

Claire Hassoun

CONTACTS

French Citizen

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LANGUAGES

French	Native
English	Fluent, Lived in the US for 2 years
Portuguese	Fluent, Lived in Mozambique for 10 years
Italian	Business, Lived in Italy for 4 months
Russian	Proficient.

KEY STRENGTHS

- SME Ecosystem Development & Startup Support
- Business Model Development, Financial Modeling
- Digital Transformation Strategy
- Innovation Development
- Fundraising & Investor Relations
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Monitoring & Evaluation
- Market Systems Development
- PPP Design & Structuring

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Private sector development specialist with unique combination of **entrepreneurial experience and advisory expertise**. Founded and scaled Mozambique's **first tech startup to raise international venture capital** and achieve international recognition (VC4A, Norrsken Impact Fund), gaining deep operational insights into SME challenges, business model innovation, fundraising, and digital transformation in frontier markets.

15+ years advising development organizations (IFC/World Bank, EU, UNFPA, USAID) and governments on entrepreneurship ecosystems, SME capacity building, and market systems development across Sub-Saharan Africa. **Civil engineer (École Nationale des Ponts et Chaussées - ParisTech) and Harvard Kennedy School MPA graduate**. Recognized for translating private sector realities into actionable policies and programs that balance commercial viability with development impact.

EDUCATION

2013-2015 Cambridge, USA	HARVARD UNIVERSITY, John F. Kennedy School of Government Master in Public Administration Major: Political and Economic Development.
2003-2008 Paris, France Montreal, Canada Genoa, Italy	ECOLE NATIONALE DES PONTS ET CHAUSSÉES Master in Civil Engineering and Urban Services Major: Supply of basic services in urban areas <ul style="list-style-type: none">• UNIVERSITY OF MONTREAL. Urban Management in Developing countries• UNIVERSITY OF GENOA. Faculty of Engineering
2000 – 2003 Brest, France	LYCEE de KERICHEN Preparatory classes "Maths Sup, Maths Spé"

ENTREPRENEURIAL EXPERIENCE

Jul 2018 - ongoing Mozambique, South Africa	Apload - Digital Marketplace for Logistics www.aploadafrica.com Co-Founder, CEO <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Founded and scaled Mozambique's first tech-enabled logistics platform, digitizing freight operations across the country. Expanded to South Africa with offices in Maputo and Johannesburg.• Built scalable technology infrastructure and business model to incentivize transport sector formalization, enabling SME transporters to access digital markets, improve operational efficiency, and increase revenues by an average of 35%.• Secured venture capital funding from impact investors; designed fundraising strategy and pitched successfully to international funds including recognition by Norrsken Impact Fund (Sweden) as one of Africa's most promising startups in 2022.
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- Navigated complex regulatory environments, working with government agencies on policy advocacy for digital economy enablement and formalization of the informal transport sector.
- **Gained deep operational insights into frontier market challenges** including last-miles service delivery, mobile money integration, capacity building for low-literacy users, and building trust in digital platforms; insights directly informing advisory work with SMEs, startups, and development programs.

CONSULTANCY Experience

Jul 2025-on-going
Mozambique

PROMOVE - EU Funded Project (Ginger SOFRECO)
Private sector & digital transformation Consultant

- Developed **business models and PPP structuring** for management and concession of 15 rural stop places in Nampula and Zambezia provinces, including financial projections, tender documents, and contract frameworks designed to enable SME participation in infrastructure operation.
- Conducted **market analysis and stakeholder workshops** with local communities, provincial authorities, and private sector to ensure viable and inclusive management models accessible to local small businesses.
- Designed road sector **digital transformation strategy** through stakeholder consultations.

Jul 2020 - Dec 2022
Mozambique

United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA)
Consultant

- Designed and delivered implementation roadmap for a rural mobility application improving pregnant women's access to healthcare in Zambezia Province
- Led prototype development, software procurement, and field data analysis to optimize program outcomes and ensure sustainability

Mar 2019 - Mar 2021
Ivory Coast, Mozambique

International Finance Corporation (IFC / World Bank Group)
Consultant at the IFC Manufacturing Agribusiness and Services Advisory Services

- Led monitoring & evaluation of IFC-funded **agriculture value chain projects**, coordinating field surveys, data collection, and analytical frameworks for results measurement focused on SME farmer organizations and agribusiness enterprises.
- Advised **private sector clients on market entry strategies, business development opportunities**, and investment structuring in frontier markets, with emphasis on inclusive business models engaging smallholder farmers and MSMEs.

July 2015-Jul 2019
UAE, Mozambique

Private Sector Development Consulting (USAID, French Development Agency, GIZ, Private Sector, Associations)
Consultant and Project Manager

- Assessment study of Technical and Vocational Training (TVET) centers in the construction sector in Mozambique, to evaluate potential for training in employment-intensive methods, with a focus on women's employability and entrepreneurship in construction trades.
- Diagnostic study of the Work-for-Progress program to assess **priority sectors for TVET** in the province of Cabo Delgado, for traditional employment or micro-enterprise creation, with a focus on **women and youth entrepreneurship pathways**.
- Project manager for evaluation studies of e-government solutions implementation (e-BAU - Balcão de Atendimento Único) designed to **simplify registration and reduce red tape for small and medium businesses** through one-stop-shop public service delivery.
- Team leader for AFD on the feasibility study of a tourism vocational training center in Mozambique, including **economic analysis and forecasts for leisure and professional tourism**, supporting SME development in the hospitality sector.

July 2015-Jul 2018
Mozambique

Transport and Mobility Consulting
Team leader for the following missions

- Designed interventions to improve **female workers' mobility** in Mozambican SMEs (DFID – MUVA program), addressing gender barriers to **economic participation in small and medium enterprises**.
- Led assessment of WTO trade facilitation measures (USAID and GIZ funded study) aimed at increasing goods trade between Mozambique and its neighbors **through private sector-driven**

measures. Interviewed 30+ stakeholders in logistics, distribution, and agro-industrial sectors, focusing on SME export challenges.

- Developed innovation market study and pilot for informal transport operators to bundle agriculture commodity transport with passenger transport, creating new revenue streams for micro-entrepreneurs.

Jun - Aug 2014

Washington DC, USA

International Finance Corporation (IFC / World Bank Group)

Consultant - Advisory services for Public-Private Partnerships (PPP)

- Conducted due diligence and financial modeling for **PPP projects** in West Africa (energy & transport sectors).
- Drafted terms of reference for major **infrastructure feasibility studies.**

Jul - Aug 2013

Benin

European Union Delegation in Benin

Consultant and project coordinator for the rehabilitation of the national railway in Benin

- Led project approval processes within the EU and coordinated feasibility studies with the African Union.

May 2010 - Jul 2013

France

Missions in Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Benin, Niger, Uganda,

Liberia, Cameroon, Belarus

SOFRECO - Engineering and Technical Assistance Firm

Project Director & Contract Manager

- Managed large-scale infrastructure feasibility studies across West Africa, leading multidisciplinary teams of 15+ experts and coordinating with multiple governments, EU, and African Union.
- Developed technical and financial strategies for industrial projects in mining, agribusiness, and transport infrastructure.

EARLY CAREER Experience

Jul 2008 - May 2010

France, Mission in Mali

ENEA Consulting - Engineering Consultancy

- Process Engineer at AXENS (Institut Francais du Petrole group)

- Research Project Leader on the following missions:

- Conducted market analysis and developed business plan for biofuel power production in Koutiala, Mali, including due diligence of agriculture value chain alternatives and food security impacts
- Performed technical and financial analysis of biogas potential in French industry

May 2007 - Feb 2008

Niger

VEOLIA WATER - Société d'Exploitation des Eaux du Niger (Niger National water utility)

Project Engineer

In the context of a subsidized connections program to drinkable water network:

- Designed and supervised implementation of subsidized water connections program targeting vulnerable households, including internal procedures, cost control, quality assurance, and awareness campaigns

Sep. 2005 - Jul 2006

France

VEOLIA Transport - Transportation services operator for passengers in Ile de France region

Project engineer for bus public services optimization of urban and semi-urban networks.

- Optimized urban and semi-urban bus networks in Ile de France region, negotiating contracts with local public administrations
- Prepared technical and financial proposals for public bus service contracts

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Jul 2022 - ongoing

Mozambique

French Foreign Trade Advisor (Conseiller du Commerce Extérieur - CCE). Voluntary Honorary Position

- Provide strategic guidance on trade, investment opportunities, and business development between France and Mozambique

Sep 2016-17

Paris, France

École Nationale des Ponts et Chaussées (France)

- Visiting **Lecturer, Lectures on Transport & Logistics in Africa**

Sep 2014. June 2015

Boston, USA

Harvard Kennedy School

- Co-Chair, Africa Development Conference, **Harvard Kennedy School. Led a major forum on African economic growth.**