



# **FACULTY OF SPEAKERS**

*(Contact Information and Biographies)*

## **FOOD ALLERGY AND SAFETY ASSESSMENT WORKSHOP**

**11-12 August 2014**

**Kenyatta International Convention Center  
Nairobi Central Business District  
Nairobi, Kenya**

**HESI Protein Allergenicity Technical Committee**



## **Ayola Akim Adegnika, MD, PhD**

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Dr. Ayola Akim Adegnika is co-director and group leader of immuno-epidemiology of parasites infection at CERMEL, Hôpital Albert Schweitzer. Currently, he is a Principal Investigator of several studies. He is a research group leader at the Institute for Tropical Medicine, University of Tübingen, and associate researcher at the University of Leiden.

Dr. Adegnika has significant experience in field work activities of basic research studies and epidemiology of helminthiasis in relationship with allergy diseases and malaria infection. As PI and/or investigator, he has conducted several clinical trials of new anti-malarial agents and evaluated efficacy of the existing anti-malarial drugs. In addition, he has excellent international cooperation with European universities, including the University of Tübingen in Germany and the Leiden Medical University Center in The Netherlands.

Dr. Adegnika has received a number of grants, including TDR-WHO, several EU grants (FP6, FP7), and German fellowships (DAAD, DFG-Grant). He is the author and co-author of numerous published papers.



**Prof. Emmanuel O.D. Addo-Yobo, MD FGCP, MWACP, MSc, DTCH**

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Emmanuel O.D. Addo-Yobo is currently Associate Professor at the Department of Child Health, School of Medical Sciences, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology; Honorary Consultant Paediatrician in the Directorate of Child Health; and Head of the Quality Assurance Unit of the Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital (KATH), Kumasi, Ghana. He graduated from the same University (MB ChB, 1984), and is a Foundation Fellow of the Ghana College of Physicians. He is also a member of the West African College of Physicians (Paeds). Prof. Addo-Yobo holds a MSc in Maternal and Child Health (University of London), a Diploma in Tropical Child Health (University of Liverpool), and a Doctor of Medicine (MD) (University of Manchester). He is a physician and head of the Paediatric Asthma Clinic at KATH, medical educator, researcher, and administrator with primary clinical interests in childhood asthma and paediatric pulmonology, immunization practice, and child survival issues. Prof. Addo-Yobo serves on a number of national health committees in Ghana such as the National Poliomyelitis Expert Committee and Standard Treatment Guidelines Review Committees. Internationally, he is a member of the Medical Technical Options Committee of the Ozone Secretariat of the United Nations Environment Programme since 2005. He has also served as a resource for several WHO-organized Regional Vaccinology courses in the African sub-region and assisted some African countries in conducting EPI training needs assessment in the last few years. He has authored a number of publications, especially on childhood asthma in Ghana. He is married with three children.



**Ms. Abena Amoah**

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Abena Amoah is a researcher in the Parasitology Department at the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research (NMIMR) in Accra, Ghana. Since 2002, she has been involved in multi-centre collaborative projects that focus on parasitic infections and allergic diseases among Ghanaian children. Prior to working at NMIMR, Ms. Amoah was a clinical research assistant at Rockefeller University in New York City for two years.

Ms. Amoah holds a bachelor's degree in Biological Sciences from Mount Holyoke College and a master's degree in Epidemiology from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. In September 2014, she will defend her PhD thesis at Leiden University on the complex dynamics between parasitic worm infections and allergy disease among Ghanaian children. Her doctoral research was supervised by Professor Maria Yazdanbakhsh of the Department of Parasitology at Leiden University Medical Center and Professor Daniel Boakye of the Parasitology Department at NMIMR.



## **Dr. Evans Inyangala Amukoye**

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Dr Evans Inyangala Amukoye is a Paediatrician with interest in paediatric pulmonology and is currently the Director at the Centre for Respiratory Diseases Research (CRDR), a centre within the Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI). He obtained his MB.ChB (1985) and M.Med (1992) from the University of Nairobi. He has also undergone several professional trainings in Pediatrics. He was a senior clinical fellow at the Institute of Child Health (London) in Critical Care, and also had an attachment and training in Paediatric Bronchoscopy/Respiratory from the University of Sapporo and Kyorin University (Japan), among others. His Research interests includes MDR Tuberculosis, TB – infections, Pneumonia in Children, Influenza Virus, and HIV/AIDS. He has authored and co-authored several publications and books and is a co-Editor of the *African Journal of Respiratory Medicine*. He is a member of many professional bodies including the Association of Travel Medicine & Vaccination Services of Kenya (ATMVSK), Pan Africa Thoracic Society, Targeting Asthma in Sub-Saharan Africa, National Task Force for Preparedness of Avian Flu Pandemic, Kenya Paediatrics Association, Kenya Association for Prevention of Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases (KAPTLD) Executive Board, Committee on Drug Registration (CDR) at the Pharmacy and Poisons Board. He is currently involved in two drug trials aimed at reducing tuberculosis treatment from 6 months to 4 months.



## **Philip Brune, PhD**

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Dr. Philip Brune currently holds the position of Technical Expert for Compositional Analysis, Product Safety, for Syngenta Crop Protection, LLC, in Research Triangle Park, NC, USA. He has been in this position since 2009. Dr. Brune received a BA degree in Biology from Wittenberg University (Springfield, OH), and a MS degree in Plant Pathology from The Ohio State University. He then went on to obtain a PhD degree in Plant Pathology from North Carolina State University. From 1995 to 1997, Dr. Brune held an assistant professorship in the Math and Science Department at St. Mary's College (Raleigh, NC). In 1997, he accepted a position with Syngenta Crop Protection, where he has held positions as a research scientist (conducting field research on disease control of most major field, fruit, and vegetable crops), in data management (data capture, analysis, and mining; experimental design), and as team lead for Compositional Analysis of genetically modified crops. Dr. Brune was Co-Chair of the International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI) Crop Composition Task Force, and was one of the organizers of the ILSI International Food Biotechnology Committee (IFBiC) Crop Composition Workshop, held in Washington, DC, in September 2012. He has spoken about crop compositional analysis at workshops sponsored by ILSI (November 2012, Brasilia, Brazil), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (November 2013, Paris, France) and EuropaBio (February 2014, Brussels, Belgium).



**Adnan Custovic, DM, MD, PhD, FRCP**

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Adnan Custovic is a Professor of Allergy at the Institute of Inflammation and Repair, University of Manchester, UK. He is a Training Programme Director for Allergy in the North Western Deanery and an Honorary Consultant Allergist at the University Hospital of South Manchester (UHSM). He has developed the NHS Allergy service at the UHSM, and has driven a step change in the size and breadth of clinical activity in the last decade. As a result, the UHSM Allergy Centre now offers fully comprehensive service to adult and paediatric patients with a range of allergic conditions.

Prof. Custovic's major academic contributions have been in fields of genuine unmet clinical need, especially prevention of childhood asthma and food allergy. He has published more than 200 papers in peer-reviewed journals. His research output has been highly cited over the last decade. He is an Associate Editor of *Thorax* and a member of the Editorial board of several major international specialty journals.

Prof. Custovic served as a Secretary of the British Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (BSACI) in two terms, represented allergy on the Specialist Advisory Committee of the Royal College of Physicians, is President of the Asthma section of the European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology, and is a member of several World Allergy Organisation Special Committees.



**Jacoba Adriana ('Kobie') de Ronde, PhD**

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Dr. Kobie de Ronde obtained her BSc in Agricultural Genetics in 1987 at the University of Pretoria, her MSc in Biology in 1994, and her PhD in Plant Biotechnology in 2001 at the University of Natal in South Africa. Since 2009, she has worked at Syngenta South Africa as the Regulatory Affairs Country Manager. Before that, she worked at the Agricultural Research Council where she started her career working in a tissue culture laboratory before moving on to research in abiotic stress and biotechnology. From 2005 to 2009, she headed the Biotechnology Research Program at the ARC. At Syngenta South Africa, she is responsible for delivering regulatory approvals for new biotechnology-derived products for Syngenta and shepherding the products through the approval process, as well as providing the infrastructure to maintain a high level of regulatory compliance and stewardship pre- and post-commercialization.





**Prof. Alison Elliott**

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Prof. Alison Elliott became interested in Tropical Medicine as an undergraduate as a result of a course on parasitology and immunology at Cambridge, and this interest was encouraged further, as a medical student, by an elective with the MRC Unit in The Gambia. After completing medical training, she joined the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and, during the late '80s and early '90s, undertook studies on the interaction between tuberculosis and HIV infection in Zambia. An infectious diseases fellowship in Denver, Colorado, provided an opportunity to learn about management of MDR-TB and laboratory immunology. This enabled Prof. Elliott to plan and conduct subsequent clinical-immuno-epidemiological studies. Since 1997, she has been based in Uganda at the Uganda Virus Research Institute. Current interests focus on the effects interactions between co-infections, the effects of helminth infection on immune responses to vaccines, infectious and allergic disease incidence in children in Uganda, and research capacity building in Africa.



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Dr Liezel Gouws is a project manager at Biosafety South Africa and is responsible for the coordination, management, and sourcing of biosafety projects, regulatory dossiers, and resources. She has a PhD in plant biotechnology and, prior to joining Biosafety South Africa, she completed postdoctoral fellowships at the Institutes for Plant Biotechnology and Wine Biotechnology at Stellenbosch University. She completed her master's degree at the Ruprecht Karls University in Heidelberg (Germany), where she concentrated on plant growth, diurnal growth rhythms, and metabolism. Her research career focused mainly on plant growth analysis, specifically plant gene expression, proteomics, and metabolomics.



## **Gregory S. Ladics, PhD, DABT, Fellow ATS**

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Dr. Gregory S. Ladics received his Bachelor of Science cum laude in Toxicology from the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science in 1987. In 1991, he received his Doctor of Philosophy in Pharmacology and Toxicology from the Medical College of Virginia/Virginia Commonwealth University. He has been employed by the DuPont Company for over 22 years where he is presently a Research Fellow. In 1999, Dr. Ladics became a Diplomate of the American Board of Toxicology, and a Fellow of the Academy of Toxicological Sciences (ATS) in 2012. He serves on the ILSI Health and Environmental Sciences Institute's (HESI) Protein Allergenicity Technical Committee (PATC) as Co-Chair. Dr. Ladics is also Chair of the CropLife International Protein Allergenicity Team and Past President of the Society of Toxicology Immunotoxicology Specialty Section. He is a member of the Editorial Boards for the Journal of Immunotoxicology, Dataset Papers in Biology, and the ISRN Biotechnology Journal. Current research activities involve the evaluation and validation of test methods to assess protein allergenicity potential and research to address issues and further refine bioinformatic/protein modeling approaches for assessing potential protein allergenicity. Dr. Ladics has over 160 abstract, journal, and book chapter publications in the field of immunotoxicology and allergy.



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Prof. Mike Levin is head of the Division of Asthma and Allergy in the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health, University of Cape Town, and is on the executive committee of the Allergy Society of South Africa. He teaches medical students, medical professionals, and specialists in allergy, and presents at national and international allergy congresses. He has published 41 peer-reviewed scientific articles, three chapters in medical books, and edited a textbook of paediatrics.

Prof Levin has a special interest in epidemiology of allergy in Africa, severe allergies and anaphylaxis, as well as patient support and education.



## **Dr. Nohrasco Mang'ondi**

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Dr. Nohrasco Mang'ondi is a young scientist who received his Doctor of Medicine from University of Dar es salaam. Later, he joined the Regional Dermatology Training Centre (RDTC) at Kilimanjaro Christian Medical University College (KCMC) in Kilimanjaro where he received his Masters of Medicine in Dermatovenereology.

Dr. Mang'ondi's interest in allergology was strengthened at the Allergology Unit of RDTC/KCMC in Kilimanjaro, Tanzania, where he worked for four years. He received further working experience in allergic diseases in the Allergy Department of Tübingen University in Germany. He also did a study in immediate food hypersensitivity among children with eczema in Moshi, Kilimanjaro.

Currently, Dr. Mang'ondi is working as Lecturer and Dermatologist at the Catholic University of Health and Allied Sciences (CUHAS) at Bugando Medical Centre, Mwanza, Lake Victoria region, Tanzania.



## **Scott McClain, PhD**

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Dr. Scott McClain's academic background is in animal physiology and environmental toxicology having received his MS and PhD degrees in the Center for Environmental Toxicology and Statistics at Miami University, in Oxford, Ohio. Dr. McClain's professional background is within the biotechnology sector with training primarily in immunology and clinical allergy diagnostics, product efficacy and safety testing. He started his professional career supporting research programs in immunology and biochemistry with a focus on developing bioactive food ingredients. The last nine years have been spent in the regulatory divisions of the agricultural biotechnology sector with an emphasis on conducting and communicating studies in allergy and toxicology which support the safe introduction of novel food and feed crop products. Dr. McClain has worked in Syngenta Product Safety for five years. He represents Syngenta as co-chair of the ILSI Health and Environmental Sciences Institute's (HESI) Protein Allergenicity Technical Committee (PATC) and participates on the Crop Life International Allergy Expert Team.



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Dr. Harriet Mpairwe is a Wellcome Trust training fellow based at the MRC-Uganda Unit, where she has been involved in allergy-related research for the last ten years. She trained in epidemiology (MSc and PhD) at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and her current post-doctoral project is investigating the risk factors associated with asthma among children in Uganda. Her main research interest is the possible therapeutic role of worms in the management of asthma and other chronic inflammatory diseases.



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Prof. Theophilus Mutui earned his MSc in Horticulture in 1999 from the University of Nairobi, Kenya, and holds a PhD in Horticultural Sciences (2005) from Leibniz University of Hannover, Germany. He did his post-doctoral studies at the Department of Horticulture, University of Georgia, USA; United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) - Agricultural Research Service (ARS) at West Virginia and Maryland, USA; and Leibniz University of Hannover, Germany. These studies were funded by an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) fellowship and German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) scholarships, respectively.

Currently, Prof. Mutui is the Chief Biosafety Officer responsible for Compliance and Enforcement. He represents the National Biosafety Authority in the National Food Safety Coordination Committee (NFSCC) and Technical Committee on Biotechnology at the Kenya Bureau of Standards. He has been (2007-2013) the National Coordinator for the European Union (EU) Executive Agency for Health and Consumer's (EAHC) Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Point (HACCP) Training Program. Previously, Prof. Mutui was a faculty member in the Department of Horticulture, School of Agriculture and Biotechnology, University of Eldoret, Kenya. Consequently, he has many years of experience in research, consultancy, and teaching. Prof. Mutui is a member of many local and international professional societies, including the International Society of Horticultural Sciences (ISHS), Horticultural Association of Kenya (HAK), and the Kenya DAAD Scholars Association (KDSA). He has widely published in international refereed journals and he is regularly invited as a guest speaker at scientific conferences. Prof. Mutui is a strong believer in ensuring accessibility of safe and affordable food in adequate quantities to the Kenyan citizenry.





## **Prof. Gabrielle Pauli**

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Prof. Gabrielle Pauli studied medicine at the Faculty of Medicine of Strasbourg University. She qualified as a doctor in 1967 and was appointed assistant at the Department of Chest Diseases. As soon as 1968, she specialized in asthma and allergy at the Faculty of Medicine of Marseilles. Back in Strasbourg, she developed a specific consultation for respiratory allergic diseases. Her research was aimed at the role of mites in allergic asthma, and she performed the first bronchial challenge tests with mite allergens; she also demonstrated the plurality of allergens in house dust using *in vivo* and *in vitro* tests.

Prof. Pauli carried on her clinical research, initiating immunotherapy with mite extracts and testing eviction methods. She validated a mite detection test (by dosing guanine concentration in house dust samples) and initiated the employment of an environmental counsellor. Her work won her the *Environment and Health Prize* delivered by the French Academy of Medicine in 1993 and the 9th Gold Medal of the Foundation for Research in Allergy in 1995.

As a pneumologist, she took a thirty-year long interest in occupational asthma and trained a team of practitioners, nurses and technicians which made her department a pole of reference.

Several new etiologies of occupational asthma were described by her team. She co-founded the occupational asthma registry in France and, with two colleagues, issued the first book on occupational asthma published in French (first edition 1999, second 2012).

From 1995 onward, her research has been aimed at molecular allergens and, thanks to exceptional collaborations with European researchers in the same field, she was one of the first clinicians to test recombinant molecules in patients. Together with two other groups, she initiated the first trial of immunotherapy with a recombinant allergen showing that the concept led to satisfactory results.

In 2011 the European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology gave her the Clemens von Pirquet Award for her research, which found expression in more than 300 publications, general reviews, and book chapters.

Gabrielle Pauli is professor emeritus, former Head of the Pneumology Department of the Strasbourg University Hospital, former President of the French Society of Allergology, former President of the French Society of Pneumology, and a member of the Collegium internationale allergologicum.



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Prof. Lars K. Poulsen (PhD 1988, Dr. Med. 2000) is Clinical Professor of Basic Allergology at the University of Copenhagen, Medical Faculty, since 2009. He received a MSc in Chemistry at the Danish Technical University in 1984 and a Diploma of Business Administration at the Copenhagen Business School in 1997. Following his PhD at the Medical Faculty at the University of Copenhagen, he was a post-doc at the Johns Hopkins University Medical School in 1989. Since 2002, he is Head of Allergy Research at the Gentofte Hospital (formerly National University Hospital). Prof. Poulsen has supervised 31 PhD students, 65 graduate students, and was opponent/censor for 19 PhD students and 20 graduate students. He regularly reviews grants and positions for the EU Commission, the National Medical Research Councils in Austria, Singapore, Switzerland, Spain, the Austrian National Bank Foundation, and the Danish Universities. In 2010, he served as a consultant for the Danish Food Institute and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). Prof. Poulsen has been the Scientific Programme Coordinator of the European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (EAACI) 2010-12, and will be chairing the 2014 EAACI Annual Congress in Copenhagen.



## **Laura Privalle, PhD**

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Dr. Laura Privalle received her BS in biochemistry and MS in botany from Virginia Tech. She received her PhD in biochemistry from the University of Wisconsin. Following a post-doctorate at Duke University, she joined Ciba-Geigy in its Agricultural Biotechnology Research Unit, currently known as Syngenta Biotechnology, Inc., in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, USA. Dr. Privalle headed the Regulatory Science Laboratory which had the responsibility for generating much of the data used in the safety assessment of transgenic products for global regulatory dossiers. She was part of the effort in registering the first transgenic maize product, Bt Event 176. In 2003, Dr. Privalle joined BASF Plant Science LP, where she was the Head of Regulatory Science. Dr. Privalle has served as the Vice-Chair and Chair of the ILSI Health and Environmental Sciences Institute's (HESI) Protein Allergenicity Technical Committee and on the Steering Group of the ILSI International Food Biotechnology Committee (IFBiC). She also served on two expert panels on behalf of CropLife International. She serves on the Education Enhancement Grants panel for the North Carolina Biotechnology Center and has participated in many other NCBC-sponsored activities. She was President of AEIC (Analytical Excellence through Industry Collaboration), an organization that focuses on analytical detection method technologies. In 2013, Dr. Privalle left BASF to work for Bayer CropScience. She is a member of the Faculty of 1000 in the Agriculture and Biotech Section.



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Dr. Montserrat Fernández-Rivas earned her Medical Degree in 1985 from the Universidad del País Vasco, Bilbao, Spain, and her PhD in 1995 from the Universidad Alcalá de Henares, Madrid, Spain. In 1998, she earned a Master Diploma in Methodology of Clinical Research from the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, and in 2012, she earned a Master Diploma in Clinical Governance from the Universidad Pompeu Fabra of Barcelona. Currently, she is the Head of Allergy Department of Hospital Clínico San Carlos, Madrid, Spain, and an Assistant Professor of Medicine at the Complutense University of Madrid. She is the Chair of the Interest Group in Food Allergy of the European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (EAACI). Her research interests include food allergy, food allergens, and allergen immunotherapy. Dr. Fernández-Rivas participates in clinical trials on allergen immunotherapy (inhalants, foods) and in research projects on food allergy and allergens funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and the European Commission (SAFE, CREATE, EuroPrevall, FAST, iFAAM). She has more than 100 publications in international journals of allergy.



**Prof. Peter Schmid-Grendelmeier, MD**

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Prof. Peter Schmid-Grendelmeier is Head of the Allergy Unit in the Department of Dermatology at the University Hospital of Zürich in Switzerland. He is also Professor and Lecturer for Allergology and Dermatology. Prof. Schmid-Grendelmeier received his medical degree in 1985 from the University of Zürich. He is board certified in Dermatology and Venereology, as well as in Allergology and Clinical Immunology. Earlier in his career, Prof. Schmid-Grendelmeier was a research fellow with the Swiss Institute for Allergy and Asthma Research SIAF and a visiting scientist in the Department of Allergy at Harvard Medical School in Boston. His work and teaching activities have taken him to Peru, Tanzania, and Cambodia. Prof. Schmid-Grendelmeier serves on the EACCI Executive Committee and Exam Committee, is President-Elect of the Swiss Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology, is the Director of the CK-CARE Foundation, and is an honorary member of the Allergy Society of South Africa (ALLSA). His research and education is focused on atopic dermatitis, component-resolved allergy diagnosis and immunotherapy, and implementation of allergologic know-how into primary care and areas with limited resources. Prof. Schmid-Grendelmeier has published over 150 paper and book articles.



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Elopy Sibanda is a Professor of Clinical Immunology in Zimbabwe. He studied Medicine at the University of Gdansk, Poland, and proceeded to specialize in Clinical Immunology in Birmingham, England, where he earned his MSc and MD/PhD degrees. He runs the only Allergy and Immunology clinic in the country. He is a founding member and past President of the Federation of African Immunology Societies (FAIS), and has served on committees of the International Union of Immunological Societies. He currently is a committee member of the Communications and Emerging Societies programs of the World Allergy Organization. Professor Sibanda has convened international meetings under the banner of African International Conference on Immunity (AICI). The purpose of these meetings is to bring together researchers and clinicians of the world to share their experiences with African regional participants, many of whom are not able to travel abroad.



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Dr Harris Steinman is a medical doctor with extensive clinical and research experience in the field of allergy and intolerance. He is the author of a number of allergen reference books; has been the Allergy Society of South Africa's (ALLSA) representative on the South African Department of Health's Food Advisory Legislative Group (FLAG) since its inception. He was an invited member of the UN Joint FAO/WHO Expert Consultation on "hidden" allergens in 1996 and in 2001 on the allergenicity of foods derived from biotechnology (GMOs). He is an advisor to the Department of Agriculture for the assessment of the allergenicity of GMOs. He is head of FACTS (Food & Allergy Consulting and Testing Services), a multidisciplinary team which includes dietitians and food scientists. The FACTS laboratory is the first in Africa to test commercial food products for allergens and reaction-causing substances and provide Practical Allergen Management workshops to industry.



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Prof. Ronald van Ree was originally educated in history but switched to biochemistry and immunology, the field in which he defended his thesis at the University of Amsterdam in 1994 on the topic of grass pollen allergens and their interaction with the immune system. From 1994 until 2005, he headed the Allergy Research Laboratory at Sanquin Blood Supply Foundation in Amsterdam. In July 2005, he moved to the Academic Medical Center in Amsterdam where he was appointed as Associate Professor at the Department of Experimental Immunology. There he is head of the Laboratory for Allergy Research. In June 2009, Prof. van Ree was appointed as Full Professor of Molecular and Translational Allergology. In 2010, he began work as a consultant for one day a week at HAL Allergy BV in Leiden, where he continues to advise the management of the R&D program. During 2011, he *ad interim* headed the Department of Experimental Immunology.

Prof. van Ree has participated in many European Union (EU) Framework Programme projects, including as vice-coordinator in the Integrated Project on Food Allergy, EuroPrevall, the GLOFAL project aimed at integrating food allergy research in developing countries into the EU framework programme, and most recently as co-ordinator of the ongoing project on immunotherapy for food allergy (2008-2015). He is a Member-at-Large of the Executive Committee of the European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (EAACI), and is a Co-Chair of the ILSI Health and Environmental Sciences Institute's (HESI) Protein Allergenicity Technical Committee. He is on the editorial board of several leading journals in the field of allergology, and is associate editor of International Archives of Allergy and Immunology. Prof. van Ree has published over 200 papers in peer-reviewed journals, as well as several book chapters.





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Prof. Maria Yazdanbakhsh is head of Parasitology at Leiden University Medical Center in The Netherlands. She also leads a research group that focuses on cellular immunology of host pathogen interaction with special emphasis on Th2 mediated diseases. Collaborations set up, for more than a decade, with research groups in Indonesia, Gabon and Ghana, have paved the way for conducting studies to characterize the immune system of subjects living in areas undergoing epidemiologic transition from a traditional to a modern life style. This is studied at the population level using immunoepidemiological methods in in vitro studies where dendritic cells and regulatory T and B cells are investigated at the molecular level. The question of how chronic parasitic infections modify responses to third party antigens has been studied by analyzing their effect on allergic diseases, vaccination, and more recently metabolic parameters. With respect to allergy, one of the issues that has been investigated in some depth, has been the high levels of allergen-specific antibodies that are seen in rural areas of developing countries with no evidence of clinical allergic symptoms. The group has, in collaboration with biochemists, identified modulatory molecules derived from parasites that might have potential for therapeutic interventions. The characterization of such molecules in terms of their interaction with receptors on immune cells or with antibodies generated has led to promising avenues for therapeutic interventions.