



# MICHIGAN FELLOWS AGRIBUSINESS INITIATIVE

A nexus of Agri-Innovations across Africa

# PROFILE





# About us



---

MFAI started as a professional network of alumni of the U.S DoS exchange program at Michigan State University (MSU) in 2018. The MSU fellowship was pivotal to connect professional fellows from East Africa and upon return from the United States, the Ugandan fellows registered MFAI as a Not-for-profit organization. Since 2018, the organization has grown as more fellows from subsequent cohorts join and also recruit young professionals across Africa. We have managed to build codes of friendships and professional relationships among young professionals across the continent who continue to make remarkable progress as leaders in their communities.

## We Inspire

Our work focuses on creating a lasting impact. We use innovative pedagogies such as cultural tours, sports, Minds on the Move Ignite visits, music, art for change in our programs and share our U.S experiences to ignite hope, positive thinking, and action among young people in Uganda.

We know from our research, practical experiences and learning that for women to overcome barriers and realize their dreams, they need equitable opportunities, capacity building programs that ignite potential to lead, access and effectively manage finances in a friendly ecosystem.

MFAI has managed to positively use this evidence to provide transformative capacity-building programs such as the AgAP, the DEI in leadership and training project & Ecourse4, provides start-up agribusiness finance through the SACCO, and collaborate with several landmark organizations to create women and youth-friendly ecosystem that ensure that everyone can realize his or her dreams.

---

# Projects & Programs



## Agribusiness Apprenticeship Program (AgAP)

Our programs are directly responsive to addressing dire life challenges. We prioritize the interests, needs, and views of women and youth. We recognize that these groups are often marginalized, excluded from key decision-making processes, disproportionately affected by socio-economic inequality, and have limited opportunities for decent employment which renders them susceptible to poverty, disease, and abuse.

The AgAP is our flagship program where we train, mentor and inspire mid-career professionals from all over East Africa. The program is a cohort-based residential training that allows selected fellows to travel, study and connect. We use experiential techniques along with a data-driven curriculum that allows fellows to pitch their ideas, refine their projects, and seek funding for their businesses. The AgAP is a weeklong training consisting of intense in-class sessions that feature practical tutorials from the U.S DoS exchange alumni who can say their experiences in the U.S and how they have used it to create impact, local experts and International speakers, and tutors from Michigan, field tour including farm visits, cultural site visits, minds on the move-ignite talks where the fellows meet up-close with influential persons in Business, Law, Sport, Art, and Charity. The AgAP ends with a commencement day where fellows connect with members of the media, investment community, and researchers to pitch their ideas. Ultimately receiving a certificate of acquired skills and enrolling in the mentorship class. Since its inception in 2020 at the American Center, we have trained 30 young people across 3 cohorts.

## Ecourse4



Ecourse4 is an online professional technical and soft skills training for emerging community leaders between 18-28 years old in Uganda. Ecourse4 adopts a learning curriculum on 4 major thematic areas: leadership, project management, civic participation, and fundraising across 4 cohorts. The training is administered with our partners at Michigan State University (MSU) Alliance for African Partnerships (AAP), Makerere University (MaK) and experts from the private sector and Civil Society in Uganda. Each cohort adopts a competitive application process, and upon selection, the fellows are required to spend a total of 40 hours of study for 1 month. The training is administered on the MSU\_AAP Bridge platform that allows fellows to connect with wider professionals from MSU and the AAP consortium partners. Ecourse4 reaches a total of 200 young people, majority women across 4 cohorts in 4 districts of Kampala, Wakiso, Gulu and Dokolo in Uganda.



## Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) in Leadership and Training

We partner with Makerere University and Michigan State University to undertake a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) in Leadership and Training project for senior administrators/unit managers including principals, deans, and directors, faculty staff members including lecturers and extension workers and youth leaders. The DEI is a Global North-South collaborative project that promotes DEI through Institutional transformative workshops.



The key objective of the DEI project is to increase the representation of categories of people that have typically been marginalized from leadership and decision-making processes in these institutions. These include women, Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), People Living with HIV/AIDs (PL-HIV/AIDs), and youth from low income earning families. The workshops involve dialogue, discussions, expert presentations, and group work. The main topics that are covered in the workshops include: (i) Defining Diversity and Inclusion and how they manifest in different contexts (ii) Understanding conscious and unconscious biases in recruiting, training, and engagement (iii) Benefits of an inclusive culture (iv) Cultivating and nurturing diverse and inclusive environments. Additional topics will be added to the training program for specific target groups as deemed necessary.

## SACCO

The SACCO is a financial support initiative that seeks to use data-driven, innovative finance solutions to inform the design and use of finance to address some of the agricultural financing challenges. We make investment capital readily available to last-mile agribusiness projects on a rotational basis to support businesses involving value addition to crop farming, animal husbandries and agribusiness literacy materials such as tool kits, and practical guides to farmers among others. Our SACCO vision is to create innovative financial solutions for young Agri-entrepreneurs which reinforces our vision to become a Nexus of agribusiness innovation across Africa.

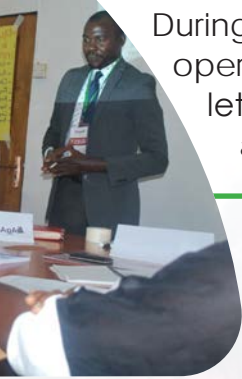
Our SACCO services include; saving opportunities that accord members the opportunity to collectively pool resources, save and benefit from their savings through access to Credit services that allow members to invest in their businesses, and do market scale-ups. We conduct a short online Financial Management literacy program (FMLP) for our members to build the capacity to effectively manage finances, record and account for funds and make data-driven financial decisions. In so doing we create innovative Investment pathways for emerging agribusinesses to survive and thrive.



# Internships

We offer quarterly internships for students from our partner academic institutions as part of our mandate. Our internships are unique in that we prioritize the profession and career needs of each individual and our team works together with the intern to design an experiential program that lasts 2 months. Our internship program allows students to learn first hand how to design community programs, write competitive resumes, reports, network, build collaborations and seek out professional and career opportunities early.

Our interns have the opportunity to meaningfully participate in our running projects as peer educators, volunteers and communication persons. We incorporate job shadowing which allows the interns to role play as managers, field communication officers, and junior staff. During the internship, each intern is attached to a mentor who guides the intern in administrative, operational and communication functions. At the end of the internship program we award a letter of reference to the intern, a certificate of completion and support the intern to write their academic report.



## International Internship Program in Leadership (IIPL)

In 2023 we will open our doors to starting our International Internship Program in Leadership (IIPL) that will allow scholars, researchers and academics from our international academic partners to travel to Uganda and conduct their research, practice at our offices in Kampala. The IIPL is a multi-disciplinary program that allows international interns to learn real-world skills, gain multicultural professional proficiency, and immerse themselves in community programs that increase their ability to work in diverse environments.



# Internship Program

Our internship rounds are from January to March\_June to August each year. We adopt a fairly competitive recruitment process for the internship program due to the limitedness of intern positions. We are interested in reaching and working with young professionals who need the experience the most and have limited opportunities to practically refine their knowledge and skills.

Interested persons can submit their Expression of Interest (EOI) to [intern@mfa-ug.com](mailto:intern@mfa-ug.com) once the solicitation message is published. Shortlisted applicants are required to attend a physical interview.



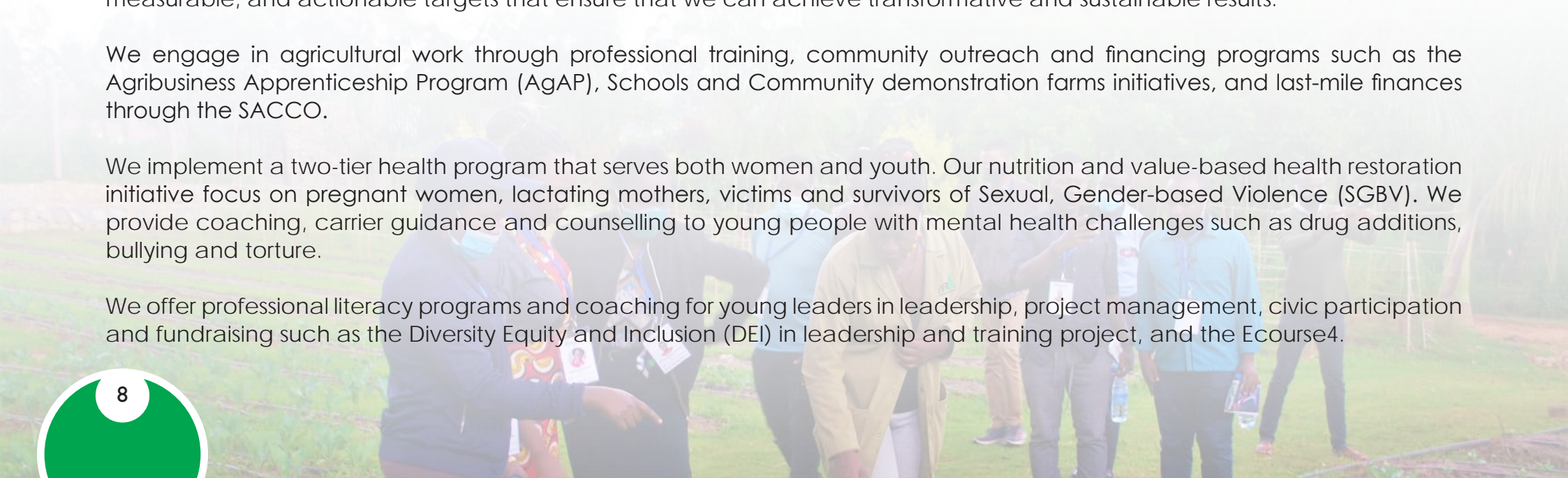
## Social Impact

Our overarching goal is to reach and serve people who are impoverished and survive on less than a dollar a day, especially women and youth as end beneficiaries. We adopt a Gender Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) approach that views women and youth as equal partners and places them at the forefront of solving life challenges. We offer essential technical and soft skills that enable women to earn a decent income, best manage their finances, and provide for their families. We set realistic, measurable, and actionable targets that ensure that we can achieve transformative and sustainable results.

We engage in agricultural work through professional training, community outreach and financing programs such as the Agribusiness Apprenticeship Program (AgAP), Schools and Community demonstration farms initiatives, and last-mile finances through the SACCO.

We implement a two-tier health program that serves both women and youth. Our nutrition and value-based health restoration initiative focus on pregnant women, lactating mothers, victims and survivors of Sexual, Gender-based Violence (SGBV). We provide coaching, carrier guidance and counselling to young people with mental health challenges such as drug additions, bullying and torture.

We offer professional literacy programs and coaching for young leaders in leadership, project management, civic participation and fundraising such as the Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) in leadership and training project, and the Ecourse4.





# Vision

A nexus of agri-innovations across Africa.

# Mission

To advance innovative problem-solving interventions that intentionally address life challenges for women and youth within the agriculture, health and education sectors.

# Our Values

**Accountability:** we deliver on our commitments and are loyal to our partners

**Bold ideas:** we encourage individual creativity for shared growth.

**Collegiality:** We are concerned about the needs of our colleagues as our own.

**Discipline:** charity begins at home and illuminates our journey to success.

**Thought leadership:** we believe leaders need to make thought-through decisions and take full responsibility for actions.





## Our Work

Nearly 200 emerging leaders, managers, entrepreneurs join our organization every year as interns, apprentices, fellows, volunteers, and mentors to leverage our capacity to deliver as a lead organization in life-transforming initiatives. We are a woman and youth-centered organization that focuses on addressing some of the dire life challenges.

We are a learning organization with a human-centered approach that allows young professionals to freely join our organization to learn, collaborate, and connect. We value Accountability, Bold ideas, Collegiality, discipline, and thought leadership. Our partners include U.S Missions Uganda, Michigan State University (MSU), Alliance for African Partnerships (AAP), African Studies Center (ASC), Makerere University (MaK), St Lawrence University (SLAU), Grassroot Strategies Africa (GSA).

MFAI has built a strong professional network of multi-disciplinary professionals across 21 districts in Uganda. We take pride in our mutually beneficial collaborations with landmark institutions and strong bonds with the people of the United States (U.S).



## Objectives

---

- Share U.S exchange experiences, and amplify common values, norms and practices in work and service.
- Encourage bold ideas and solutions that address life challenges through professional training programs.
- Build synergies with academic institutions to advance evidence-based solutions that challenge systemic barriers to meaningful women and youth participation and equal benefit in agriculture, health and education.
- Contribute to Civil Society Organizations and the Private sector existing socio-economic efforts by way of innovative programs that amplify diverse, equitable and inclusive opportunities for all.

# Our Team

A professional and dedicated team



**Oliver Nabiryo**  
Co-Director



**Dorcus Alowo**  
Co-Director R&D



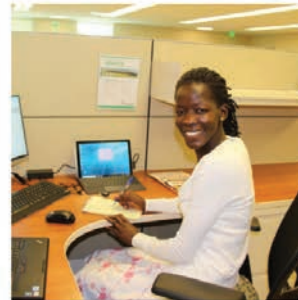
**Musiima Raymond**  
Co-Director Programs



**Samuel Kiggundu**  
Co-Director Business



**Marion Namusoke**  
Co-Director Finance



**Eudine Awuzu**  
Asst. Director Finance



**Martha Mukisa**  
Ass. Co-Director ICT



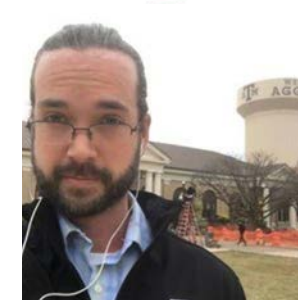
**Harriet Penrod Apili**  
Co-Director ICT



**Atimango Kevin**  
Team Member



**Kakungulu Brenda Asasira**  
Programs Administrator



**Derek H Tobias**  
Advisor



**Piloya Innocent**  
Co- Director Partnerships



## Contact Us

Plot 70 Bukoto street  
P.O.Box 2526 Kampala (U)  
[info@mfa-ug.com](mailto:info@mfa-ug.com)  
+256-392 146 400  
+256-772-842-205

