

FAO-IAFN Emerging Accelerator Mentorship Programme for Women-led SMEs in Africa

Leadership and Human Resource Workshop

12 February 2026 via Zoom Meetings

15:00 -17:00 CET

Speakers' Biographies

(In order of Speaking)



Irina Wandera

Policy Manager, Emerging ag inc

At Emerging, Irina is working as Policy Manager. For over fifteen years, she has worked with different constituents, from grassroot communities to private sector players, to actively participate in policy processes ensuring public policies are shaped by multiple stakeholders. Her experience runs across various sectors including food, agriculture, environment, community conservation and health. Prior to joining Emerging, Irina worked at The Wildlife Foundation in Kenya and the Friends of Nairobi National Park, helping implement Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) programs to mitigate human-wildlife conflicts.

Irina is a Rotarian and has served on several secretariats including the Rotary Leadership Institute and Rotary Day at the UN. A Kenyan national, Irina holds a BSc (Hons) in Environmental Science from Kenyatta University in Kenya, and a Master of Public Administration (MPA) from Dalhousie University, Canada.



Suze Percy Filippini

Country Representative of Zambia, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Suze Percy Filippini was Food and Agriculture Organization Representative (FAOR) in the Republic of Congo before assuming the same position in Zambia. Having more than 25 years of multi-cultural leadership experience, Percy earlier held various prestigious positions under Government portfolios and represented her country to the FAO in Rome, the UN in New York and the Organization of the American States (OAS) in Washington DC, enriching her professional experience

in diplomacy, sustainable agriculture, strategic planning and programming. Percy Filippini holds three (3) master's degree qualifications in International Service, Arts in Hemispheric Security and Defense, and in Science in Agricultural Engineering.



Robynne Anderson

President, Emerging ag inc

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 34 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. 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.



Jeanne Bernick

Executive Director, Pinion Global Network

As Growth Leader, Jeanne Bernick leads the firm's overall market and growth strategies across the food and agriculture industry and community businesses. Jeanne matches the needs of clients with Pinion's talent and tools, facilitating healthy, growing businesses that are sustainable for generations to come. She manages the firm's growth activities, including business development and market-related approaches, to best serve client needs for business advisory and accounting solutions. Jeanne also provides client-facing service in succession planning, utilizing her first-hand perspective and professional knowledge in working with family business owners, Jeanne understands the needs and roles that both family and non-family stakeholders play in profitable business. She has been recognized for her achievement in family enterprise advising, and holds a Certificate in Family Business Advising (CFBA). Over her distinguished career, Jeanne became one of the top editors in agriculture media at Top Producer magazine. She covered industry topics in rural America and places as far flung as Africa, where ag potential is enormous yet hunger and basic needs are overwhelming. From this experience, Jeanne gained a passion for supporting and empowering women in agriculture, and co-authored a book on women leadership in agriculture called "Ceres Rising". She is a featured speaker at women leadership events. From childhood, Jeanne Bernick has walked in the shoes of ag producers, growing up on a cattle ranch in Southern Missouri. During her career as both a journalist and consultant, she has visited operations across America and the world, spending many hours driving dirt roads, listening, and learning from business owners and operators about their wants and needs for business profitability. Their stories have shaped her and fuel her passion for connecting clients with the right business resources to sustain their long-term livelihood.



Yolande Nankeng

Founder, Extrait Végétal Sarl

Yolande Nankeng is a person with great values and a passion for natural well-being. Born on 16 January 1979 in Bafoussam in the high hills of West Cameroon, Yolande Nounkeng Nankeng did all her primary and secondary education there, as well as some university studies, until she obtained her Brevet de Technicien Supérieur (Higher Technician's Certificate) in Secretarial Management. She went on to study at ESSEC business school in 2009, where she obtained a Master's degree in Organisation and Management. Raised in a single-parent Catholic family of 06 children following the death of her father when she was just 4 years old, she had to learn to work very quickly to support her mother, who was unemployed at the time. Honesty, integrity, simplicity and love of others are values that her mother instilled in her to help her cope with life's difficulties. Fascinated by vital health, she fulfilled her life's mission by organising seminars, workshops and nutritional support to help people rediscover wellbeing through food. Yolande has 18 years' experience in a multi-national company specialising in

solutions integration, where she held the position of Business Unit Manager Recurring Services before leaving in July 2020. Today, aged 42, married with 05 children, she is living out her passion for entrepreneurship through her company Extrait Végétal Sarl, which specialises in processing fruit and vegetables into high nutritional value products (juices, smoothies, cut-ups) for people who want to look after their health. Her ambition is to be the first natural juice production industry in Cameroon. She is the promoter of the APON natural fruit juice brand. Yolande lives in Douala in Cameroon with her husband (Patrice) and their 5 children (Aaron, Maeva, Ulrich, Arthur and Patrice Allan).



Donna Rosa
CEO, Efour Enterprises LLC

Donna Rosa is Founder and Chief Entrepreneurship Officer at EFour Enterprises LLC. Donna began her career as a food technologist with a background in nutrition. After earning an MBA she transitioned to the business side of the food industry, and eventually moved into international development, supporting microenterprises and small businesses in Africa, the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, Central America, the Middle East, and Russia. Donna is Past Chair of the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) International Division. She founded and currently leads the division's Food Science for Relief and Development (FSRD) initiative, which seeks to expand the use of food science to improve global food and nutrition security. She has also supported IFT's Volunteer Globally program and published articles, blogs, podcasts, and sessions on FSRD. Donna serves on several boards, lending her expertise in entrepreneur support in developing countries. She has worked with smallholder farmers, small food processors, and small enterprises of all kinds, including numerous women-led businesses.