



## Connect Africa to host webinar on Mauritius-Singapore collaboration over African agriculture investments

The banner is green with white and black text. At the top left are logos for INSEAD Africa Initiative, connect AFRICA, and Olam. A dark green box on the top right contains the word 'Webinar'. The main title is 'Connect Africa - An insight into Agriculture on the African Continent'. Below the title are three circular portraits of the speakers: Mr. V. Srivathsan, Mr. Ranveer S. Chauhan, and Dr. Vinika D. Rao. To the right of the portraits, the date and time are listed: 'Monday 25 April 2022', '08:30 UTC', '10:30 CET', and '16:30 SGT'. Below the time is 'Duration: 60 mins'. At the bottom right, it says 'In partnership with:' followed by logos for the Mauritius Africa Club and Platform Africa.

Connect Africa, the premier business platform for Africa based in Singapore, is hosting a webinar on Monday, 25 April 2022, which will explore how Mauritius and Singapore can collaborate over agricultural investments in Africa.

The session will be held in association with INSEAD's Africa Initiative and Olam International. The leading business association of Mauritius, the Mauritius Africa Business Club, is a key event partner, and the island economy's premier English news forum, Platform Africa, is the media partner for the event.

The webinar will take the form of a fireside chat where Dr Vinika Rao, Executive Director, INSEAD Africa Initiative will introduce a panel made up of two expert speakers - Sri (Mr V. Srivathsan), the Managing Director and CEO of Africa and the Middle East at Olam, and Ranveer S Chauhan, Chairman of the NTU-SBF Centre for African Studies. Next, Brendon Jones, the founder of the Connect Africa initiative, will take the fireside chat forward by





engaging in a free-flowing discussion with the panel that takes a deep dive into their sizeable experience in the agricultural sector in Africa.

The panel will delve into:

- (a) Strategies for developing agro-industry in Africa;
- (b) the potential for Singapore-African corporates to collaborate and partner for Africa ventures, involving both Singapore and Mauritius as launch platforms to invest in Africa; and
- (c) Lessons from Olam’s 3 decades of investing in and operating in the agri-sector in Africa.

The session will be held virtually at 12:30 pm (UTC+4) Mauritius time or 16:30 hours Singapore time (GMT+8).

Speaking in advance of the event, Dr Vinika Rao commented:

*“I am looking forward to this session as we’re seeing increasing interest in Singapore in agriculture investments in Africa. As a business school focused on the maxim of ‘business as a force for good’, we are especially keen to understand how investors can achieve attractive returns while simultaneously having a positive social, environmental and climate impact.”*

*“I am thrilled to be introducing Sri and Ranveer to the audience, as these veterans will bring their perspectives from long-term experience in the agrisector and in Africa.”*

### **How to get event ready**

We invite you to register for the event on a first-come, first-serve basis. Click here to provide your particulars:

[https://adansoniamanagement.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_XV\\_R2Z74QAHR6rfKtVpLQ](https://adansoniamanagement.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_XV_R2Z74QAHR6rfKtVpLQ)

Further information on Connect Africa, including how to become a member of this esteemed forum, is available on their website: [www.connectafrica.com.sg](http://www.connectafrica.com.sg)





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AFRICA



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*Want to learn more about the event? The detailed profiles of the panel members are available here:*

### **Venkataramani Srivathsan**



Venkataramani Srivathsan is a Chartered Accountant. He started his career as a Finance Professional in India and moved on to General Management where he gained significant experience managing businesses in Africa.

In 1994, Srivathsan joined Olam in Africa and has been part of the team which set up Olam's operations across Africa. From 1996 to 1998, he assumed the position of Country Head Ghana, and that of Country Head Nigeria from 1998 to 2000. Subsequently, he was Regional Controller Nigeria, Ghana and Benin from 2001 to 2005, Regional Head West Africa from 2005 to 2010, and Global Head Agri Inputs since 2010. Srivathsan has been instrumental in building a strong business in Africa for Olam for 27 years. Currently, he is Managing Director & CEO, for Africa and MENA, with oversight responsibility for Fertiliser business.

Mr Srivathsan has presented many papers on smallholder farming at Pan-African forums. In 2010, Srivathsan was awarded a prestigious World Business for Peace Award. Under his leadership, Olam Nigeria has won several international and national awards like the UNDP World Business Development Award in 2008 and the Best Non-oil Exporter Award (Nigeria) 2008 amongst others.

He is the Vice Chairman of SBF AfBG Executive Committee and a member of NTU-SBF Centre for African Studies advisory board, Board member of Lagos Business School Advisory Board and Chairman of the organising committee for ESG-Africa Singapore Business Forum.



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## **Ranveer S. Chauhan**



Ranveer has three decades of corporate executive career under his belt where he set up, managed and grew a variety of ventures in the African and Asian agri sector. He lived in Africa for over 16 years and is intimately conversant with the agri-sector and sub-Saharan Africa.

Ranveer is the Chairman of the NTU-SBF Centre for African Studies and is the Africa Advisor to the Singapore Cooperation Enterprise. He has an active corporate advisory practice and is Director on the Board of several corporates.

Ranveer is a published author, he is keenly interested in positive social impact of business ventures and is currently working at creating an innovative impact initiative in the African agri sector with wide-ranging support from Singapore public and private sector.

## **Dr Vinika Rao**



Dr Vinika Rao is Executive Director, INSEAD Africa Initiative, Gender Initiative & Emerging Markets Institute, and Asia Director, INSEAD Hoffman Global Institute for Business & Society. She also serves as Adjunct Professor, Singapore Management University. Her research is in gender diversity in leadership, male allyship, millennials and inter-generational influences on the workplace. She is frequently invited to speak on related topics and is quoted/ published in leading business publications.





She started her career with an MNC bank and went on to become Managing Director of an Asian conglomerate, before making a serendipitous transition to education. Prior to joining INSEAD, she was Associate Professor of Strategy at the SP Jain Centre of Management, Singapore.

She has taught MBA, EMBA and undergraduate students and conducted specialised programmes for corporate clients. She has an MBA from IIM Bangalore and an award-winning doctorate in leadership diversity from the Singapore Management University (SMU).

She currently sits on the boards of a non-profit organisation and a think tank and advises Diversity & Inclusion initiatives at global organisations. She is also Ambassador, Power Women of India; International Advisory Committee, Mody University for Women & SP Jain Return to Work Programme; Ambassador, She2030 and Advisory Board, Nine by 9.

Vinika is passionate about supporting women managers to make fulfilling work-life decisions, aiming to do this through active sponsorship rather than mentorship alone. She strives to engage both men and women in the effort to foster gender balance in their organisations and communities.

She believes that business has the potential to be a force for good, led by managers who value social impact and are committed to the UN Sustainability Development Goals.

### **Brendon Jones**





Brendon has over 26 years of developed and emerging market experience. He spent his early years in investment banking in London, with firms including JP Morgan Chase, Deutsche Bank, and Citibank. In 2006, Brendon was appointed Managing Director, and later became a Shareholder, of Inter-Ocean Management Limited, a Mauritian Offshore Management Company licensed by the Financial Services Commission. Inter-Ocean Management Limited was successfully sold to the Maitland Group, and rebranded Maitland (Mauritius) Limited in 2012. In 2014, Brendon co-founded the Adansonia Group, which continues to focus on providing value added solutions to a range of international investment funds, corporates, family offices and high net worth individuals from the United Kingdom, Africa, Middle East, Australia, United States and Southeast Asia.

In 2021, Brendon relocated to Singapore to set up operations for the Adansonia Group. He currently serves on inter alia the boards of Denham Capital's African mining fund, Alphamin Resources Corporation (a DRC based tin producer listed on Toronto Stock Exchange) and Adansonia Fund Manager Private Limited, a Singaporean Registered Fund Management Company.

Most recently, Brendon founded Connect Africa, a not for profit, Africa-focused business networking community, whose aim is to connect and leverage African skills and knowledge in Southeast Asia and Africa, to raise the profile of Africa as a Continent of investment opportunities. By connecting such skills and knowledge, the aim of Connect Africa is to develop into a "deal" platform linking human and monetary capital looking to capitalise on trade and investment opportunities in Africa.

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**In case of any event-related queries, please contact:**

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