tractor, an innovative shared-economy platform that makes tractor usage affordable to marginalized farmers in sub-Saharan Africa. Jehiel is responsible for the overall management of the Hello Tractor team, strategy, and partnerships. Prior to Hello Tractor, Jehiel founded Aya Consulting, a boutique development. At Aya he worked in over ten countries, including conflict zones. Through his work in agriculture and



rural markets, Jehiel recognized a real need for low-income (majority women) farmers to access affordable farm machinery, leading him to found Hello Tractor. In addition to his duties at Hello Tractor, Jehiel also served on the board of H4H, Inc., an impact investment fund providing mortgage reinsurance for South African communities affected by HIV/AIDS. He also serves as board treasurer of Shared Interest, a loan guarantee fund for agriculture and financial sector development in sub-Saharan Africa. Jehiel began his career in the U.S. investment banking and private equity industries.



Ramla Msuya

Senior Manager Sustainable Finance, CRDB Bank, Tanzania

Ramla Msuya is the Head of Sustainability Programmes at CRDB Bank Plc, with nearly 20 years of experience in credit risk, environmental and social risk management, ESG, and climate finance. A Certified Public Accountant with an MBA in Finance from Coventry University (UK), Ramla is also a Certified Expert in Sustainable Finance from the Frankfurt School and holds a certification in Environmental Management from North West University, South Africa. She has played a pivotal role in positioning CRDB as a leader in sustainable finance, including leading the bank's successful accreditation to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and developing its first Environmental and Social Management System. Ramla also served as an advisor to a GCF Board Member and continues to drive climate adaptation and mitigation funding proposals. Based in Dar es Salaam, she is passionate about advancing sustainability in Africa and seeks opportunities to contribute at board level within international or climate finance-focused organizations.



Ama Mintah

Associate Director, Finance, Cargill

Ama Mintah works with Cargill as Country Controller/Associate Director for the Ghana businesses. She started her career with KPMG as Audit Associate for approximately 3 years. From there, she worked on her own for five months mainly providing accounting services. In 2008, she got the opportunity to work with Cargill as an accountant. Other roles that she has occupied at Cargill include the senior accountant role, accounting manager and head of finance. Ama is a chartered accountant with 20 years' work experience. Her expertise include financial reporting, working capital management, process, governance and controls and talent development.



Beatrice Githinji
Africa Lead – Advisory Services, Rabobank

Beatrice Githinji is a seasoned development finance and agricultural finance expert with over 15 years of experience spanning commercial banking and international development. Currently serving as Africa Lead for Advisory Services at Rabo Partnerships, she previously led access to finance initiatives across multiple African countries with ISF Advisors, supporting agri-SMEs through innovative financing structures, strategic partnerships, and investment readiness.

Beatrice has held key roles at Barclays, Chase Bank, and Root Capital, where she specialized in agribusiness lending, environmental and social risk management, and value chain finance. Her expertise includes agriculture credit policy design, risk management, and stakeholder engagement. With an MBA in Business Strategy and a BA in Business Studies and Economics from Kenyatta University, Beatrice is driven by a passion for sustainable development and inclusive finance in the agriculture sector.



Auxillia Kambasha
Head of SME Banking, Stanbic Bank Zimbabwe

Auxillia is a professional seasoned banker with a wealth of experience in relationship management and fostering the growth of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). She is currently the Head of Enterprise Banking at Stanbic Bank Zimbabwe, a post that she has held for more than 5 years. She is responsible for the growth of those SMEs that falls within her area. She holds an MBA from Gloucestershire University and is a graduate in Chartered Secretary and Administrator.

Auxillia's passion lies in empowering SMEs, and she has actively contributed to this sector by sitting on various panels where she has offered her expertise to help SMEs realise their full potential. Her dedication and commitment to her growth and development of SMEs make her a valuable asset in the banking industry.



Dr. Langelihle Simela

Business Development Manager, Agribusiness, Absa SA

Langelihle Simela is an Agribusiness Development Manager at Absa Group, where she focuses on enabling emerging commercial agribusinesses to access finance and scale their enterprises. With a strong foundation in agricultural sciences and development finance, she brings over a decade of leadership experience in agribusiness, including past roles as CEO of the National Emergent Red Meat Producers' Organisation (NERPO) and lecturer at the University of Pretoria.

Langelihle holds an MPhil in Development Finance from Stellenbosch Business School and an MSc in Veterinary Tropical Diseases from the University of Pretoria, both earned with distinction. She is a passionate advocate for sustainable agricultural development across Southern Africa, recognized for her commitment to smallholder empowerment, strategic partnerships, and inclusive agri-financing models that unlock the potential of Africa's agricultural resources.



Sophie Goudard

Vice President, Operations, Emerging ag Inc

Sophie has joined the Emerging ag team in the role of Vice President, Operations, and focuses primarily on team logistics, scheduling and event planning. Sophie has spent the last 15 years as a professional in the business of live arts. Providing high standard services handling the administration and logistics of many international productions touring stages of the world. She has been honing her skills in an environment requiring precise organization, interpersonal and leadership qualities. Passionate

about development, Sophie's strength is to organize and motivate people to accomplish goals and empowering them by providing clear direction to execute successfully their strategic initiatives. A French national from a mixed background, Sophie holds a Master of Arts in International Cultural Exchange Strategies from the Institute of Political Sciences of Lyon, a BA in Legal Studies and Political Science from the Institute of Political Sciences of Rennes and a BA in History. Sophie speaks English and Spanish after living in North America for twelve years and studying in Mexico, she became proficient in German in the last 8 years working mostly in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. She currently lives in France.