

PAFO–COLEACP Innovation Series:

Innovations and successes of African farmer-led businesses and SMEs

**Session N°3: African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA):
opportunities for SMEs and businesses in the agrifood sector**

18th March 2021, 12h00-14h00 (GMT)

SPEAKERS' BIODATA

Michael ANNAN-FORSON – CEO, Melach Groups, Ghana



Michael holds a Bachelor's degree in Human Resources Management and a MBA. He worked as Human and Organizational Development HR for 10 years in a coconut processing firm in Bangkok, Thailand. After his return to Ghana in 2007, he started his own business by producing coconut oil on a small-scale in his kitchen. He had only one coconut farmer who supplied him few coconuts and was able to produce only 1litre per day. From this humble beginning, Melach Coconut Processing farm has been able to organized its supply from 166 coconut farmers of which 146 are female. Today, Melach Coconut Processing farm is organic and Fair For Life certified with a daily minimum production capacity of 30 tons. Melach Coconut Processing farm is now operating on its own processing site, empowering with agribusiness inmates(prison) women, single parents, communities and orphanages across the country.

Fatma BEN REJEB – CEO, Panafrican Farmers Organisation (PAFO), Rwanda



Fatma Ben Rejeb has been working with farmers organisations for more than 20 years. She began her involvement in land and legal affairs with farmers and their grassroots organizations. Subsequently, she has been on charge of the administrative and financial management and, later on, of the international cooperation and the partnership management at the Tunisian national farmers organization. She has been Director of the North African Farmers' Network, UMNAGRI. Fatma received a Diploma of Advanced Studies in Political Science, a Masters in Juridical Sciences and a Certificate of Specialized Studies in Political and International Studies. She is fluent in Arabic, French, English, Italian and basic knowledge in Spanish.

Isolina BOTO – Head of Networks and Alliances, COLEACP, Belgium



Isolina Boto is the Head of Networks and Alliances at COLEACP, a non-profit Association of private sector operators in the agri-food sector active in the EU, Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific regions. Isolina has more than 25 years of experience in agricultural development. She started her career with the European Commission and has also worked with various ACP embassies and NGOs in areas related to food security, rural development and trade. Before joining COLEACP, she was the Manager of the CTA Brussels Office (2004-2020) implementing policy

initiatives related to the ACP-EU cooperation in the field of agricultural and rural development. She has led agribusiness projects in support of capacity development of SMEs, entrepreneurs and farmers organisations across Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

Moussa Silvain DIAKITÉ – CEO, Service Commercial Silvain International SARL, Mali



Moussa Silvain Diakité is a Malian business manager with a degree in business management, passionate about agriculture and convinced of the untapped potential of Malian agriculture. Nicknamed the “peasant”, he made his passion a reality by directing the activities of his company, SCS International, towards agriculture from 2006, in particular, the production and export of Malian mango to Europe, but also vegetable production for the local market. To do this, he has organized a network of farmers, now made up of around ten farmer organizations bringing together 1,150 mango producers and 660 vegetable producers. As a major player of the Mango inter-profession in Mali, he has been

confronted with all the issues related to the sector and has always guided the development of his activities with the aim of providing Mali with tools and solutions to reveal the agricultural potential of the country, create jobs, provide income and, above all, offer opportunities and prospects to young people. This is how he initiated the Kamalé agropolis project, comprising 50 ha of orchards soon to be equipped with a training center for the strengthening of horticultural production in Mali, as well as created a manufacturing unit of cardboard packaging for industries. Other projects relating to solar energy production, animal husbandry and vegetable production are being planned. The SCS group exports 2,000 tons of mango per year, employs around 60 permanent staff and nearly 700 seasonal workers.

Dan JAKANA – CEO, Jakana Foods Ltd, Uganda



Dan Jakana is the founder and CEO of Jakana Foods Ltd since 1994. He immigrated from Kampala, Uganda, to the USA in 1973 to study business administration in marketing and international marketing. He worked as a production technician at a food processing plant, as well as a residential management services market representative prior to found his own residential management services. He moved permanently back to Uganda in 2004 leading his fruit processing company. He is currently developing a multi-family real estate luxury residential project in Kampala, Uganda, named Jakana Heights. His inspirations to plan

and work hard are his mom, Edith Jakana, and John Fitzgerald Kennedy, as well as Martin Luther King with regard to the protection of citizens’ rights. Dan Jakana is the author of two books, *The US. doing Business with selected East African Nations* published in 1979 and *Born in Africa* a story of an African American wrongfully deported from the US published in 1998.

John Bosco KANYANGO – Managing Director, Trade and Development Links, Rwanda



John Bosco Kanyangoga is a Rwandan International Trade Lawyer and Independent Consultant. He is the founder and managing director of Trade and Development Links (T&D Links), a consultancy firm that focuses on regional integration, international trade and private sector development. He has a Master’s Degree in International Transactions and Comparative Law (LLM) from the University of San Francisco and a Bachelor of Laws Degree (LLB) from the National University of Rwanda. Before launching into full time consultancy, John Bosco served as Director of Trade and Policy Advocacy for the Rwanda Private Sector Federation (PSF). Prior to this he worked at Rwanda’s Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning and he was one of the key Rwandan negotiators that negotiated for Rwanda’s accession to the East

African Community (EAC).

As a Trade Policy Consultant with more than fifteen (15) years, his outstanding experience and exceptional expertise is in guiding Rwanda’s eligibility for the United States of America (USA) market under the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), Rwanda’s participation in COMESA, Rwanda’s accession to the EAC and EAC Common Market negotiations, participating in the formulation of

Rwanda's position(s) in the EAC-EU Economic Partnership Agreement negotiations as well as providing technical support to Rwanda's national negotiating team in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) negotiations, among others. In his consultancy capacity, he has worked and supported a number of member based organizations such the Rwanda Mining Association in Rwanda and Farmers Organizations at the regional level (East Africa) as well as at the continental level.

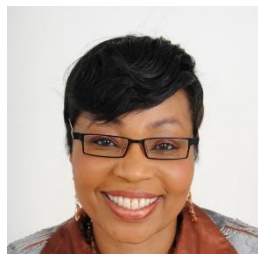
Jeremy KNOPS – General Delegate, COLEACP, Belgium



Jeremy holds a Master's degree in Business Engineering from the Solvay Brussels School of Economics and Management (SBS-EM). Prior to joining COLEACP in 2009, he was involved in Guatemala with the daily operations of a farmers' cooperative exporting loquats to the EU and the US. He started to work for COLEACP as an expert in charge of matters related to private standards and certification for ACP producers and exporters of fruit and vegetables. Jeremy is an accredited coach for leadership and professional development. He has been appointed as

General Delegate of COLEACP in June 2019.

Lucy MUCHOKI – Chief Executive Officer, Pan African Agribusiness and Agroindustry Consortium, Kenya



Lucy Muchoki is a social scientist with master's degree in strategy and business management who is passionate about food security in Africa. She believes that the African economic transformation will be achieved through dedicated development support focusing on agricultural small businesses women and youth. She founded the Pan African Agribusiness and Agroindustry Consortium, PanAAC, a continental Private Sector organization supporting the African Agribusiness through enhanced productivity and competitiveness in the regional and global market. She's currently the CEO and president of PanAAC, as well as the National chair of the technical Business committee of the Kenya

National Chambers of commerce and Industries, the Coordinator of Kenya Agribusiness and Agroindustry Alliance, the national chapter of PanAAC, board member of Agricultural Sector Network under Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), advisory board member of African Plant Nutrition Institute based in Morocco, advisory board member of Invest In Africa (IIA) and member of the African Union Agribusiness Chambers organization. She has been appointed as one of the UN 2021 food systems champion and as a member of the newly formed Africa EU strategic task force on Agriculture. Previously, she has served in various advisory councils and steering committee for Agribusiness leadership organizations both at regional and global level.

Lucy is also an accomplished entrepreneur and trades in horticultural products, tea and herbs. She was the first person in Kenya to sell herbs to local retail shops.

Prudence SEBAHIZI – Chief Technical Advisor and Head of AfCFTA Negotiations Support Unit, African Union Commission, Rwanda

Prudence Sebahizi is the Chief Technical Advisor on the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and Head of the AfCFTA Negotiations Support Unit, since August 2016. He provides technical and Strategic advice to the AfCFTA Negotiating Institutions on the AfCFTA Negotiations. He's the overall



coordinator of AfCFTA negotiations and coordinates a team of senior experts and advisors on various issues under negotiations. Prior to his appointment to this position, he led a team of experts who provided technical assistance and strategic guidance to strengthen the capacity of the African Union Commission (AUC), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to more effectively drive the AfCFTA preparatory process since 2015. He was the Lead Technical Advisor (LTA) to the Department of Trade and Industry of African Union Commission on the AfCFTA.

Between 2012 and 2014 he worked with Civil Society Organizations and prior to 2012, Prudence worked with the Government of Rwanda for more than 10 years in the areas of International Trade and Regional Integration and as Rwanda's Chief Negotiator to the negotiations of the EAC Common Market Protocol since 2006. He was at the center of Rwanda's

accession to the East African Community (EAC) and he advised the government of Rwanda on Regional Integration while working with the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Office of the President and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation respectively. Prudence SEBAHIZI holds a Master's Degree in International Development Policy from Seoul National University, South Korea.

Remco VAHL – Senior expert, DG Trade, European Commission, Belgium



Remco VAHL is Senior Expert at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Trade (DG TRADE) in a unit dealing with Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) in seven African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) regions. Remco Vahl is also responsible for trade questions relating to the African Continental Free Trade Area. He has been DG TRADE's coordinator for the post-Cotonou negotiations.

Having negotiated EPAs in all ACP regions, Remco's unit is now implementing and monitoring the agreements. In doing so, the unit is contributing to the new Africa-Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs, and the EU's partnership with Africa.