

## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



**Surname: Ntiokam Divine**

**Founder and Managing Director**

**Organisation: Climate Smart Agriculture Youth Network Global (GCSAYN)**

**@GcuCsayn**

**@ntiokam**

Divine Ntiokam recognizes the critical importance of the youth in building a resilient, sustainable and prosperous agricultural sector in Africa. This passion drove Divine to start the Climate Smart Agriculture Youth Network Global (GCSAYN) in May 2014, of which he is now the Managing Director. Teams in 100+ countries work to raise awareness of Climate Smart Agriculture among young men and women, educating them in the benefits of sustainable approaches to increasing agricultural yields and resilience. Alongside his role in GCSAYN, Divine was elected as the African Continental Vice President of Youth in Livestock, Fisheries and Aquaculture Incubation Network in July 2018. By providing business incubation and powerful networks of support, the Network aims to build an Africa in which youth-owned enterprises in animal resources contribute to poverty reduction and food security. In addition, he was equally nominated as one of the Food and Land Use (FOLU) Coalition International Ambassador in 2018.

Divine's entrepreneurialism and advocacy for greater inclusivity is nothing new. His background includes rich experience in youth mainstreaming, most notably in coordinating and facilitating the translation of the Sustainable Development Goals into over sixty local languages on the African and Asian continent to

ensure that “No One Is Left Behind”. In addition to this, in 2020 the UN Special Envoy to the Food Systems Summit 2021 appointed Divine as one of the Champions to leverage the SG’s vision within this DECADE OF ACTION. Finally, he is equally a Core Member for the Strategy Group on Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems at Africa Europe Foundation.



**Valentina Stinga**  
**Italian Farmer**

Valentina Stinga was born in Sorrento, Italy. At the age of 18 she moved to Milan where she took a Bachelor’s in Economics and Management and a MSc in Marketing Management.

After a couple of internships, she went back to Sorrento and started looking for a job in the Tourism sector. She was however either overqualified or poorly experienced for the jobs she applied for, and ended up working in her family's business, dealing with truck transport. When Booking.com opened an office in Sorrento she applied to become Account Manager and worked for them for a year. At the end of the contract, she felt unfulfilled and started looking for something else following which she started growing some vegetables in an abandoned agricultural fund that her father bought some years before, while she was waiting for the renovation works of the ancient building in that piece of land. She became more and more passionate about growing food and with the help of some friends she started to make a business out of it.

She opened a blog, a website and Social Media pages, and started telling her story, and how her Farm was born.

She started by selling a mixed basket of fresh vegetables to families in her neighbourhood, and after learning by doing and by asking other farmers and to reduce waste, she expanded to processing fresh production with canned and

pickled tomatoes, and extra-virgin olive oil. The canned tomatoes come with local variety that are usually eaten when they're not totally ready, so when they are well ripe, they can't be eaten raw but are perfect for the sauce. This is the same concept of the green pickled tomatoes.

In February 2021 Valentina Stinga opened the e-commerce section on her website and started shipping the products in Italy and also in some EU countries.

## PANEL SPEAKERS



**Tijmen Rooseboom**  
**@tijmenrooseboom**

Tijmen Rooseboom is the Ambassador for Youth, Education and Work at the Netherlands' Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He works on the ambition of the Netherlands to increasingly put the challenges and opportunities of young people at the heart of its international cooperation, as stipulated in the Youth at Heart strategy and the recently organized Youth at Heart virtual forum. Prior, Mr Rooseboom worked at the Dutch Development Bank and as the Deputy Ambassador to Somalia; also, for the EU NAVFOR mission in Kenya and the UN Peacekeeping Missions in South-Sudan and Ivory Coast.



**Lucia Preugini**  
**Agriculture and forestry expert at the Ministry of Ecological Transition of Italy**

PhD in forest ecology with scientific background on forestry and climate change. Since 2003 she is part of Italian Delegation at the UNFCCC, supporting the Ministry of Ecological Transition on issues related to agriculture, LULUCF and REDD+. Senior scientific manager at CMCC, her research is focused on climate change, forest and agriculture sectors interplay and the link between the scientific and policy communities.



## **Bourahima Diallo**

Bourahima is a 34-year-old Malian cattle farmer and lives in Sebecourani, a village located 10 km from Narena, 90km west of Bamako, the capital of Mali. In 2016, owing to school issues in his country, he left University to work with his father in cattle raising.

One year later, he joined IFAD's Rural Youth Vocational Training, Employment and Entrepreneurship Support Project (RJRFIER

He begun with four sheep heads, and nowadays he has more than ten.

Together with other young farmers, project staff, NGOs, the *Forum des Services et Conseil Agricole et Rural (FOSCAR)* of Mali, they came together to form a network of RJRFIER beneficiaries to exchange expertise, advice, guidance, recommendations, trainings, commercialization tips, and intelligent marketing of their agricultural products. They created a WhatsApp group following the Field Laboratory organized by Youth Tools in Segou, Mali in January 2020, where they communicate among themselves and with the input suppliers, vets, buyers, and agricultural experts, and above all among themselves to share their respective challenges and solutions. They want to continue their work and move forward with more advanced solutions in the field of intelligent entrepreneurship by and for rural youth financed by FIER and their partners (IFAD). With this innovation of RJRFIER intelligent agriculture is moving forward despite all covid-19 challenges.



## **Chantal Adiko**

Chantal is the founder of AfricaCompost, Beninese organic fertilizer production company, - one of IFAD's Market Gardening Development Support Project (PADMAR) beneficiaries - located in Calavi, a border town of Cotonou. She has been involved in entrepreneurship for several years now and her organic fertilizer production company is attracting many agricultural producers. She was among the 5 finalists of the 2018 Food Connection Challenge, an initiative of BoP Innovation Centre and Crosswise Works that calls upon SMEs in Nigeria and Benin to submit their innovative ideas to reduce post – harvest losses.

Africa-Compost is taking organic waste that would otherwise be left to simply decay in garbage dumps and processing it through special facilities where it is converted into microbiological compost. The compost helps to improve the quality of the soil, makes plants more robust and resistant to pest attacks, and helps farmers cut down on the use of pesticides and make food safe. This helps tackle one of the biggest problems in rural areas: the massive use of chemical fertilizers that has made the ground infertile, caused soil erosion and led to contaminated water.

The idea behind starting this business came with the raising awareness about the harmful effects of pesticides on health and environment and the lack – or limited availability – of organic fertilizers.

AfricaCompost is also engaged in the production and processing of local cereals and tubers into dough flours. Her business benefited from the support of IFAD-funded Market Gardening Development Support Project (PADMAR) through the ASAP funds for installing new infrastructures to upgrade the composting site.

The COVID-19 outbreak definitely posed new challenges that Chantal succeeded in transforming into opportunities. In fact, during the crisis, there was a renewed interest in

local and healthy produce and growing demand for it and new sales channels, above all through the social media and on-line platforms, opened up.

Besides her entrepreneurial success, she removed gender tags and stopped regarding this career path as no-go area for girls, showing how women can succeed in fields that have been traditionally reserved for men. This commitment places the young Chantal among the few women with a thirst for a better tomorrow.



### **Hasna Zamouri**

#### **[Agropastoral Value Chains Development Project](#)**

Hasna lives in live in Zammour, a rural area in the south of Tunisia. She is a young graduate with a specialization in genetics and biodiversity. Unfortunately, after her graduation she could not find employment opportunities in her field of specialization. Thanks to IFAD-funded [Agropastoral Value Chains Development Project](#) (PRODEFIL), she received capacity-building training and start-up kits and she is now a beekeeper and member of a women cooperative in her village.

Beekeeping is a promising example of green jobs and an excellent choice to create youth employment opportunities in remote communities, particularly mountain communities with very little land available. Moreover, the low start-up costs required to begin a beekeeping operation and very little land and time required - if performed at a small or medium-sized scale – make it an ideal path for youth employment creation. In fact, these represent two of the key elements attracting young people and facilitate the launch of a new business. Hasna’s bees are contributing to the provision of pollination services that increase crop yields by up to 30 per cent. That means more productive agriculture without tilling more land or adding more inputs. Beekeeping also offers huge potential for reducing negative environmental impact and can therefore be engines for environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable enterprises and economies