

# AFRICAN GRADUATE MENTORSHIP AND COACHING PROGRAM (AGMCP)

COHORT 5-2024. <https://imagesinitiatives.org/>

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Memorabilia By

Mentee: **Omar Abdullahi Askalan**

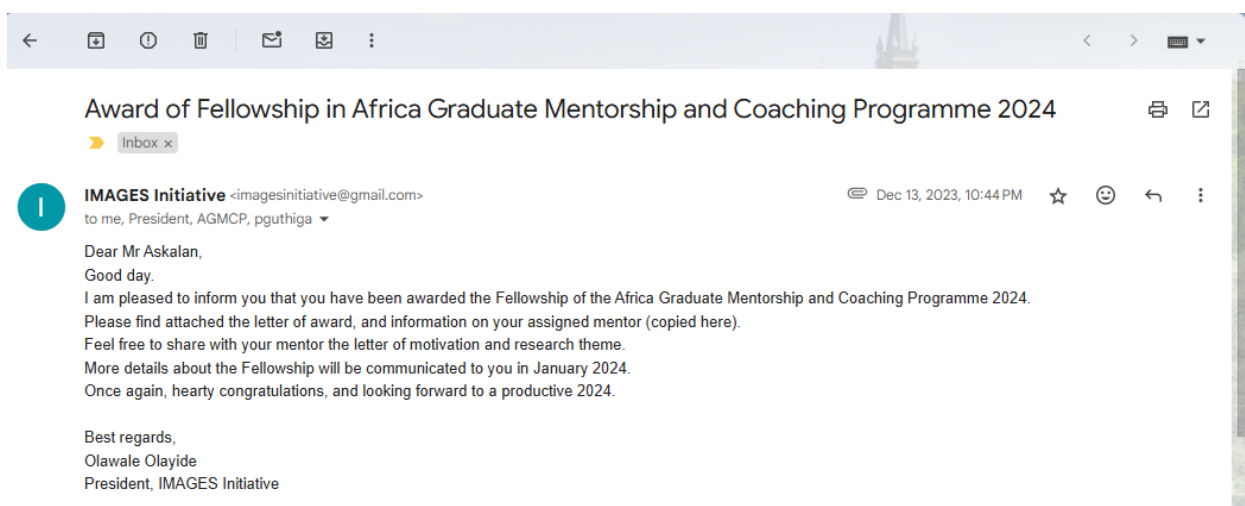
Mentor: **Dr Paul Guthiga.**

President, IMAGES Initiative: **Olawale E. Olayide, Ph.D**

## 1. Introduction

The **Africa Graduate Mentorship and Coaching Programme (AGMCP)** represents a remarkable platform designed to enhance skills and foster communication across African nations while empowering the next generation for a brighter future. By nurturing researchers and scholars who proudly represent Africa on the global stage, the program not only amplifies the continent's intellectual presence but also contributes to the worldwide recognition of African talent and potential. Through initiatives like AGMCP, a new wave of well-rounded professionals is being shaped—individuals who can confidently carry Africa's name with pride and influence, making significant contributions to local and global advancements across diverse fields.

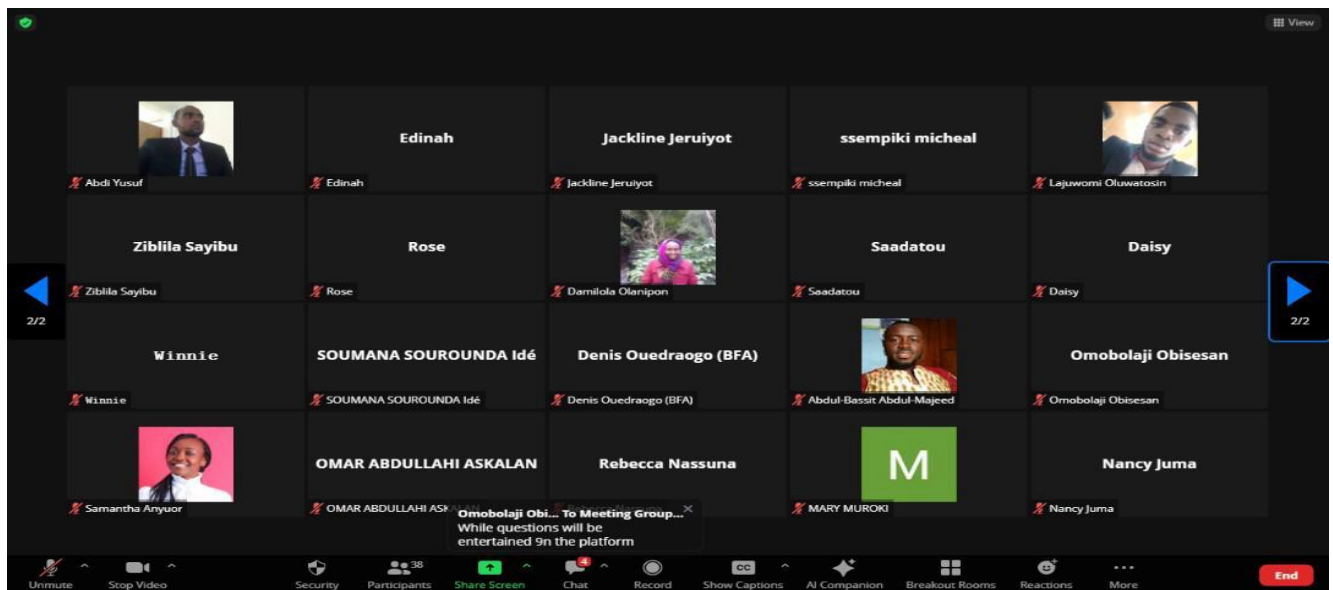
My journey with AGMCP began when I first learned about the program through **RUFORUM Weekly News**. What drew me in was the relevance of the program's research sub-themes, particularly the focus on "**Developing Capacity for Assessing Sustainable African Food Systems**", which aligned perfectly with my interests. Motivated by the program's vision and the opportunity to contribute to sustainable development in Africa, I decided to apply. On **December, 2023**, I received an email announcing my selection as a Fellow in the **Africa Graduate Mentorship and Coaching Programme 2024**, marking the start of an exciting and transformative journey.



## 2. Monthly Modules

### Inception and Goal-setting

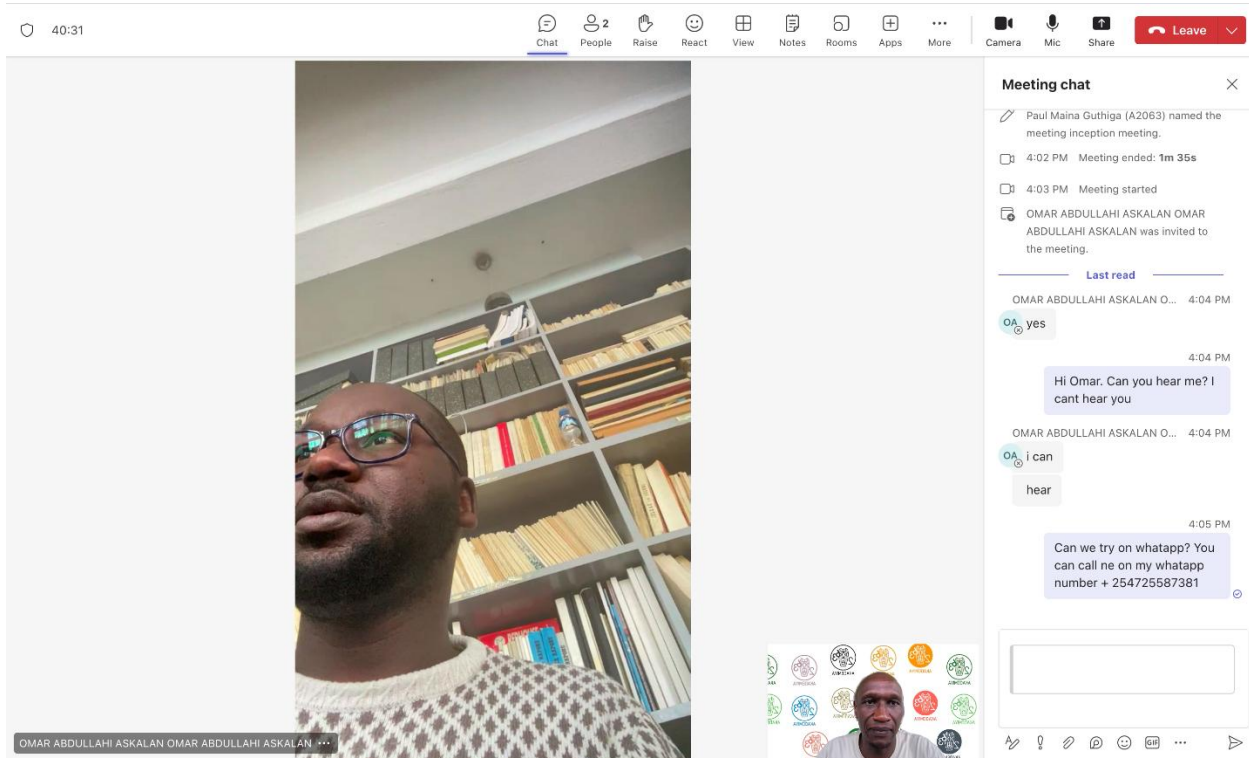
I attended a webinar focused on the program's inception. The session began with a comprehensive general introduction, setting the stage for the objectives and expectations of the initiative. This was followed by a presentation (**President, IMAGES Initiative: Olawale E. Olayide, Ph.D.**) that provided a detailed overview of key aspects of the program, further enhancing our understanding. The webinar also featured an engaging Q&A segment where participants had the opportunity to seek clarifications and share their perspectives, fostering a sense of collaboration and shared purpose. The event concluded on a high note with important announcements and a heartwarming family group photo, symbolizing unity and collective ambition. This moment not only captured the spirit of the program but also solidified our connection as a **COHORT 5-2024**. The experience left me feeling informed, motivated, and excited to embark on the journey ahead with my peers and mentors.



## First meeting with mentor and mentee

I had the privilege of meeting my mentor, **Dr. Paul Guthiga**, for the first time in an engaging hour-long virtual meeting. This initial interaction served as an opportunity for us to introduce ourselves and establish the foundation of our mentoring relationship. **Dr. Guthiga** shared insights about his professional journey and outlined expectations for the program, creating a clear roadmap for our collaborative efforts. The session was interactive and inspiring, allowing me to ask questions about the program's structure and how I could maximize this opportunity to align with my academic and professional goals.

As the meeting concluded, I captured a picture as a keepsake for future reporting and memorabilia. This symbolic gesture marked the beginning of what I anticipate to be a transformative journey under **Dr. Guthiga's** guidance. The session left me with a sense of clarity, motivation, and readiness to tackle the challenges ahead while leveraging his vast expertise and support.



## CAADP, Post-Malabo Processes, And The Food System In Africa.

I attended a webinar that delved into critical topics such as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), post-Malabo processes, and the broader food system in Africa. The session featured insightful presentations by distinguished speakers, **Dr. Augustin Yamdjeu** and **Dr. John Ulimwengu**, who shared their expertise and perspectives on these vital areas. Their discussions highlighted the progress and challenges of Africa's agricultural and food systems, emphasizing strategies for achieving sustainable development.

The screenshot shows a Zoom meeting interface. The main content is a presentation slide titled "Understanding Systems". The slide features a flowchart with the following components:

- Environmental feedbacks** (e.g. water quality, GHGs) at the top, with a dashed arrow pointing to "SOC DRIVERS".
- SOC DRIVERS** (Changes in: Land cover & soils, Atmospheric Comp., Climate variability & trends, Water availability & quality, Nutrient availability & cycling, Biodiversity, Sea currents & salinity, Sea level) in a central circle.
- Natural DRIVERS** (e.g. Volcanoes, Solar cycles) in a circle to the right of the SOC DRIVERS.
- Socioeconomic DRIVERS** (Changes in: Demographics, Economics, Socio-political context, Cultural/Land use, Science & Technology) in a circle at the bottom left.
- DRIVERS interactions** in a central circle, with dashed arrows connecting it to the other driver circles.
- Food System ACTIVITIES** (Producing, Processing & Packaging, Distributing & Retailing, Consuming) in a box to the right of the driver circles.
- Food System OUTCOMES** (Contributing to: Food Security, Environmental Security, and other Societal Interests) in a box at the bottom right.
- Below the outcomes box, there are four overlapping circles: **Food Utilization**, **Food Availability**, **Social Welfare**, and **Food Access**, with **Human Capital** written below them.

The Zoom interface includes a "Leave" button in the top right, a "REC" indicator in the top left, and a bottom toolbar with icons for Unmute, Start Video, Participants (36), Chat, Reactions, Share, Captions, and Whiteboards.

The screenshot shows the Zoom mobile app interface displaying a list of 24 participants. The time is 16:09. The list includes:

- Omar Abdullahi Askalan (me)
- Gboluwaga Olaomo (Host)
- Olawale Olayide (Co-Host)
- John M. Ulimwengu (IFPRI) (Co-Host)
- Winnie (Co-Host)
- A2063 - AUGUSTIN
- Ahmed Abi A. Warsame
- Andrew ALADELE
- AZONGNIDE G. Gwladys
- Beckie
- chefor Daisy
- Fabiola Niyonshuti

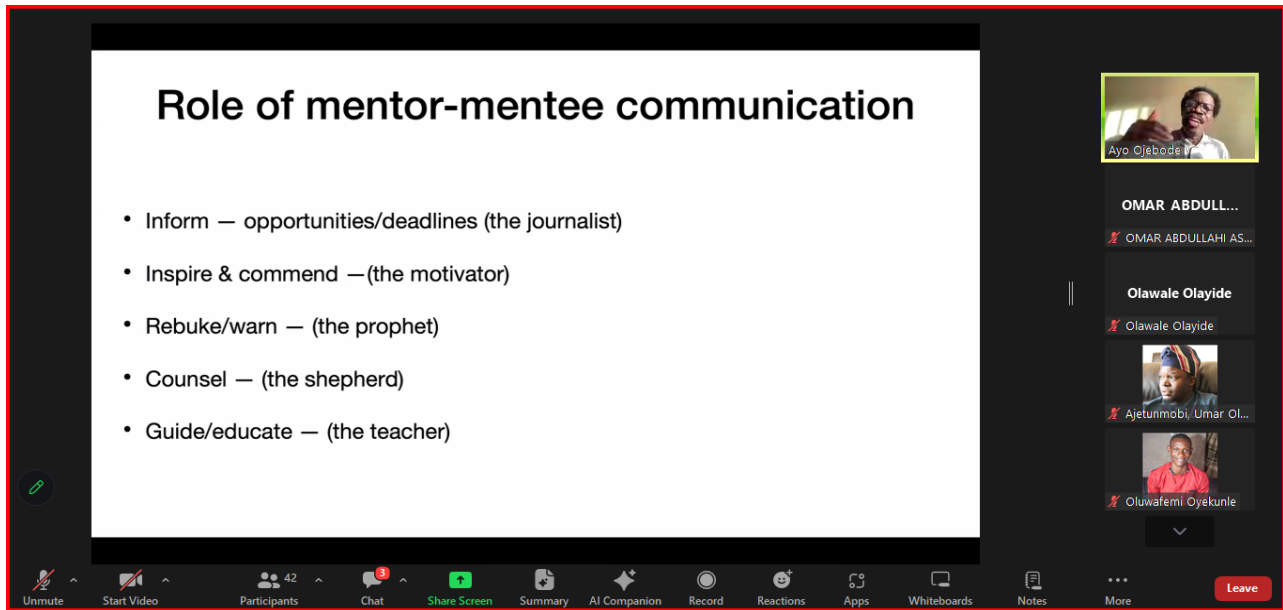
At the bottom, there is an "Invite" button.

The screenshot shows a Zoom meeting grid with 20 participants in a 4x5 layout. The participants are:

- Row 1: AUGUSTIN, Rebecca Adewole, Olawale Olayide, SOUMANA SOUROUNDA Idé, Adebisi Agboola
- Row 2: Esob Yawo DZAKPA, Pearl Agyeum, Saadatou, Winnie, Damilola Itadare
- Row 3: Ahmed Abi A. Warsame, jackline jeruiyot, Jennifer Kago, samantha, Sope Afolayan
- Row 4: AZONGNIDE G. Gwladys, Nancy Juma, Jean Bosco NGARUKIYIMA..., Thelma Ntow, Ruth Nyamgero

## Effective Mentor-Mentee Communication

I participated in a webinar led by **Professor Ayobami Ojebode**, which focused on effective mentor-mentee communication. The session was incredibly insightful, offering practical and skillful strategies to foster meaningful and productive interactions in mentoring relationships. It provided me with valuable tools to enhance communication, build trust, and maximize the benefits of my mentorship experience.

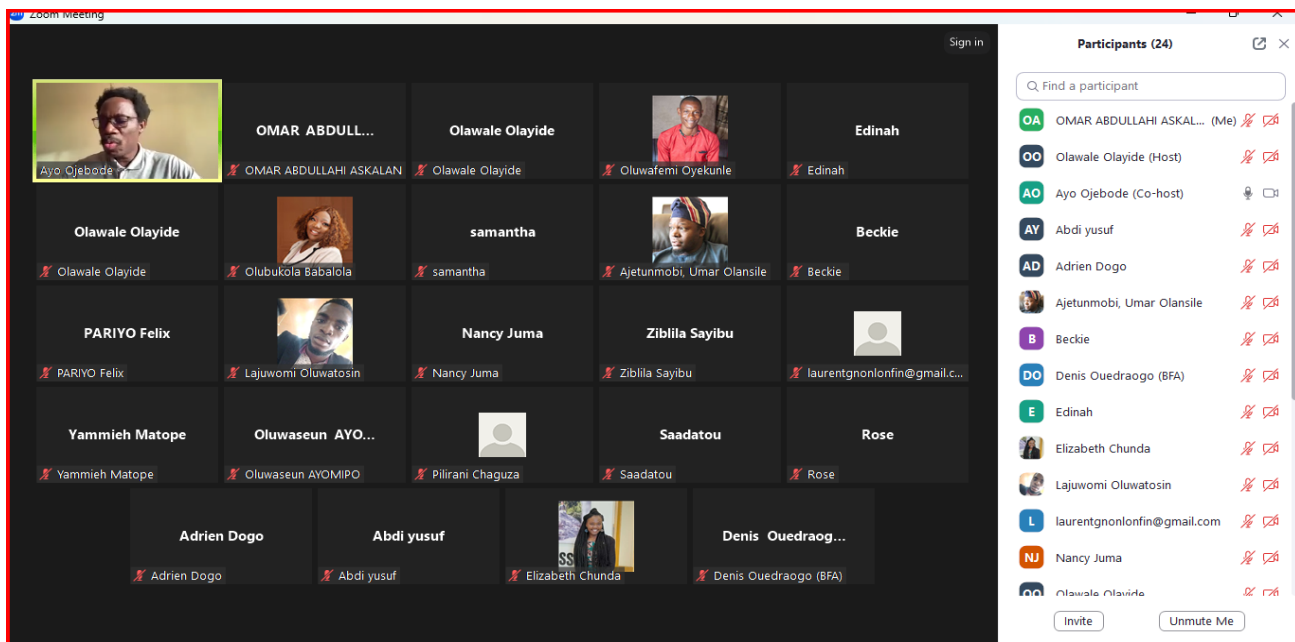


The screenshot shows a Zoom meeting slide with the following content:

### Role of mentor-mentee communication

- Inform — opportunities/deadlines (the journalist)
- Inspire & commend — (the motivator)
- Rebuke/warn — (the prophet)
- Counsel — (the shepherd)
- Guide/educate — (the teacher)

The slide is part of a Zoom meeting interface. On the right side, there is a vertical list of participants: Ayo Ojebode (host), OMAR ABDULL... (OMAR ABDULLAHI AS...), Olawale Olayide, Ajetunmobi, Umar OL..., and Oluwafemi Oyekunle. At the bottom of the slide, there is a Zoom control bar with icons for Unmute, Start Video, Participants (42), Chat (3), Share Screen, Summary, AI Companion, Record, Reactions, Apps, Whiteboards, Notes, More, and a Leave button.



The screenshot shows a Zoom meeting grid with 24 participants. The participants are arranged in a grid of 5 rows and 5 columns, with the last row containing only 4 participants. The participants are:

Ayo Ojebode	OMAR ABDULL...	Olawale Olayide	Oluwafemi Oyekunle	Edinah
Olawale Olayide	Olubukola Babalola	samantha	Ajetunmobi, Umar Olansile	Beckie
PARIYO Felix	Lajuwomi Oluwatosin	Nancy Juma	Zibllila Sayibu	laurentgnonlonfin@gmail.c...
Yammieh Matope	Oluwaseun AYO...	Pilirani Chaguzza	Saadatou	Rose
Adrien Dogo	Abdi yusuf	Elizabeth Chunda	Denis Ouedraog...	

On the right side, there is a 'Participants (24)' list with a search bar and a list of participants with their names and status icons (mute, video off). The participants listed are: OMAR ABDULLAHI ASKALAN (Me), Olawale Olayide (Host), Ayo Ojebode (Co-host), Abdi yusuf, Adrien Dogo, Ajetunmobi, Umar Olansile, Beckie, Denis Ouedraogo (BFA), Edinah, Elizabeth Chunda, Lajuwomi Oluwatosin, laurentgnonlonfin@gmail.com, Nancy Juma, and Olawale Olayide. At the bottom of the list, there are 'Invite' and 'Unmute Me' buttons.

## Short courses/training

I participated in training sessions on **RIMA (Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis)** facilitated by **Joanna Mihaylova** and **Parfait Hodjo**. These sessions were instrumental in deepening my understanding of resilience measurement tools and their application in various contexts. During this time, I also completed the e-learning course "**Understanding RIMA – An Introduction to the Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis**", further solidifying my knowledge and ability to apply the concepts and methodologies effectively in research and practical scenarios.

The screenshot shows a Zoom meeting interface. On the left, a presentation slide is displayed with the following content:

- Logos for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the European Union.
- Slide title: **Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis (RIMA)**
- Slide subtitle: **Introduction to the RIMA methodology and to Shiny RIMA, an innovative tool to facilitate resilience measurement and analysis**
- Text at the bottom: Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis (RIMA) Team, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and the email [FAO-RIMA@fao.org](mailto:FAO-RIMA@fao.org).

On the right side of the Zoom window, a vertical list of participants is visible, including:

- OMAR ABDULLAH ASKALAN
- Joanna Mihaylova (FAO)
- Parfait Hodjo
- Clawale Olayide
- Maranatha Tembo
- Thelma Ntow
- Jean Bosco Ngarukiyimana
- Nancy Juma
- Ntamushigo Yeshua

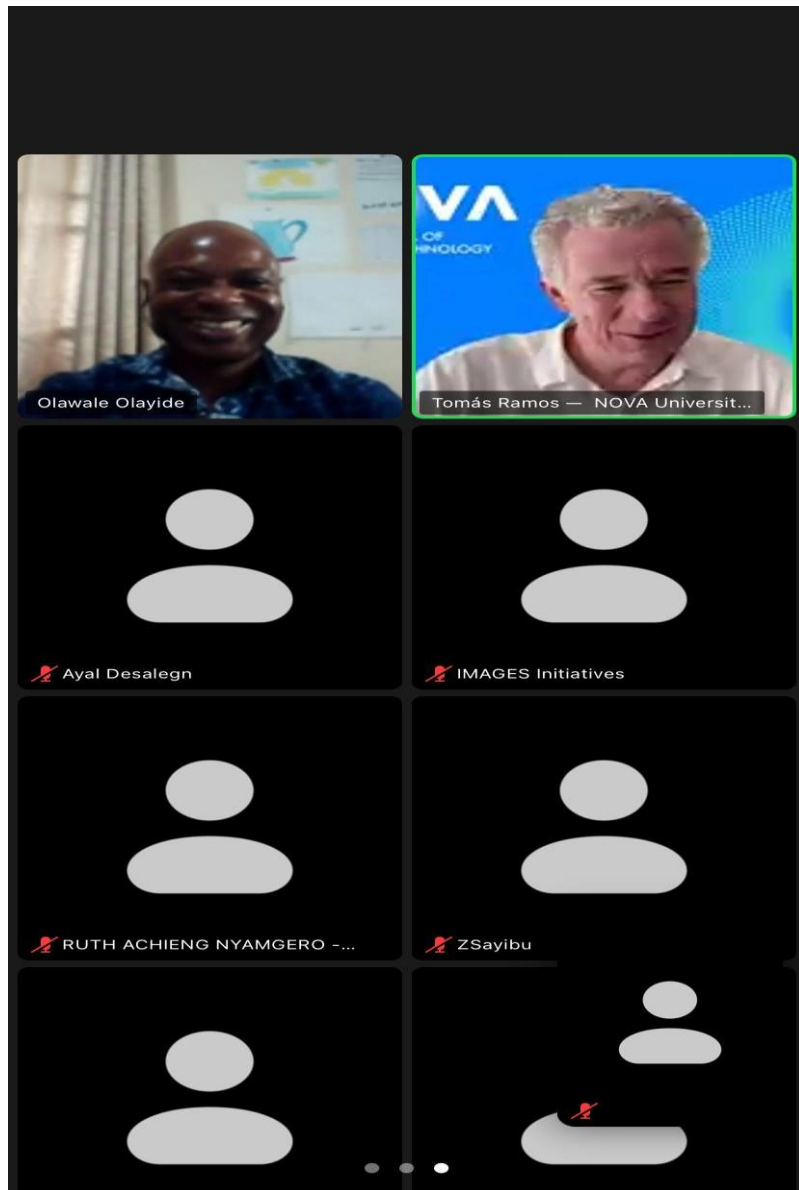
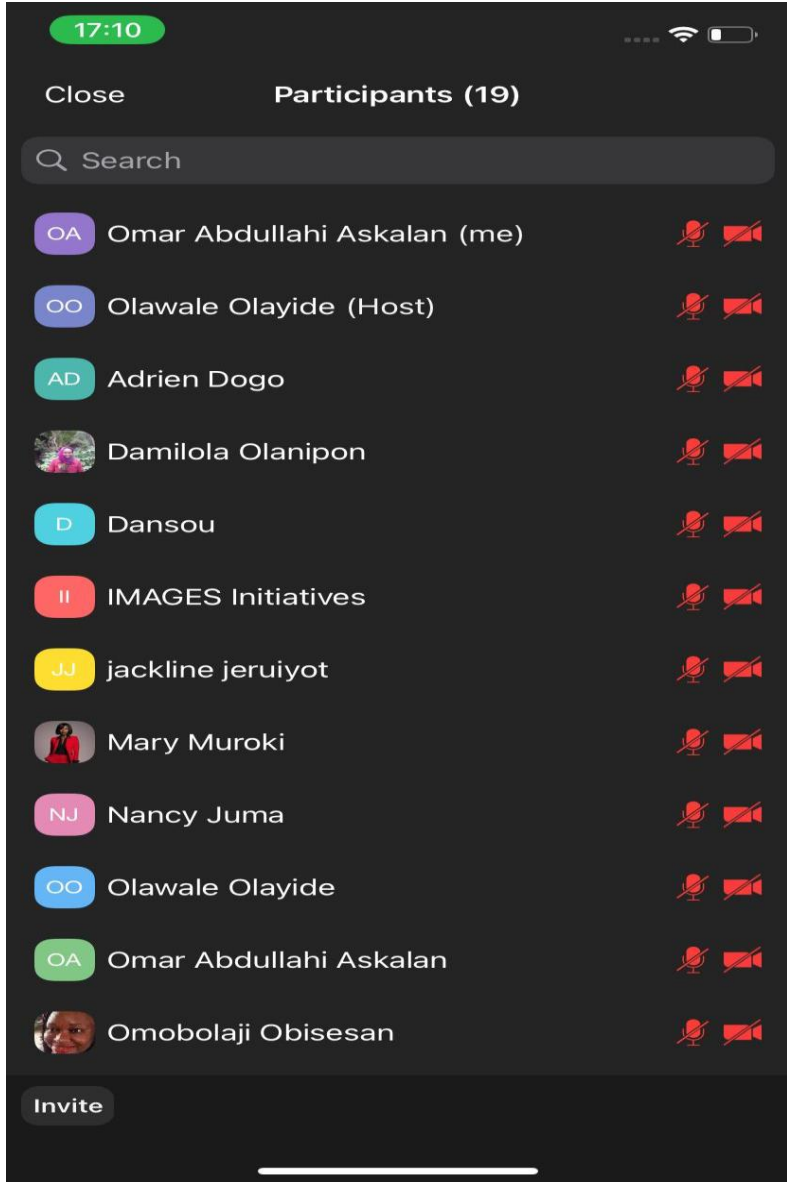
At the bottom of the Zoom window, a toolbar contains various icons for meeting controls: Unmute, Start Video, Participants, Chat, Share Screen, Summary, AI Companion, Record, Show Captions, Reactions, Apps, Notes, and a red 'Leave' button.

This screenshot shows a grid of participant video feeds in a Zoom meeting. The participants visible include:

- Joanna Mihaylova (FAO)
- OMAR ABDULLAH ASKALAN
- Parfait Hodjo
- Clawale Olayide
- Lajuwomi O. Oluwatosi
- Etsé Yawo DZAKPA
- jackine jerujot
- laurentignonlornfi@gmail.com
- Ntamushigo Yeshua
- Jean Bosco Ngarukiyimana
- Thelma Ntow
- AZONGNIDE Gwladys
- Saadatou
- Pearl Agyeikum
- Maranatha Tembo
- Andrew ALADELE
- Nancy Juma
- Rose
- IPIYANA MWANGOMBA

The interface also shows a 'Recording' indicator at the top left and a 'Sign in' button at the top right.

I attended a webinar on **Research Paper Publications and Impacts**, presented by **Professor Tomas Ramos** from the **Centre for Environmental and Sustainability Research, Portugal**. The session offered invaluable insights into the process of publishing impactful research and its role in advancing sustainability and environmental studies.





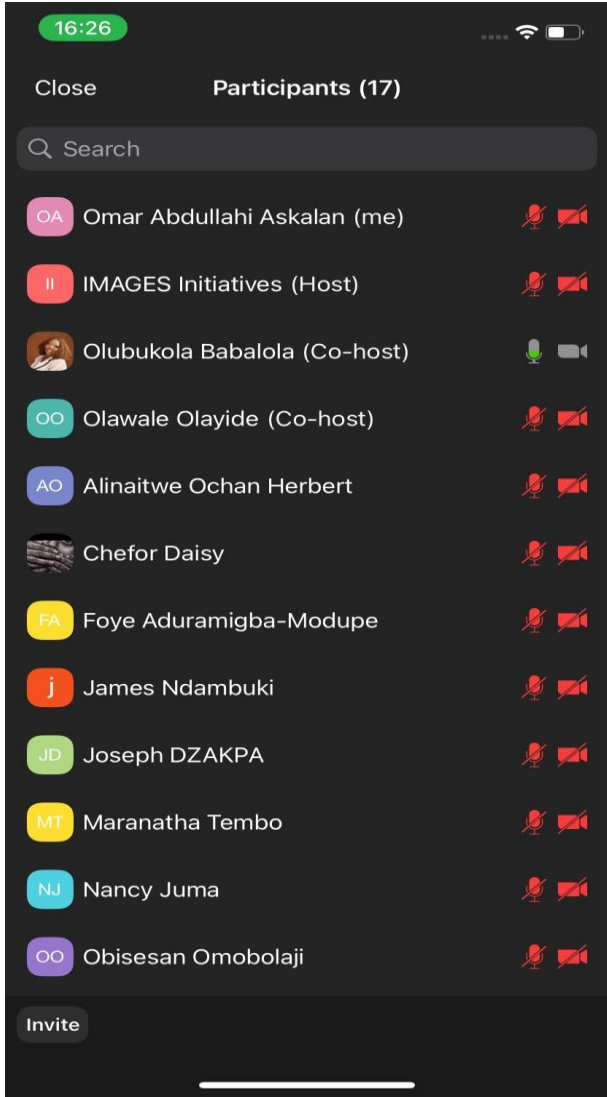
## **Data Analytics**

I participated in a session on **Data Analytics**, facilitated by **Isaac Oritogun**. The training provided valuable knowledge and practical approaches to analyzing data effectively, enhancing my analytical skills for research and professional applications.

The **Hands-on Training on Data Analytics** took place on **21 and 28 September 2024**. This practical training session was designed to enhance data analysis skills, providing participants with valuable tools and techniques for managing and interpreting data effectively.

I participated in a session focused on **Data Visualization**. This session provided essential techniques and tools for effectively presenting data, and enhancing clarity and impact in research and communication.

I attended a webinar centered on **research leadership and work-life balance**, presented by **Professor Olubukola Babalola**. The discussion emphasized strategies for excelling in leadership roles within academia and maintaining a healthy balance between professional and personal life.



The right side of the image shows a webinar presentation. At the top right is a small video feed of a man speaking. The main content includes a list of 10 ways to be an effective leader, a central mind map for 'Effective Leadership', a chalkboard definition of assertiveness, and a photo of a woman holding a sign.

**10 Ways to be an effective leader:**

- 1 be decisive
- 2 take responsibility for your actions
- 3 say **NO** when you need to
- 4 be an attentive listener
- 5 communicate clearly
- 6 say **YES** when you need to
- 7 ask for what you want
- 8 follow your intuition
- 9 feel free to take a chance
- 10 stand up for yourself

**Effective Leadership Mind Map:**

- Learning from failure & successes
- Setting smart Goals
- Communication skills
- Confidence building
- Prioritize & manage time
- Value feedback
- Timely & informed decision making
- Be assertive (not aggressive)

**Assertiveness is ....**

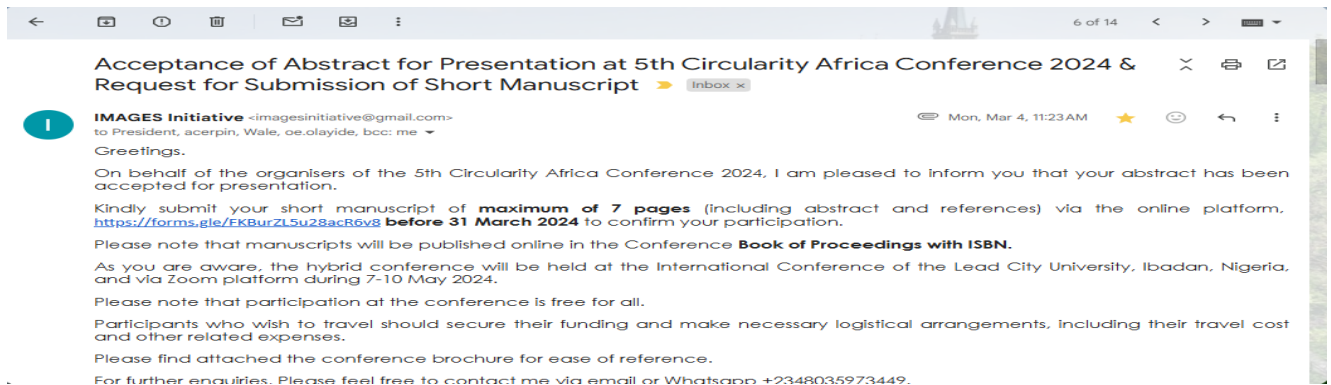
- Speaking up.
- Respecting yourself.
- Listening.
- Not letting others walk over you

**BE ASSERTIVE. NOT AGGRESSIVE.**

Research Leadership: Helpin' your team to succeed & Work-life balance

## Conferences and published in the book of abstracts.

As part of this program, I had the opportunity to participate in two significant conferences. The first 5th Circularity Africa Conference 2024, focused on **The Agricultural Economic Impacts and Policy Analysis Model of the Food System in Somalia**, exploring critical challenges and solutions for the country's food systems. The second **8th International Student Science Congress** in Gaziantep, Turkey, addressed the **Socio-Economic Impacts of Greenhouse Vegetable Production in Mogadishu, Somalia**, providing an in-depth case study on its implications for local communities.



## Certificates during the program.



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**Google Scholar:** <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=h9Q-7yUAAAAJ&hl=en>