

Vera Songwe

Dr. Vera Songwe is a globally respected economist, development finance expert, and senior international leader with deep experience across public, private, and multilateral sectors. She is Chair and Founder of the Liquidity and Sustainability Facility, a financial mechanism designed to improve liquidity for emerging markets and support sustainable development and climate finance. She also served as a senior advisor to the Bank for International Settlements (BIS), focusing on financial stability, credit risk cycles, and regulatory innovation. She is Visiting Professor of Practice at CETEx–LSE and Non-resident Senior Fellow, Global Economy Development and the Africa Growth Initiative at the Brookings Institution.

Dr. Songwe previously held the highest regional leadership position at the United Nations serving as Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). In this role she became the first woman to lead the organisation in its 60 year history, driving strategic reforms on macroeconomic stability, private sector growth, development finance, and the African Continental Free Trade Area.

Her career includes senior leadership positions at the World Bank and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), where she managed multi-billion-dollar portfolios and championed fiscal policy, economic governance, and innovative financing for development across Africa and beyond. She also began her professional journey as a visiting scholar at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis and the University of Southern California.

Dr. Songwe's thought leadership extends to climate finance and global economic policy. She is Co-Chair of the Independent High-Level Expert Panel on Climate Finance, has served multiple G20 commissions and contributes to key international initiatives at the intersection of sustainability, finance, and economic transformation.

Her academic credentials include a PhD in Mathematical Economics from the Center for Operations Research and Econometrics, Université Catholique de Louvain in Belgium, a Master's in Law and Economics, and a BA in Economics and Political Science from the University of Michigan. She has been consistently recognised among Africa's most influential leaders by the Financial Times, Forbes, Jeune Afrique, and other global outlets.