

South-South Series:

Empowering and Growing Women-led Business



Session n°10:

Food security in the face of climate disasters: women entrepreneurs leading solutions

Wednesday 21 October 2026 - 14:00-15:45 UTC

BIODATA OF PANELISTS

Inês Bastos – Head of Networks and Alliances, COLEAD



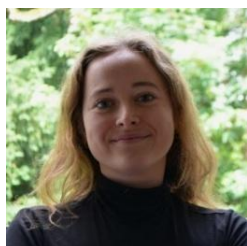
Inês Bastos is Head of Networks & Alliances at COLEAD, bringing over two decades of expertise across technical assistance, monitoring, network management, and policy development, with a deep specialisation in agri-food sector development. Since joining COLEAD, Inês has led and coordinated technical activities across Sub-Saharan Africa, overseeing programs and projects spanning agri-food production and processing, business management, access to finance, and network development. In 2024, she took on the role of COLEAD's Gender lead, driving women's empowerment across the organisation's programs.

Angela Davis – Programme Specialist, UN Women Caribbean



Angela Davis is a regionally respected development professional with over 20 years of experience in public health, sexual and reproductive health, international health, and development. She has extensive expertise in managing national and donor-funded programs, particularly in maternal and child health, HIV/AIDS, gender, and sexual and gender-based violence. For the past eleven years, she has provided strategic leadership and program oversight for a leading international development partner, managing a regional portfolio of approximately US\$6 million annually. Her work involves close collaboration with governments, donors, multilateral organizations, and civil society partners. Known for her strategic thinking and results-oriented approach, Angela consistently translates evidence into impactful, equity-focused programs.

Nina Desanlis-Perrin – External consultant, COLEAD



Nina Desanlis-Perrin is an external consultant for COLEAD, providing project coordination and partnership support within the Networks and Alliances Department. She contributes to initiatives supporting entrepreneurship development and sustainability in the agrifood sector across the Global South, with a focus on international and regional partnerships. She also supports the organisation of agrifood webinars showcasing innovations from farmer-led businesses and SMEs, in collaboration with international partners such as UN Women. Nina holds an MSc in Environmental Science for Sustainability from King's College London, and a BSc in Public Administration from Erasmus University Rotterdam. She is an advocate for sustainable development, international cooperation, and climate justice.

Lizra Fabien – Technical Advisor, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, Dominica



Lizra Fabien is devoted to private sector development and disaster resilience, with over a decade of experience strengthening businesses and institutions across the Caribbean. She currently serves as a Technical Advisor with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), supporting business continuity and private sector resilience initiatives in the region. Lizra has held regional leadership roles within the private sector, including as Executive Director of the Dominica Association of Industry and Commerce, and first Chair of the Network of Caribbean Chambers of Commerce (CARICHAM). Lizra continues to work closely with chambers, MSMEs, and international partners to drive sustainable development and resilience. Through her work, Lizra champions bold leadership, collaboration, and women's and youth economic empowerment to shape resilient and thriving societies.

Jacqueline Joyreen Banda – Chief Visionary Officer, Jeyie Foods Company, Malawi



Jacqueline Joyreen Banda is a Malawian entrepreneur and Chief Visionary Officer of Jeyie Foods Company Ltd, a youth-led agrifood enterprise transforming local produce into value-added products while creating opportunities for smallholder farmers, particularly women and young people. Under her leadership, Jeyie Foods produces chili sauce, nutritious maize-and-soya porridge flour, peanut butter, and vinegar, employs 12 full-time staff, and works with over 400 contracted smallholder chili farmers. Jacqueline is a 2024 Mandela Washington Fellow, a Leading African Women in Food Fellow, and a World Food Forum Youth Representative for Malawi. In 2026, she joined the World Customs Organization's Private Sector Consultative Group. Passionate about inclusive agribusiness, Jacqueline aims to expand Jeyie Foods beyond Malawi, strengthen regional agricultural trade, and promote value addition, food security, and shared prosperity for farming communities.

Keithlin Caroo-Afrifa – Founder and Executive Director, Helen's Daughters, Saint Lucia



Keithlin Caroo-Afrifa is a Saint Lucian social entrepreneur and Founder and Executive Director of Helen's Daughters, a women-led organization advancing the economic empowerment of women in agriculture across the Caribbean. Raised in a farming community in Saint Lucia, Keithlin was inspired by women farmers, including her grandmother, whose contributions were often overlooked. This shaped her commitment to recognizing rural women as farmers, entrepreneurs, and leaders. After working in international development, including at the United Nations in New York, Keithlin founded Helen's Daughters, which now operates across five Caribbean countries, supporting thousands of women through agricultural training, entrepreneurship, market access, climate resilience, and leadership development. An IICA Goodwill Ambassador and Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE), Keithlin champions gender equality, food security, and resilient rural livelihoods.

Rebecca Akullu – Founder and CEO, NEWA Farms, Uganda



Rebecca Akullu is the Founder and CEO of NEWA Farms Limited, a mixed farm in Uganda specializing in beekeeping, coffee, bananas, and value-added bee products, including cosmetics. She also founded the NENWA Initiative, which equips women entrepreneurs with practical skills and supports small business development. An experienced business mentor and growth expert, Rebecca has supported SME development, resource mobilization, and entrepreneurship through several international programmes and fellowships. Her expertise includes regenerative agriculture, climate change adaptation and mitigation, sustainable agribusiness, and agricultural value addition. Through her work, she promotes women's economic empowerment, environmental sustainability, and resilient agricultural businesses.

This publication has been developed by COLEAD within the framework of the FFM Africa 2030 programme ("FFM Africa"), funded by the European Union under the NDICI–Global Europe instrument. Its content is the sole responsibility of COLEAD and does not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.