

Contributor Biographies (Draft)

Dr Anitha Seetha, ICRISAT

Anitha Seetha started her career in the field of food safety and nutrition with the focus on science based innovations by integrating health, agriculture and nutrition technologies to reduce malnutrition, especially for the most vulnerable group of first 1000 days including pregnant women, and children under 2 years. She received the promising young scientist award for her contribution in the field of food safety. She has a multiple disciplinary educational background encompassing Bachelor's and Master's in biochemistry, Master's in dietetics and food service management (DFSM) and a PhD in food science and working experience of more than 7 years in Malawi, Tanzania, Myanmar and India.



Dr Carla Cerami, MRC Unit The Gambia

Carla Cerami is a research scientist at the MRC Gambia. She is also an active member of the Hecpidin in Global Health consortium. She earned both her MD and PhD from the New York University School of Medicine. Her commitment to Global Health began in earnest during her dissertation work on the circumsporozoite protein of the sporozoite form of the malaria parasite with Dr. Victor Nussenzweig. She subsequently became one of the founders of The Kenneth S. Warren Institute, a non-profit research Institute dedicated to translational global health research and then founded Warren Pharmaceuticals in order to commercially develop the discoveries made at The Warren Institute.



Dr Gizaw Desta, ICRISAT Ethiopia

Gizaw Desta is Research Coordinator on Integrated Watershed Management at ICRISAT, Ethiopia. He obtained his PhD in Agriculture specialized in Land and Water Management Engineering from University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna, Austria in October 2009. He has attained his MSc (2003) in Soil and Water Conservation Engineering and BSc in Agricultural Engineering from Alemaya University in 1994. His research interests include soil and water conservation, watershed management, soil erosion processes, hydrology and sedimentation, landscape restoration and management, water harvesting, irrigation, water resources management and sustainability assessment of agro-ecosystems.



Helen Walle, Bahir Dar University

Helen Walle is a PhD student in Bahir Dar Institutes of technology, faculty of chemical and food engineering. Currently, she is working her PhD in collaboration with MillNETi: Millets and nutritional enhancement traits for iron bioavailability/bioaccessibility. Specifically, her research focuses on bioavailability and bioaccessibility of iron during traditional processing of local finger millet. Helen studied her BSc in Food Technology and Food Process Engineering at Bahir Dar University, Ethiopia and completed her MSc in Food Technology from the same university. Since her graduation in 2012, Helen has been working as assistant lecturer and lecturer in the department of Food engineering.



Dr Hirut Assaye Cherie, Bahir Dar University

Hirut Assaye Cherie is an Assistant Professor of Food Science and Nutrition at the Department of Applied Human Nutrition, Bahir Dar University (BDU). She has been working at BDU in various capacities, and previously as a graduate assistant and lecturer. She is a member of the post-harvest and food processing work stream the BDU-IUC programme and is a Co-PI of the “Response of Eragrostis tef to Zn fertilization and its ability to increase grain Zn content” project funded by the Cambridge-Africa ALBORADA Research Fund. She also consults on food and nutrition in Ethiopia. Her research focuses on food composition analysis, food processing, human nutrition, and food microbiology.



Professor Howard Griffiths, University of Cambridge Plant Sciences

Howard Griffiths is Professor of Plant Ecology in the Department of Plant Sciences at the University of Cambridge. A Fellow of Clare College, he serves as Co-Chair of Cambridge Global Food Security Interdisciplinary Research Centre and with the Strategic Advisory Group for the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF), as well as the advisor to the Vice Chancellor on the University’s strategic relationship with India. Howard is the Principal Investigator for TIGR²ESS and MillNET_i, research projects that are investigating challenges relating to sustainable agriculture and food security in India, Ethiopia and The Gambia.



Joanna Kane-Potaka (Smart Foods, ICRISAT)

Joanna Kane-Potaka began her career as an agricultural economist and later moved into market research in agribusiness. Since then, she has worked in a wide variety of marketing-related areas including strategic marketing, communications, fundraising, knowledge management, and uptake of scientific research. She has worked for government, private industry (manufacturing and consulting) and with non-profit organizations (four CGIAR agricultural research centres) in India, Sri Lanka, Italy, Malaysia, Philippines and Australia. She has 30 years’ professional experience. She has a Bachelor’s degree in Economics, Graduate Diploma of Management, Professional Post Graduate Diploma in Marketing and Master of Science.



Dr Lara Allen, Centre for Global Equality

Lara Allen is CEO of the Centre for Global Equality, a UK-based civil society organisation that evolves innovative solutions to global challenges. She also leads the Inclusive Innovation Programme at the Department of Chemical Engineering and Biotechnology, University of Cambridge. As head of the Centre for Global Equality she has led the evolution of the organisation’s approach to Inclusive Innovation – innovation for, with and by the rising billions. This approach is premised on facilitating co-creation between researchers, innovators and end-users in low-resource communities, along with productive collaborations between key actors in academia, civil society, government and business to ensure that innovations are context-appropriate and are diffused and scaled effectively.



Dr Lydia Smith, NIAB Innovation Farm

Lydia Smith joined NIAB in 1997 and initially managed the expansion of research across NIAB groups. She established and ran the Novel and Non-Food Crops area, which remains an important part of NIAB's work. With a BSc. in Botany from the University of Sheffield, an MSc, from Reading University and a PhD from the University of East London. She spent postdoctoral periods at UEA and Luton University, with periods lecturing in soil/environmental science at the University of Luton and in reclamation science on M.Sc. courses at the University of East London. A plant ecologist by training, especially soil-plant microbial interactions and reclamation of land to agricultural use, Dr Smith has extensive experience in the application of ecological principles to the farming environment.



Dr Minaleshewa Atlabachew, Bahir Dar University

Minaleshewa Atlabachew is Associate Professor of Analytical Chemistry at Bahir Dar University. He is also Head of the Central Laboratories Management Unit of the Blue Nile Water Institute and the Department of Chemistry. He has contributed several analytical methodologies for characterization of bioactive compounds from natural products, synthesized materials for water treatment technologies to remove bacteria, heavy metals and organic substances. He is a member of the Royal Society of Chemistry, UK, under the 'Future Leader in the Field' scheme. He has been recognized for his Analytical Chemistry Training Partnership with Pan African Chemistry network (PACN) through the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) and sponsored by GlaxoSmithKline (GSK).



Dr M Govindaraj, ICRASAT

M Govindaraj is Senior Scientist (Sorghum Breeding), Crop Improvement Theme, Research Program-Asia, at ICRISAT, and is based in Hyderabad, India. With a PhD from the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), in Plant Breeding and Genetics, Dr Govindaraj works on the development and dissemination of diverse breeding lines and hybrid parents in pearl millet. He also leads the HarvestPlus-supported pearl millet biofortification research and development program at ICRISAT. This program mainly focuses on developing high-iron/zinc pearl millet hybrid parents, and hybrids for high-iron pearl millet cultivar development. His team efforts led to the landmark release of a high-iron variety (Dhanashakti), and the first three iron biofortified pearl millet hybrids (ICMH 1202, ICMH 1203 and ICMH 1301).



Dr Mohamad Farshard Aslam, King's College London

Mohamad Farshard Aslam is Postdoctoral Research Associate in the Department of Diabetes. Mohamad is an experienced Postdoctoral Research Associate. Skilled in Real-Time Polymerase Chain Reaction (qPCR), Life Sciences, Data Analysis, Confocal Microscopy, and Microscopy. Strong research professional with a PhD focused on Biological Science from the University of Cambridge.



Dr Richard Sidebottom, University of Cambridge Development Studies PDRA

Richard Sidebottom is an Affiliated Lecturer at the Centre of Development Studies. His current research focus is on agricultural value chains (millets and cotton), rural entrepreneurship and capacity building including work for the GCRF funded Cambridge University wide TIGR2ESS project (Transforming India's Green Revolution by Research and Empowerment for Sustainable food Supplies). Richard holds academic qualifications from Cambridge, London Business School and the University of Oxford and has over 20 years' experience in financial markets.



Dr Sarah Dalzell, University of Cambridge

Sarah Dalzell is a Research Associate in the Department of Land Economy and visiting researcher at the MRC Epidemiology Unit. She completed her PhD and first postdoc in the MRC Nutrition and Bone Health Research Group (NBH) in Cambridge and the Calcium, Vitamin D and Bone Health research team at MRC Unit The Gambia (2013-2020). She has specific expertise on the impact of rural-urban migration on food, nutrition and health with experience conducting nutrition research in rural and urban settings in The Gambia, West Africa. Her research interests include understanding dietary and lifestyle transition in rural and urban contexts, as well linkages between the two.



Dr Shailaja Fennell, University of Cambridge Development Studies

Shailaja Fennell is a Co-I on MillNETi and her work stream focuses on the use of quantitative and qualitative surveys to understand how millets are currently grown, processed, cooked, and consumed in focus villages in The Gambia and Ethiopia. She is also Co-I on TIGR2ESS, a research programme to study how to improve crop productivity and water use, identify appropriate crops and farming practices for sustainable rural development, with funding of £7.8 million from the Global Challenges Fund of RCUK.



Professor Srijit Mishra, IGIDR

Srijit Mishra researches and teaches on development-related issues that intertwine between social philosophy, analytical measurement, and applied development. He has been instrumental in spearheading the Odisha Millets Mission that brought together the Government, civil society and the Academia for a pro-people action research initiative that works in four verticals - production, processing, marketing and consumption. His work on cyclone Fani dealt with macroeconomic and human impact that has important methodological and policy implications. His work on farmers' suicides in Maharashtra led to the setting-up of Vasantrao Naik Kshetkari Swabhilambhan Mission and other policy outcomes.



Dr Stéphanie Swarbreck, National Institute of Agricultural Botany (NIAB)

Stéphanie Swarbreck joined NIAB in 2019 to develop a research programme in crop molecular physiology. She is interested in understanding how plants integrate and respond to different environmental conditions such as nutrient availability and the presence of neighbours (including weed competitors). Through her research she aims to provide useful information for the development of crop varieties that can produce high yield with lower herbicide and fertiliser inputs.



Tadesse Fenta, Bahir Dar University

Tadesse Fenta is a researcher and lecturer in the Faculty of Chemical and Food Engineering since July 2014 and has experience with a wide range of food industries. He studied for a BSc in Food and Biochemical Technology and an MSc in Food Engineering, along with many other career related training. He is a PhD candidate working on mineral bioavailability of millet based traditional fermented food in Ethiopia and the Gambia with MillNETi project. He has a specific interest in working on food processing and nutritional bioavailability for helping to improve areas of the world that are affected by malnutrition.



Dr Wanjiku Gichohi, ICRISAT Malawi

Wanjiku Gichohi is a public health nutritionist experienced in food, nutrition and health research. She possesses practical experience in engaging in international collaborative efforts towards alleviation of malnutrition. Her passion is in undertaking assignments that impact on the nutrition and health of the vulnerable in society and translate nutrition science to meaningful impact for society and positively influence policy. This includes undertaking research to elucidate nutrition specific and sensitive approaches that work, for whom they work and where they work. Her work over the past four years has revolved around generating evidence on the agriculture to nutrition impact pathway in Sub Saharan Africa.

