

Speaker Bios



Yemi Akinbamijo

Executive Director,
Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
(FARA)

Dr. Yemi Akinbamijo is an agriculture expert with a track record of leadership in Food/Nutrition Security, Rural Development, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. Prior to his appointment as the Executive Director of FARA in 2013, Yemi was the Head of Agriculture and Food Security Division at the African Union Commission Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. He has been in the frontline of the implementation of the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP), now operating in 40 African Union Member States.

Dr. Akinbamijo is an agricultural research and development specialist with considerable expertise in natural resource management including crop-livestock integrated systems, market-oriented production systems, regional value chains, sustainable agriculture and climate change adaptation strategies. With more than 30 years in the practice of agriculture and rural development, he has served with increasing responsibilities and leadership roles in institutions with national, regional and continental mandates, including as a Diplomat/Head of Mission. He also sits on numerous boards.

Dr. Akinbamijo is widely published in various agricultural disciplines. He is a former editor of the Bulletin of Animal Health and Production in Africa (peer-reviewed journal) and lead author of the book, Crop-livestock Integration in West African Cities. He has contributed to knowledge through peer-review journals, conference proceedings, special publications, etc. in more than 80 scientific publications. He is a former university lecturer and obtained his PhD in Agriculture and Environmental Sciences from Wageningen University, The Netherlands.

Source: [FARA website](#)



Namukolo Covic

Senior Research Coordinator,
International Food Policy Research
Institute (IFPRI)

Namukolo Covic (PhD) is a Registered Nutritionist with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA). She is a Senior Research Coordinator at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) for the CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH). She is based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia where her work includes promoting the use of evidence by African Union and Ethiopian Government efforts that address food security and nutrition. With a dual background in agriculture and nutrition, her expertise straddles the interface of policy, dynamics of agriculture and food systems and related interventions and how research could inform the intended impact on nutrition and health outcomes for Low-Middle-Income-Countries (LMICs) with special focus on Africa. She is a capacity strengthening expert with notable strength on bringing together different stakeholder groups on common goals. She is a member of the African Academy of Sciences Steering Committee on Food and Nutrition Security.

Source: [IFPRI website](#)



Doug Gollin

Professor of Development Economics,
Oxford University

Doug Gollin's research focusses on economic development and growth, with particular interests in agriculture and structural transformation. His work brings a general equilibrium perspective to issues such as: sectoral differences in productivity; the impacts of agricultural technologies; the role of transport costs in shaping spatial patterns of development; the importance of small firms and self employment in poor countries; and the macroeconomic effects of disease.

Doug Gollin joined Oxford in October 2012 after spending 16 years on the faculty of Williams College in the United States. From 2012-17, he chaired the Standing Panel on Impact Assessment of the CGIAR, a consortium of international agricultural research organisations. He also works with the International Growth Centre and a number of international organizations and NGOs involved in policy-oriented research on development.

He is currently a Managing Editor of the Journal of African Economies. Since 2015, he has been a Research Fellow with the Centre for Economic Policy Research (CEPR), in both the Development Economics Programme and the Macroeconomics and Growth Programme; he is also a Fellow of the Bureau for Research and Economic Analysis of Development (BREAD).

Doug Gollin holds an AB degree from Harvard University and an MA from Yale University. He received his PhD in economics from the University of Minnesota in 1996.

Source: [Oxford website](#)



Elwyn Grainger-Jones

Managing Director,
Institutional Strategies and Systems,
CGIAR System Organization

Elwyn Grainger-Jones is an experienced leader and change manager with a deep understanding of development, food systems transformation and climate change. Elwyn's role as Managing Director adds to his responsibilities as Executive Director of the CGIAR System Organization, where he has worked with partners to help initiate the creation of One CGIAR, among other achievements.

Prior to joining CGIAR, he spent over 20 years working in a range of government institutions and development banks, where he held various leadership and change management positions, including Director of Policy, Partnerships and Operations at the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in the World Bank; Director of the Environment and Climate Department in the UN's International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD); and Head of the Climate and Environment Department at the UK Department for International Development (DFID). He has worked with countries across the world, including leading a World Bank export diversification study in Botswana; supporting DFID's work in Vietnam, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union; and supporting the Government of Guyana as an Overseas Development Institute (ODI) fellow. He holds an MSc in Economics.

Source: [CGIAR website](#)



Nicoline de Haan

Director,
CGIAR GENDER Platform

Nicoline de Haan is a senior researcher and previously served as the leader of the gender team at the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI). She has over 15 years of expertise in gender, rural livelihoods, agriculture, and natural resource management. In her present position she is responsible for leading the work on gender and livestock to ensure equitable development. Before ILRI, she led the work on gender, poverty and institutions under the CGIAR program on Water, Land and Ecosystems (WLE) examining the implications of inequity in access and control over natural resources, and finding options to ensure inclusive benefit sharing. In her previous position at the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) she led the global socio-economic team on animal health, where her main responsibility was reducing the impact of animal diseases on the livelihoods of smallholders. She has a master's in development sociology from Wageningen Agricultural University, and a PhD in rural sociology from University of Missouri, Colombia.

Source: [CGIAR Gender Platform website](#)



Kundhavi Kadiresan

Managing Director,
Global Engagement and Innovation,
CGIAR System Organization

Kundhavi Kadiresan is a development expert with over 25 years of experience in policies and programs. Most recently, she served Assistant Director General for Asia and Pacific for the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), where she advocated and supported the FAO's work on food, agriculture, water, forestry, fisheries, livestock, one health, nutrition and climate change, supporting member states to achieve their Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and meet their commitments to the Paris Agreement.

Prior to joining the FAO, she worked in leading international organizations such as the World Bank and the United Nations, leading multi-sectoral, multi-disciplinary teams on macroeconomic policy, governance, agricultural policy, emergency response, and poverty. She has also led change processes at the FAO, and advanced new ways of doing business in the UN system. Her work spans Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe and Latin America, where she led senior-level policy dialogues, and managed multi-million dollar loan portfolios and technical assistance grant programs. She strives for innovation in approaches, processes, products and services for better development impact. To this end, she has established creative partnership models with research institutions, private sector and agribusinesses to link research, policies and program delivery. She holds a PhD in Economics and an MBA in International Business.

Source: [CGIAR website](#)



Agnes Kalibata

Special Envoy for the 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS)

President,
Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)

As the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy, Dr. Kalibata works with the United Nations system and key partners to provide leadership, guidance, and strategic direction towards the 2021 Food Systems Summit. She is responsible for outreach and cooperation with key leaders, including governments, to ensure the Summit serves as a catalytic process within the Decade of Action to improve food systems around the world to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Paris Agreement.

Since 2014, Dr. Kalibata has also served as President of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), where she leads the organization's efforts with public and private partners to ensure a food secure and prosperous Africa through rapid, sustainable agricultural growth, improving the productivity and livelihoods of millions of smallholder farmers in Africa.

Prior to joining AGRA in September 2014, Dr. Kalibata was Rwanda's Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI) from 2008 to 2014, where she drove programs that moved her country from a food insecure to a food secure status and became a reference point for other countries that sought to deliver agriculture transformation. Dr. Kalibata has held several other leadership positions, including Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Agriculture and Deputy Vice Chancellor of University of Rwanda. She also worked for the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture in Uganda, and various other agricultural development organizations. She sits on various boards, councils and commissions including the Global Commission on Adaptation, the Global Commission on the Economy and Climate, the Global Panel for Agriculture & Food Systems for Nutrition, the Global Agriculture & Food Security Program (GAFSP), the Global Agenda Council of the World Economic Forum, the Malabo-Montpellier Panel, and Africa Risk Capacity, among others.

Dr. Kalibata has a distinguished track record as an agricultural scientist, policy maker and thought leader. She was awarded the Yara Prize, now the Africa Food Prize, in 2012, an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Liège in 2018, an Honorary Doctorate from McGill University in 2019, and the National Academy of Sciences' Public Welfare Medal in April, 2019 for her work to drive Africa's agricultural transformation through modern sciences and effective policy thereby improving livelihoods of smallholder farmers. Dr. Kalibata holds a doctorate in Entomology from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.



Karen Macours

Professor, Paris School of Economics; Research Director, French National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment (INRAE)

Karen Macours is a professor at the Paris School of Economics, research director at the French National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and Environment (INRAE), and chair of the CGIAR's Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA). She is a development economist with an active research portfolio focused on the micro-economic constraints to agricultural productivity and rural poverty reduction in developing countries. Much of her current research involves impact assessment related to agricultural research, the evaluation of programs addressing rural households' productive and human capital investments, and related measurement and methodological questions. She has led field projects in Sub Sahara Africa, Latin America and Asia, and has worked with a variety of stakeholders (national governments, NGOs, bilateral and multilateral agencies).

She is a board member and co-chair of the health sector for JPAL (Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab), member of the board of directors of the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Market Risk and Resilience and of BREAD (Bureau for Research and Economic Analysis of Development), co-editor of the Journal of Development Economics, associate editor of the American Journal of Agricultural Economics, co-lead of the development research group at Paris School of Economics, and an affiliate of CEPR (Center for Economic Policy Research) and EUDN (European Universities Development Network). She previously was

Chair, CGIAR's Standing Panel on Impact Assessment (SPIA)



Philip Pardey

Professor of Science and Technology Policy, Department of Applied Economics, University of Minnesota

associate professor of international economics at SAIS- Johns Hopkins University. She received her MS in Agricultural Engineering from the K.U. Leuven and her PhD in Agricultural and Resource Economics from the University of California at Berkeley.

She received her MS in Agricultural Engineering from the K.U. Leuven and her PhD in Agricultural and Resource Economics from the University of California at Berkeley.

Philip G. Pardey is Professor of Science and Technology Policy in the Department of Applied Economics at the University of Minnesota, Director of Global Research Strategy for the College of Food Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences, and directs the University's International Science and Technology Practice and Policy (InSTePP) center. Previously he was a senior research fellow at IFPRI, Washington D.C. and ISNAR, The Hague, Netherlands. Philip presently co-directs the University's GEMS informatics initiative, a joint CFANS-Minnesota Supercomputing Institute venture.

Philip's career has focused on informing and enabling data driven innovation in the food and agricultural sectors worldwide. His research deals with productivity measurement and assessment (drawing on spatial bio-economic modeling approaches), the finance and conduct of R&D globally, methods for assessing the economic impacts of research, and the economic and policy (especially intellectual property) aspects of genetic resources and the biosciences. Pardey is author of almost 400 books, articles, and papers.

Source: [InSTePP website](#)



Marcela Quintero

Research Area Director – Multifunctional Landscapes, Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT

Marcela Quintero is the Multifunctional Landscapes Research Area Director at the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT. She is an ecologist, and holds a Ph.D. from the Department of Agronomy at the University of Florida. With 20 years of experience, her core work has focused on research project implementation in thematic areas related to payments for ecosystem services, watershed management, environmental impacts in agricultural landscapes, and adoption determinants of sustainable land use-based options. Recently she has worked on environmental impacts and adoption determinants of conservation measures, including mixed crop-livestock systems and conservation measures.

Marcela has also worked for a number of other organizations working in sustainable development, including GIZ, CONDESAN, and Forest Trends.



Claudia Sadoff

Executive Management Team Convener
and Managing Director, Research
Strategy and Impact,
CGIAR System Organization

Claudia Sadoff is a globally-recognized leader in water management for international development. She most recently served as the Director General of the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), a CGIAR Center headquartered in Sri Lanka working globally to find water solutions for sustainable, climate-resilient development. She also served as a member of the CGIAR System Management Board, acting as CGIAR Gender Champion.

Prior to joining IWMI, she spent over 20 years at the World Bank where she worked across Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East and North Africa, South Asia and Southeast Asia, holding multiple positions, including Lead Economist and Global Lead for Water Security and Integrated Water Resource Management. She currently serves as a Member of the Scientific Group of the 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit and was recently named an Honorary Member of the International Water Resources Association. She has received appointments from a wide variety of other organizations, including: Distinguished Visiting Scholar at Oxford University; Chair of the Global Water Partnership/Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Task Force on Water Security and Sustainable Growth; Economic Advisor to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN); Member of the World Economic Forum's Global Agenda Council on Water Security; Member of the Global Water Partnership Technical Committee; and Fulbright scholar. She holds a PhD in Economics.

Source: [CGIAR website](#)



Carin Smaller

Director,
Agriculture, Trade and Investment,
International Institute for Sustainable
Development (IISD)

Carin Smaller is Director, Agriculture, Trade & Investment, for the Economic Law and Policy program. She advises governments and parliamentarians on law and policy issues related to foreign investment and trade in agriculture. She is the author of the IISD Guide to Negotiating Investment Contracts for Farmland and Water, the first attempt to create a model contract for developing countries to attract investment for agriculture, while at the same time, promoting the needs of the poor and protecting the environment.

She has lived and worked in several developing countries, and advised dozens of government officials on how to maximize the benefits and minimize the risks from foreign investment in the agriculture sector. She has organized and participated in international conferences on agriculture, trade, investment and human rights; has worked with several NGOs; and has carried out media relations, particularly providing access to the media for people whose voices are not usually heard.

Source: [IISD website](#)



James Thurlow

Senior Research Fellow,
International Food Policy Research
Institute (IFPRI)

James Thurlow is a development economist whose research focuses on the interactions between policies, economic growth and poverty, primarily using computable general equilibrium and micro-simulation modeling.

Past research focuses on evaluating public investments and policies; rural, regional and urban development; and climate change and other external risks.

He has worked with governments and researchers throughout Sub-Saharan Africa, and in Bangladesh, Peru, Tunisia and Vietnam.

Source: [IFPRI website](#)



Victor Villalobos

Secretary of Agriculture and Rural
Development of Mexico

Víctor Manuel Villalobos Arámbula is Mexico's Secretary of Agriculture and Rural Development and serves ex officio as Honorary Chair of CIMMYT'S Board of Trustees. An expert with over 40 years' experience in agronomy, agricultural economy and environment sciences, Villalobos holds an engineering degree in Agronomy from Mexico's Agriculture School and an MSc in Plant Genetics from the Graduate College of Chapingo. He holds a PhD in Plant Morphogenesis from the University of Calgary in Alberta, Canada.

He was Director General of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperating in Agriculture, a specialized agency from the Organization of American States, for two consecutive four-year periods from 2010. He was the first Mexican to hold this international position based in Costa Rica. He has worked in high-level positions for Mexico's Government. He has been appointed as Natural Resources Undersecretary, Agriculture Undersecretary and International Affairs Coordinator of Mexico's Department of Agriculture. He has served as Principal Biotechnology Officer for the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome, Italy, and Director of the Tropical Crops Improvement Program at the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) in Costa Rica. He became a member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry in 2004 for his research in biotechnology, plant production, and conservation of natural and genetic resources. He received an honorary doctorate from CATIE in the same year, and an honorary doctorate from Asunción University in Paraguay in 2013. In 2015, he received the "Golden Spike" award from the Graduate College of Agronomy Engineers and Agriculture and Livestock Professionals in La Paz, Bolivia.

Source: [CIMMYT website](#)



Juergen Voegele

CGIAR System Council Chair
Vice President for Sustainable
Development, World Bank

Juergen Voegele, Ph.D., assumed the position of Vice President for Sustainable Development at the World Bank on April 1, 2020. In this role, he oversees the work of Global Practices and thematic groups that bring together the best expertise from across the World Bank Group and from partners, to help countries tackle their most complex challenges in the area of sustainable development. The practices and groups under his responsibility include Agriculture and Food; Climate Change; Environment, Natural Resources and Blue Economy; Environmental and Social Framework Implementation Unit; Social Development; Urban, Disaster Risk Management, Resilience and Land; and Water.

Prior to this appointment, Dr. Voegele was Global Director of the World Bank's Climate Change Group and Senior Director of the World Bank's Agriculture and Food Global Practice. Dr. Voegele is chair of the CGIAR System Council Board, which oversees agricultural research programs tackling poverty, food and nutrition security, and improved natural resource management around the world. Since 2016, Dr. Voegele has served as co-chair of the Global Future Councils of the World Economic Forum. He is also a member of the EAT Foundation Advisory Board since May 2017.

Career highlights include his leadership of the acclaimed Loess Plateau watershed management project in China and managing a multi-sectoral team that disbursed more than \$1 billion for 70 projects in response to the global Avian influenza crisis. Those latter efforts were replicated during the 2008 global food crisis. Dr. Voegele holds a PhD in Agricultural Economics and a Master's in Agricultural Engineering from the University of Hohenheim, in Germany.

Source: [World Bank website](#)



Lini Wollenberg

Flagship Leader for Low Emissions
Development, CGIAR Research Program
on Climate Change, Agriculture and
Food Security (CCAFS)

Lini Wollenberg is the Flagship Leader for Low Emissions Development for CCAFS and Research Professor at the Gund Institute for Environment and Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources, University of Vermont. She was previously the Director of the Center for Sustainable Agriculture at the University of Vermont (2007–2009); Principle Scientist at the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) (1994–2005); and Program Officer for Asia's Rural Poverty and Resources Program at the Ford Foundation (1991–1994). Lini is a member of the Forest, Trees and Livelihoods and Frontiers' Climate-Smart Food Systems editorial boards.

Lini's areas of expertise include climate change mitigation, local governance, environment and rural livelihoods, community-based forest management, participatory action research and adaptive collaborative management. She conducted field research primarily in Asia, especially Indonesian Borneo.

Lini has produced over 81 peer-reviewed publications. She received her BS (1980), MSc (1986), and PhD (1991) degrees from the University of California, Berkeley, USA.