



PAFO-COLEACP INNOVATIONS SERIES: Innovations and successes of African farmer-led businesses and SMEs

SESSION N°7

Innovations in the African agroprocessing sector: the key role of SMEs and businesses

18th November 2021, 12:00-14:00 (GMT)

English-French interpretation available

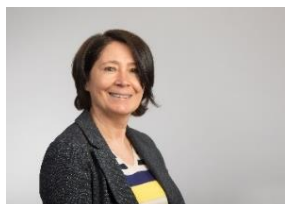
BIODATA OF THE SPEAKERS

FATMA BEN REJEB – CEO, PAN-AFRICAN FARMERS ORGANIZATION (PAFO)



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 organisations. Subsequently, she held the administrative and financial management, and later 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 holds a Diploma of Advanced Studies in Political Science, a Masters in Juridical Sciences and a Certificate of Specialised 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



Isolina Boto is the Head of Networks and Alliances at COLEACP, a non-profit Association of private sector operators in the agrifood sector active in the EU, Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) 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 Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU (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.

EUPHRASIE DASSOUNDO – FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR GENERAL, AGRO EXPRESS, BENIN

Euphrasie Dassoundo is the founder and Director General of Agro Express, an agri-food processing company established in 2013 that processes produce which would otherwise be wasted to reduce post-harvest losses. Agro Express offers creative solutions to preserve fresh produce and expands markets opportunities for local produce to contribute to food security and economic development. The company enables many farmers to develop their activity because by buying all of their production. It also creates employment opportunities for women and youth in rural areas.



Euphrasie was laureate of the 2017 Tony Elumelu Award and of 2020 "GAME CHANGERS - WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE" award from the German International Cooperation Agency (GIZ). Agro Express also placed second in the 2019 "Get in the ring Cotonou" competition for Beninese start-ups.

Euphrasie, initially a marketing and international trade technician, has undergone numerous training courses, notably thanks to her distinctions, such as the Tony Elumelu Foundation's training programme, which enables entrepreneurs to develop their skills and support them in their professional projects. Willing to share her knowledge and experience, Euphrasie has become a trainer for the retraining of young people who have dropped out of school.

YVES KOMACLO, REGIONAL MANAGER, OIKOCREDIT, CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Yves Komaclo is Regional Manager for Oikocredit West Africa and manages a €60 million diversified development portfolio of 80+ agriculture, renewable energy and inclusive finance projects across the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) region. Prior to joining Oikocredit in 2009, Yves was Division Chief Audit at UBA Bank in Benin; Marketing Manager at Tyco International in London, England; Director of Operations IT at the Nigerian National Sport Lottery; Associate at the management consulting firm Booz Allen & Hamilton; and Senior Network Manager at the African Development Bank.



Yves holds a bachelor in mathematics and physics from the Stanislas School in Paris, France; a master in electronics and telecoms from the Central School of Lyon, France; and a MBA in Business Management from the Yale School of Management, USA.

JEREMY KNOPS – GENERAL DELEGATE, COLEACP

Jeremy Knops 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.



ELMINE KOUYATÉ – FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR, AXIOM GROUP, CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Elmine is the founder and director of Axiom, a company specialised in the training, production, processing and sale of mushrooms. With her company, Elmine aims to satisfy consumers and to create jobs, as well as to contribute to achieving food and health safety by promoting environmentally friendly agriculture.



Elmine is a multi-awarded entrepreneur and won, among others, the 2003 Francophonie prize from the Conference of Ministers of Youth and Sports of the Francophonie (CONFESJES), the 2014 prize "Talents of the World" awarded by the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) and the "Best Startup Africa" prize at the Africa Guarantee Fund (AGF) forum in 2016. Elmine was also finalist in the first edition of the Pierre Castel Foundation prize in 2018, placed second at the

Cotonou "Get in the Ring" competition and fourth for the Academy of Sciences, Arts, Cultures of Africa and African Diasporas (ASCAD) prize in 2019.

Elmine has been nominated Green Ambassador for the climate in 2020 and selected by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to train Beninese out-of-school young girls and women in mushroom growing.

JANE MAIGUA – MANAGING DIRECTOR, EXOTIC EPZ, KENYA

Jane Maigua is the Managing Director of Exotic EPZ Ltd, a macadamia nuts and oils processing company based in Nairobi, Kenya. Passionate to venture into agroprocessing and export space, Jane founded the Nawiri Agribusiness EPZ Ltd company with her partners Charity Ndegwa and Loise Maina in April 2016. The company then acquired Exotic EPZ Ltd, a macadamia processing and export company based at Sameer Industrial Park, Nairobi, Kenya. Under her leadership and together with her partners, the company has grown and directly employs 163 people, 85% of whom are women and 75% young people. The company has provided increased incomes for thousands of smallholder farmers and aggregators in the macadamia nuts value chains.



Jane has previously worked for over 20 years with various international, local NGOs and the United Nations in various roles in the space of enterprise development.

ADAMA MBAYE – CEO, BAONANE, SENEGAL

Adama Mbaye is the CEO of Baonane, a leading producing company of baobab products in Senegal which promotes ethics and sustainability both in harvesting and partnerships. Baonane works on improving living conditions in the poorest regions of West Africa through the development of products for the food and cosmetic sectors.



Adama studied tourism at the Dakar Polytechnic School; Senegal, and completed a training on executive agribusiness in 2017.

In addition to her position at Baonane, Adama has been sales manager at Biomega e.U. since 2013 and President of Baye Mbaye SUARL since 2020

ERIC MEDJI – CO-FOUNDER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR, OTHENTIKS, BENIN

Eric Medji is the Managing Director of OTHENTIKS, a family business created in 2013 and specialised in the production and marketing of natural fruit and vegetable juices. The company operates in Benin and has a representation in France in order to promote products from Africa throughout the world. Since its creation, OTHENTIKS has become a reference brand in Benin.



Eric graduated from a computer science engineering school in the field of "Software Engineering" and worked several years as a consultant in information systems for computer engineering companies, later as a senior consultant within the consulting firm PricewaterhouseCoopers. In January 2002, he joined BearingPoint (former Andersen network) as head of Customer Relationship Management (CRM). He created his own consulting structure in 2006 to support clients in their digital transformation projects.

With OTHENTIKS, Eric aims at supporting a leading and responsible industry, a strong culture of ecology and respect of the environment, as well as new technologies, with all the actors of the industrial ecosystem.

WILLI SCHULZ-GREVE – HEAD OF UNIT, DG AGRICULTURE, EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Willi Schulz-Greve is Head of the unit for Global issues and relations with ACP of the Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI) at the European Commission. He joined the European Commission in 1996 and held several positions at DG AGRI, from working on rural development and as a speechwriter, to economic analysis, in particular of risk management tools and biofuels. Willi has been appointed Deputy Head of the unit in charge of arable crops, sugar, fibre plants and animal feed in 2006 and assistant to the Director General in 2007. Willi also worked for the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Willi studied agricultural sciences at the University of Göttingen, Germany, and has PhD in agricultural economics.



EMMERANCE TUYISHIME – PROGRAMS OFFICER, PAFO

Emmerance Tuyishime is the Programs Officer at the Pan African Farmers Organisation (PAFO). She has several years of experience working with local farmers' organizations and with PAFO, and has gained a lot of experience in international programs related to agriculture and cooperative development.



On top of her position, Emmerance is a members of the cassava producers cooperative RCC and is passionate with improving the living conditions in rural communities.

Emmerance was born and raised as a family farmer in rural communities of Rwanda. She holds a Masters in Project Management from Rome Business School, Italy, and a Bachelor's degree in International Relations from the University of Rwanda.