



Digital  
Agri Hub

To diversify or not to diversify?

## Debating one of the dilemmas in digital solutions for agriculture

Friday 14 June 2024 | CEST 15:00 – 16:30

### Webinar's Rationale

Digital service providers operating in the agricultural sector often find themselves at a crossroads, faced with the decision of whether to stick to their specialized niche or to diversify their service offerings within agriculture and eventually branch out to other sectors. This strategic choice can significantly impact their market positioning, growth potential and resilience.

Agriculture is a field loaded with unpredictability. Weather conditions, pest outbreaks, and crop husbandry and market fluctuations can drastically affect agricultural returns and, consequently, the demand for digital services tailored to farming. Small-scale producers often lack the means to meet the cost of digital services, unless organised in cooperatives or associations, thus emulating the conditions existing on large-scale farms. By branching out into other sectors, digital service providers can buffer themselves against the sector-specific risks inherent in agriculture. Economic cycles influence different sectors in various ways, so a downturn in agriculture might be counterbalanced by stability or growth in another sector, providing a safeguard against volatility.

Moreover, the technological advancements developed for agriculture—such as remote sensed data analytics, IoT and artificial intelligence - are often versatile and can be repurposed for other sectors like logistics, environmental monitoring, credit scoring, or smart city infrastructure. Often diversification leads to bundling of solutions within the agricultural -, or perhaps between different sectors.

Hosted by the [Digital Agri Hub](#) in partnership with the [College of Agriculture](#), Tennessee State University, USA and [Africa Goes Digital](#) (AfGD), this webinar benefitted from presentations done by **Worlali Senyo**, Country Manager of [Farmerline](#), **Anne Jorun Aas**, CEO of [Farmforce](#), **Hamza Rkha Chaham**, COO of [SOWIT](#) and **Teddy Segore**, CTO and Co-Founder of [Charis UAS](#) who shared their experiences in diversifying their digital service portfolio.

### The Presenters

**Worlali Senyo**, Farmerline Group's Ghana Country Manager, has significantly advanced the company's mission to enhance farmers' profits through innovative solutions. Under his leadership, Farmerline has expanded its services, impacting thousands of farmers with productivity, market access, and financial inclusion tools. The company has achieved notable awards and recognition from Time Magazine, Bloomberg, and the World Economic Forum. With 15+ years of experience in agriculture and ICTs, Worlali shares expertise in mobile technologies for agriculture and rural development, representing Farmerline at high-profile events and showcasing AgriTech's transformative potential in Africa.

**Anne Jorun Aas** is the CEO of Farmforce. She has significant management experience from various positions in companies focusing on sustainability and start-ups, complemented by several board positions and six years at McKinsey and Company. She holds a PhD in nuclear chemistry from the University of Oslo and CERN, Geneva. She has a fascination for rural Africa stemming from a trip she made in her younger days driving from South Africa to Oslo in an old Land Rover.

**Teddy Segore** is the CTO and co-founder of Charis UAS, a leading African 3D geospatial drone data analytics company with a branch in the Ivory Coast. Charis UAS is headquartered in Rwanda. He also performs the roles of lead pilot, UAS instructor, and flight operations manager. With over a decade of UAV flight experience, Teddy is a certified pilot proficient in troubleshooting, maintaining, and repairing multirotors, VTOLs, and fixed wings. He has managed operations across five countries and established significant business relationships.

**Hamza Rkha Chaham** is the co-founder of SOWIT, a start-up providing African farmers with the financing and technology they need to increase their productivity and incomes, face climate change and feed the continent. SOWIT is incorporated in Morocco, France and Senegal and leverages all the power of remote sensing, AI and agronomy to provide farmers with all they need from seed to sale, including financing, insurance, inputs, advisory and market access. SOWIT is a future 40 company, aka one of the 40 most promising start-ups of the Station F ecosystem.

## The Facilitators

**Dr Abdelaziz Lawani** is a full-time Assistant Professor of Agribusiness Management & Entrepreneurship at Tennessee State University. His research interests lie at the intersection of the digital economy and artificial intelligence. He is a Fulbright scholar, Norman Borlaug fellow, and serial social entrepreneur, he is always eager to translate his research into cutting-edge concrete solutions for development. In 2014, he founded Global Partners Sarl, a company that combines drone and satellite imagery with AI to support farmers and develop sustainable solutions to the world's most pressing challenges. He is also a founding member of Africa Goes Digital, a consortium of Africa's enterprises that develop and use digital development solutions. The social impact of his works led him to feature among the 35 under 35 young innovators in francophone countries in 2016 and he is recognised by Pdt. W. J. Bill Clinton is among the CGI honour alumni.

**Giacomo Rambaldi** is an independent consultant in the domains of digitalisation for agriculture and enterprise development. He has 42 years of professional experience in Africa, Latin America, Asia, the Pacific and the Caribbean where he worked for various international organisations including CTA, the ADB, FAO and as a long-term consultant on projects funded by the Italian Aid to Development and the European Commission. At present, he provides D4Ag ecosystem support to the Digital Agri Hub (Wageningen University and Research). He holds an honours MSc in agricultural sciences from the State University of Milan, Italy.

## Webinar recording

Available on YouTube [https://youtu.be/pQ7EjqxL\\_g?feature=shared&t=0s](https://youtu.be/pQ7EjqxL_g?feature=shared&t=0s)

## Presentations



[Click here for all presentations](#)