













1st Roundtable of African Farmers

2023

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENHANCED ACCESS TO AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGIES

Ruramiso Mashumba (Zimbabwe), Collina Geneveive Msongole (Malawi), Onyaole Patience Koku (Nigeria), Michael Waciira Gatiba (Kenya), and Jorge Rafael Lopez Menendez (Argentina / Sierra Leone)

Agriculture supports over 50% of Africa's population and contributes 35% to its GDP, reaching up to 60% in some countries. Despite this, Africa faces rising food imports and persistent food insecurity due to low productivity, low value added per worker, and subsistence farming below efficient scales with an average farm size of 1.3 he. Despite having 65% of the remaining arable land of the world, only 10 % is utilized. Key constraints include limited access to modern technologies, funds, knowledge, land tenure issues, inadequate infrastructure, and climate challenges.

At their 1st Roundtable, in 2023, the African farmers highlighted the centrality of enhancing access to modern technologies, as a catalyst for driving sustainable growth across the region. With that aim, they called for the adoption of **outcome-driven**, **evidence-based**, and **technology-neutral** agricultural policies.

OUTCOME DRIVEN | Agricultural policies should focus on setting key outcomes that benefit farmers, environment, and consumers.

Farmers

- · Increase productivity of farms.
- Improve farmers' livelihoods, health, wellbeing.
- Increase farmers' resilience to climate change.

Consumers

Enhance food safety and nutrition

- Preserve and restore soil health.
- Preserve natural habitats and biodiversity.
- Preserve water resources.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions

Environment

EVIDENCE BASED | Policies should enable the expedited legal approval and registration for the development, availability, accessibility, use, and scaling up of all those technologies that – based on scientific evidence gained through testing and implementation in diverse agroecological and socio-economic contexts – have proven to successfully enable farmers to deliver against those desired outcomes, while minimizing trade-offs and maximizing synergies among them.

TECHNOLOGY NEUTRAL | Policies should neither allow nor prohibit specific agricultural technologies and practices, nor should they favor one over another. Remaining open and neutral, policies nurture a diversified technological ecosystem, enhancing farmers' adaptability and resiliency to local conditions by giving them access to all the tools in the toolbox – be them traditional, modern, biological, chemical, biotechnological, biochemical, mechanical, digital – to implement locally tailored and flexible solutions.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGIES FOR REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE

Toussaint N'Guessan (Ivory Coast), Matente Khethisa (Lesotho), Amadou Sidebe (Mali), Cesarie Kantarama (Rwanda), Stella Thomas (Nigeria), Dave Okech (Kenya), Motlatsi Everest Musi (South Africa), Grace Bwogi (Uganda), Elisha Lewanika (Zambia)

REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE is an outcome-based, technology-agnostic, evidence-driven production model aimed at improving soil health to increase resilience. Other key outcomes include mitigating climate change by reducing GHG emissions and enhancing carbon sequestration; preserving or improving on-farm biodiversity; conserving water resources through improved retention and reduced runoff; enhancing the socio-economic wellbeing of farmers and communities by creating a more sustainable and equitable production system.

Which technologies are enabling African farmers to implement regenerative agriculture?

Which barriers hinder the availability, accessibility, and adoption of those technologies at scale in the region?

Which actions are needed to overcome those barriers?

THE FARMERS

9 farmers' leaders from 9 countries have been selected through a collaborative process involving the Global Farmer Network, World Farmers' Organization, Bayer, and Permanent Representatives to UN Rome-Based Agencies. They represents various geographies, genders, value chains, and farming approaches. Collectively, they engage withand support thousands of smallholder farmers, significantly impacting agricultural and community development.



Toussaint N`Guessan from Côte d'Ivoire has been active in the agricultural sector for over 25 years, He leads the Ivorian Network for Sustainable Agriculture (RIAD) and the World Cocoa Producers Organization (OMCC-WCPO), both members of the World Farmers' Organization. He leads agricultural cooperatives, overseeing 45 hectares of plantations, including 5 hectares of certified cocoa, 10 hectares of rubber, 20 hectares of cassava with a processing unit, and 2 hectares of vegetables. He produces 300,000 forest tree seedlings for reforestation under the PIDACC/MINEF project. He is also a member of the ACP-EU Monitoring Committee and the International Cocoa Organization (ICCO) advisory board.



Dave Okech is a Kenyan entrepreneur with over 10 years of experience in agribusiness, particularly in aquaculture. He is a cage fish farmer and small-scale chicken farmer. He Founded AquaRech LTD, which develops innovative solutions for aquaculture food systems. Notably, he created the AquaRech App, connecting over 3,000 small-scale fish farmers to address challenges in feed, market access, and financing. In 2023, he received the International Business Entrepreneurship Impact Award from the University of Iowa John Pappajohn Entrepreneurial Center. Dave is a member of the Global Farmer Network, Acumen Fellow, Mandela Washington Fellow, Obama Foundation Africa Fellow and Africa Food Systems Fellow.



Matente Khethisa, from Leribe, Lesotho, is the CEO of Letsoara Agri Farm, specializing in horticulture. With a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting, she transitioned to agriculture to address food security and community empowerment. Her farm produces cabbages, tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, onions, butternut, and watermelon, using drip irrigation, shade nets, plastic tunnels, and hybrid seeds. In 2023, she conducted notable research on onions through the World Bank Agricultural Productivity Program for Southern Africa (APPSA). Leveraging social media for marketing, her farm has gained significant demand. Recognized for mentoring women and youth, she received the Farmers Pitso Award in 2022.



Amadou Sidibe is a Malian farmer and entrepreneur who transitioned from a career in architecture to agriculture. In his high-tech greenhouses equipped with soilless production systems, climate control, misting, aluminum screens, and water recycling he is able to produce vegetables during the off-season, stabilizing prices and ensuring a steady local supply. Sidibe's received the 2021 African Award for Agricultural Innovation and the 2024 Kéwalé People Awards as Best Agro-Business Entrepreneur in West Africa. As a member of the Global Farmer Network, he advocates for technology and sustainable practices to enhance productivity, climate resilience, and food security.

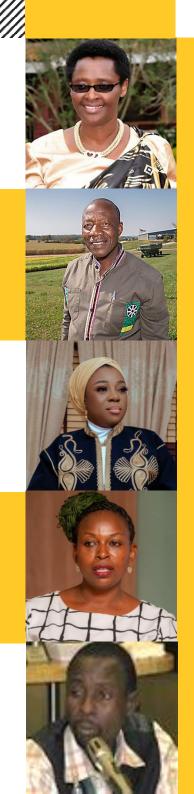
Césarie Kantarama manages a 20-hectare farm specialized in cassava cultivation using the Zai Pit technique. As president of the Ingabo Syndicate, a member of the World Farmers' Organization, she represents over 16,000 farmers and plays a key role in improving cassava productivity in Rwanda by promoting advanced and innovative farming methods. She is Council Member of the East African Farmers' Federation, and a mentor of the FAO-IAFN Women's Accelerator Mentorship Programme for Women-led SMEs in Africa. She named new cassava varieties, drawing from the Rwandan tradition of naming baby gorillas, symbolizing farmers' pride and hope for the future.

Motlatsi Everest Musi's farming journey began under the harsh conditions of apartheid, when he worked as a permanent laborer on a large farm, gaining valuable experience. After apartheid ended, Musi secured 21 hectares through a land redistribution program in 2004. Since 2005, he has been cultivating genetically modified Bt-maize, significantly boosting his production and expanding his business. A vocal advocate for agricultural biotechnology, highlighting parallels between his life under apartheid and the current restrictions on agricultural technology faced by African farmers. For his achievements, he received the Kleckner Award from the Global Farmer Network.

Stella Thomas is the Managing Director of Tecni Seeds Limited, the first female-owned seed company in Nigeria, founded in 2011 in Kano, producing high-quality seeds through scientific research. Collaborating with over 3,000 farmers and cultivating more than 6,000 hectares annually, she oversees the entire process of seed production, from planting to harvesting. Stella's pioneering work enhances the livelihoods of thousands of farmers by enabling them to significantly improve produce quality and sustainability. She is recognized by the Global Farmer Network for setting new standards for seed quality and farming support in Nigeria.

Grace Bwogi Namukasa is a Ugandan farmer and entrepreneur, serving as CEO of Bwogi Farms since 2015. Located in Rakai district, her farm focuses on goat and banana production. She founded and serves on the executive committee of the Uganda Goat Farmers' Cooperative, mobilizing and training farmers in best practices aiming to enhance goat production nationwide. Actively involved in youth advocacy and climate action, Grace collaborates with organizations to train young people in sustainable farming. Her contributions are recognized both locally and internationally, as a member of the Global Farmer Network.

Elisha Lewanika has an 80-hectare farm in Zambia, cultivating maize, cabbages, tomatoes, soyabeans, groundnuts, sunflower, onion, and raising cattle, donkeys, sheep, and village chickens. He serves as a Farmer Service Center and Aggregator with the Farm to Market Alliance (FtMA), helping smallholder farmers access inputs and formal markets, and promoting crop diversification and climate-smart agriculture to improve resilience and productivity. Elisha hosts farm events to introduce new agricultural innovations, providing smallholder farmers with practical knowledge. He is a member of the Global Farmer Network.



MODERATORS & KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Fr. Andrea Ciucci is an Italian Catholic priest of the Archdiocese of Milan. He holds a PhD in Philosophy. Currently, he serves as the Coordinating Secretary of the Pontifical Academy for Life and is a member of several academic and ecclesiastical bodies. He is involved in various Vatican-led projects and conferences concerning the ethical issues at the intersection between human life and emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and food.



Mary Boote is the CEO of the Global Farmer Network (GFN), an organization that amplifies the voices of farmers worldwide to advocate for free trade and sustainable agricultural practices. With a background in agricultural policy and communications, Mary has been instrumental in connecting farmers across continents to share knowledge and innovations. Under her leadership, GFN has grown into a pivotal platform shaping global agricultural policies. Mary is recognized for her commitment to empowering farmers and promoting agricultural sustainability, making significant strides in addressing global food security challenges.



Luisa Volpe is the Advocacy, Policy and Partnerships Lead at the World Farmers' Organisation (WFO). With a strong background in international relations and agricultural policy, Luisa plays a crucial role in advocating for farmers' interests on a global stage. She is instrumental in shaping WFO's policy agenda and fostering partnerships that promote sustainable agriculture and food security. Luisa's work involves engaging with international institutions, governments, and other stakeholders to ensure that farmers' voices are heard in policy discussions. Her efforts contribute significantly to advancing the well-being and resilience of farming communities worldwide.



Ebunoluwa Ajobiewe is an advocate for youth in agriculture from Nigeria. She is an alumna of the Technical University of Valencia and the University of Padova, where she earned Double Master's degrees in Plant Health and Sustainable Agriculture under the Erasmus Mundus program. Currently, she is conducting her doctorate research with the National Research Council of Italy (CNR) Institute for Sustainable Plant Protection and the University of Basilicata. Her research is focused on developing innovative solutions for the sustainable management of pests and pathogens in agricultural production. She currently serves as Co-chair of the Next Gen Agriculture Impact Network (NGIN).

Manuel Otero is the Director General of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the inter-governmental organization of the Americas promoting agricultural development and rural well-being. Fostering regional and South-South cooperation, IICA emphasizes innovation, resilience, and inclusivity to enhance food security and sustainable agricultural growth worldwide. With a background in veterinary medicine and international agricultural development, Otero's extensive experience spans both public and private sectors.

Canisius Kanangire is the Executive Director of the African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF). With a rich background in agricultural science and water resource management, he has held significant leadership roles in various international organizations, including the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW). At AATF, Kanangire focuses on leveraging technology to improve agricultural productivity and food security across Africa. His work emphasizes partnerships, innovation, and capacity-building to empower smallholder farmers in advancing sustainable agricultural practices and addressing food security challenges on the continent.

Chikelu Mba is a leading figure at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), where he serves as the Deputy Director of the Plant Production and Protection Division. He previously held the position of Team Leader of the Seeds and Plant Genetic Resources unit. With a robust background in plant breeding and genetics, his work focuses on enhancing crop resilience and productivity through the development and dissemination of improved seed varieties. Mba's efforts are crucial in addressing global food security challenges, promoting sustainable agricultural practices and biodiversity conservation, and supporting smallholder farmers worldwide.

Debra Mallowah is the Head of Bayer in Africa, where she leads the company's efforts in advancing innovation, sustainability, and access to agricultural solutions across the region. Debra's leadership is instrumental in fostering partnerships to effectively address pressing agricultural challenges in Africa, contributing to the region's socioeconomic development. With extensive experience in strategic leadership and business development, Debra has previously held executive roles in leading multinational corporations in Africa, including Coca-Cola, GlaxoSmithkline and Unilever, bringing a wealth of experience into her current role.

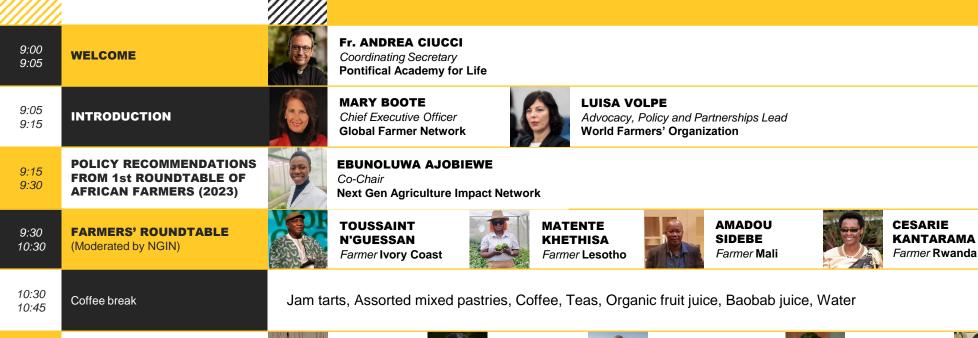
Chris Brett is the Lead Agribusiness Specialist at the World Bank, where he oversees initiatives to enhance agricultural productivity and sustainability globally, focusing on developing strategies to improve value chains, market access, and rural livelihoods. With over 30 years of experience in agribusiness and rural development, Brett has worked extensively in both the public and private sectors. Brett's expertise is crucial in addressing food security challenges and promoting sustainable agricultural practices worldwide.







AGENDA





STELLA **THOMAS** Farmer Nigeria



DAVE **OKECH** Farmer Kenva



MOTLATSI EVEREST MUSI Farmer South Africa



GRACE BWOGI Farmer Uganda



ELISHA LEWANIKA Farmer Zambia

Senegalese Maffe (meat and vegetable stew with peanut butter), Basmati rice with fresh ingredients, Vegan / vegetarian curry legumes / vegetables sauce, Flatbreads / bread, Coffee, Water



(Moderated by NGIN)

OPEN FLOOR DISCUSSION

AFRICAN CUISINE

(Moderated by NGIN)

Light Lunch

One of the farmers will deliver a collective briefing note on behalf of the whole group.



CANISIUS KANANGIRE Executive Director AATF



CHIKELU MBA Deputy Director FAO



DEBRA MALLOWAH Head of Africa **Bayer**



MANUEL OTERO DG IICA



CHRIS BRETT Agribusiness Lead WBG



Everybody in the room is invited to take the floor and contribute to the discussion with a question or a short comment.



14:00

14:50

10:45

12:00

12:00

13:00



















