



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

SESSION N°21

How farmers and SMEs respond to the changing needs and preferences
of consumers in Africa

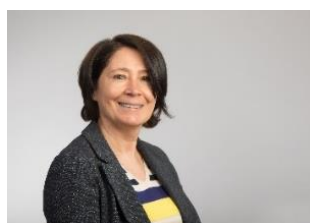
Thursday 10 October 2024 - 12:00-14:00 UTC

Online ([Zoom](#))

English-French-Portuguese interpretation available

BIODATA OF THE SPEAKERS

ISOLINA BOTO – HEAD OF NETWORKS AND ALLIANCES, COLEAD



Isolina Boto is the Head of Networks and Alliances at COLEAD, 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 COLEAD, 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.



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MARLÈNE KINDJI - FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR, BADÈMÈ NATURAL FOODS, BENIN

Marlène Kindji holds a master's degree in finance and Treasury Administration. Since 2017, she has been the promoter of BADEME NATURAL FOODS, a Beninese company specialising in processing and adding value to market garden produce (leafy vegetables, fruiting vegetables, aromatic plants, local confectionery made from aromatic plants). Before starting her business, she spent a few years working alongside her mother, a market gardener, which gave her first-hand experience of the difficulties involved in preserving market garden produce, and above all finding solutions.



Determined to make a lasting impact on the market gardening sector in Benin and to promote local flavours beyond the country's borders, she took courses in food processing and took part in the AWE GROW UP programme in 2020, winning first prize in the pitch competition with her 100% natural dehydrated vegetables, which can be stored at room temperature for over 24 months while retaining all their flavour. In 2021, she was supported by the United States African Development Foundation (USADF) with seed capital of \$10,000. In 2022, she was a finalist in the Francofil competition in the sustainable agri-economy category, organised by La Francophonie. In 2023, she received technical and financial support from the African Foundation for Development (ABC) in collaboration with the European Union Global Diaspora Facility (EUDIF). In 2024, she was an alumnus of the Mandela Washington Fellowship, a programme funded by the US Department of State, which enabled her to strengthen her business leadership skills.

FRANCIS MUIA - REGIONAL PROJECT COORDINATOR, SLOW FOOD KENYA

Francia Muia is the Regional Project Coordinator of Slow Food Kenya. Slow Food is a global movement acting together to ensure good, clean and fair food for all. Their core values are to defend biological and cultural diversity; educate, inspire and mobilize; and influence public decision-makers and the private sector.

Slow Food Kenya spearheaded the Earth Market. Nestled in the heart of Kenya's Embu County, the Slow Food Earth Market thrives on collaboration and a deep respect for tradition. Launched by passionate producers seeking a platform for their surplus, the market offers a vibrant space for the community to connect with its food heritage. Beyond its role as a marketplace, the Earth Market champions agroecological practices. Educational activities raise awareness about the importance of consuming food produced in harmony with nature, while encouraging support for local economies.

JOANNE MURUNGA - COO, KENTASTE PRODUCTS LIMITED, KENYA

Joanne Murunga is a sales professional with experience in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Rwanda. She has a strong business development professional background with a Master of Business Administration from UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School, Ireland. Joanne has expertise in sales, strategy, marketing, governance, and a demonstrated history of working in the service industry. She is passionate about consulting, service, food and culture. She is the Chief Operating Officer (COO) at Kentaste, a leading producer of coconut products in Kenya. The coconut value chain has been highly impacted by climate change, and Kentaste is working to reduce food loss and food waste. Kentaste further supports economic development by connecting rural



farmers to an international supply chain. Moreover, Kentaste focuses on empowering women, with women representing over 50% of their senior management, and improving the capacity of smallholder farmers.

PETER MWANGI - FOUNDER AND CEO, PEMU AGRIFOOD ACADEMY, FARMWORKS AGRICULTURE, KENYA

Peter Muthee Mwangi is a visionary agribusiness leader with over 25 years of experience in transforming agricultural practices and food systems across Africa. As the co-founder of Farmworks, one of the largest fresh food companies in Kenya, Peter oversees the distribution of 1 million kilos of fresh produce monthly, grown by over 5,000 farmers and distributed through a network of 3,000 vendors, supported by 31 company wholesale outlets. Farmworks focuses on ensuring the availability, affordability, and safety of fresh food for local markets, with a long-term goal of expanding across Africa to create robust ecosystems for food security.



Peter is also the founder and CEO of PEMU Agrifood Academy, a leading enterprise that trains and deploys skilled farm operators to help farmers transition to regenerative, sustainable, and commercially viable farming systems. PEMU aims to deploy thousands of operators across Africa, providing the knowledge and skills needed to enhance farmer productivity, market access, and environmental sustainability.

Peter's work with both Farmworks and PEMU highlights his commitment to improving local food systems, enhancing smallholder farmers' livelihoods, and meeting the evolving needs of consumers for safe, affordable, and nutritious food. As a Fellow of the Acumen-Rockefeller Food Systems Fellowship and Senior Business Development Consultant with the CGIAR Food Systems Accelerator, Peter is at the forefront of climate-smart innovations, sustainable agriculture, and building strong linkages between farmers and markets.

OUSSEINI OUEDRAOGO, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, ROPPA

Ousseini Ouedraogo is the Executive Secretary of the Network of Farmers' and Producers' Organisations of West Africa (ROPPA). Prior to this position, he was a programme officer in ROPPA's technical implementation unit in charge of information and communication. He has also worked for the National Federation of Naam Groups (Fédération Nationale des Groupements Naam), one of the largest farmers' organisations in West Africa.



Ousseini is also active in the permanent secretariat of the National Federation of Farmers' Organisations (Fédération Nationale des Organisations Paysannes, FENOP) in Burkina Faso and in the West African section of the international solidarity association Afdi (Agriculteurs français et développement international).

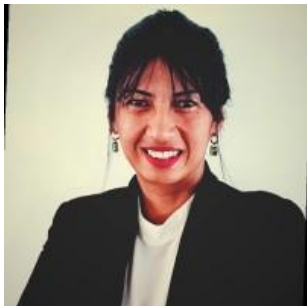
Ousseini is a trained agricultural engineer.

DR. BABAFEMI OYEWOLE – CEO, PAFO



Dr. Babafemi Oyewole, the CEO of Pan African Farmers Organization (PAFO), is a tri-sector executive and professional with experiences in the public, private and non-government sectors, and a veteran in the management of international institutions. Prior to his appointment at PAFO, he was the CEO of the African Agribusiness Alliance; former CEO of African Cashew Alliance; former Executive Director/CEO of African Energy Investment Corporation (AEICORP); Deputy Secretary General of the West African Bankers Association (WABA); General Manager, Banque Internationale du Benin, and Senior Economist with the Bank of Industry, Nigeria. He was a Regional Consultant on natural resources management policy in African countries with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). He is a member of Africa Regional Experts on Policy Dialogue on Natural Resource-based Development at the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Dr. Oyewole was a Chevening Scholar for his PhD in development economics at the university of Bradford, United Kingdom, and obtained an MBA in Technology, Marketing and Business Strategy from Olabisi Onabanjo University, Nigeria. He has attended several management and executive development programmes in top universities including Lagos Business School, Nigeria, and Harvard university, United States. He has published articles in international journals and made conference presentations on development policy, banking and finance, agriculture, agribusiness, and sustainable development issues.

TANTELY RAKOTIBE - FOUNDER MANAGER, TROPIKALY & UTAM, MADAGASCAR



Tantely Rakotobe is a mother of two daughters, the Founder Manager of UTAM ET TROPIKALY, and is also a Certified Professional Coach and Trainer. Passionate about entrepreneurship, she set up her first business in the distribution of building materials at the age of 21 and ran it for 8 years. Aspiring to a new challenge, she decided to set up an agricultural farm supplying supermarkets in Madagascar for 4 years, where she was able to see and experience the day-to-day life of farmers and producers. In 2019, she set up UTAM ET TROPIKALY, an agri-food processing unit specialising in drying exotic fruit, with the aim of becoming a sustainable source of income for fruit-producing farmers and making a lasting impact in Madagascar.



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