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Youth in agribusiness: shaping the future of agriculture

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<http://brusselsbriefings.net>

BIODATA OF THE SPEAKERS

Fatma Ben Rejeb – CEO, Panafrican Farmer’s Organisation (PAFO)

Fatma Ben Rejeb, from Tunisia, is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Pan-African Farmers’ Organization (PAFO) from 1st June 2015. She has been working with Farmers Organizations for 20 years. Previously, she was the General Secretary (CEO) of the Maghreb and North African Farmers’ Union (UMNAGRI). She was also in charge with International Cooperation and Partnership at the Tunisian Union of Agriculture and Fisheries (UTAP) where she also held the post of the Director of Administrative and Financial Affairs. Fatma received a Diploma of Advanced Studies in Political Science at the University of Law and Political Sciences of Tunis, a Masters in Juridical Sciences and a Certificate of Specialized Studies in Political and International Studies at the University of Legal, Political and Social Sciences of Tunis. She is fluent in Arabic, French, English, Italian and basic knowledge in Spanish.

Isolina Boto – Manager, CTA Brussels Office

Isolina Boto is the Manager of the CTA Brussels Office. Isolina has more than 20 years of experience in development. She worked for the European Commission, various ACP embassies and NGOs in areas related to food security, rural development and trade. Within CTA, she worked in various positions at headquarters, in the Netherlands, especially on co-funded technical programmes on Agriculture and Rural Development implemented at regional level. Since 2004 she heads the CTA Brussels Office, dealing with policy issues related to the ACP-EU cooperation in the field of agricultural and rural development. In that context, she coordinates and organizes the regular Brussels Development Briefings on topical development policy issues (<http://brusselsbriefings.net>). The office produces a daily news service on key policy areas of ACP-EU cooperation on trade, fisheries, climate change, food security and development policy (<http://brussels.cta.int>). Since 2016 she leads the CTA group on agribusiness development.

Bertrand Foffe – Founder, Jangolo Farm, Cameroon

Bertrand Foffe is from Cameroon. After some years in media and Communication in Cameroon, Bertrand decided to move abroad to study ICT in Eindhoven in the Netherlands. After few years of experience as IT consultant, Bertrand decided to start a project in Cameroon with some friends with the objective of using technologies to improve small farmers lives in Africa, starting with Cameroon. Bertrand is the founder of Jangolo, an Agri-Tech company that develop solutions to ease the life of farmers and promote their brand and product across Cameroon and abroad. Bertrand is passionate about finding IT solutions to common daily problems, that passion applied to agriculture motivated the creation of Jangolo. Jangolo offers three platforms that contribute to boost and guide the uprising new generation of farmers. Jangolo Farm is the E-commerce platform that helps farmers to sell and distribute their goods easily and efficiently. Farmers facilitate farmer’s daily activities by providing solutions to manage their farm, increase their profitability and expand in their domain of expertise.

Estelle Gallot - Administrative and Financial Officer, AgriCord

Estelle is an Agricultural Engineer, specializing in Economics and Rural Development. Since 2013, she is responsible for administrative and financial matters in the Network of Agri-Agencies (NGOs supporting producer organizations in developing countries and having structural links with professional agricultural organizations in the North) www.agricord.org

Previously, she was responsible for advocacy and strengthening dialogue and exchanges with European policy makers, the agricultural professional world, NGO networks and other development actors on the strengthening of farmers' organizations. She also has experience in monitoring and evaluation of agricultural policies and in agricultural consulting.

Peter Kuria Githinji – Director Business Development and Partnerships, African Agribusiness Incubators Network (AAIN), Ghana

Peter Kuria Githinji is the Director of Business Development and Strategy at AAIN. He has worked in Kenya, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Barbados, Costa Rica, UK, Finland and now in Ghana in the design and development of businesses solutions for SMEs, large corporations and NGOs focuses on innovations and enterprise development. He has lead programs and projects focused on market integration both in Agriculture and Renewable Energy.

Has been a lead innovator biomass clean cooking stoves (gasification) as well as being involved the design of large scale energy efficiency housing project (UN-HABITAT/HAMK/Strathmore University) in Kenya.

Peter has worked on innovations ecosystems for business incubation at Aalto University (Finland), HAMK (Finland), and Futures Research Centre (University of Turku). He is a founder and lead designer of the open Innovation approaches and business support systems at Shalin Finland (a developmental NGO).

Peter has extensive experience in business innovations at different scales. He is also a founder and director of Helsinki African Film Festival (HAFF) which is focused on promoting arts as a business on African cinema.

Viwanou Gnassounou – Assistant Secretary General, ACP Secretariat

Viwanou Gnassounou, from Togo, is an economist, financial expert and project manager with 17 years of experience in agricultural and natural resource policy formulation, aid programming, sectoral commodity export strategies, and trade. Before joining the ACP Management Team, he was co-manager of a Consulting firm, which provides support in the areas of development policies. He also set up and managed an agricultural products industrial processing company based in Togo. Mr. Gnassounou holds a Master's degree in Economic Analysis and Policy, a Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies (DEA) in Development Economics (MPhil equivalent), and a Diplôme d'Etudes Supérieures Spécialisées (DESS) in Economic Development and Development Project Management (MSc equivalent) from the Centre for Research and Studies in International Development at the Université d'Auvergne, France. He is fluent in English, French and Mina (Togo), with basic knowledge of German. Mr. Gnassounou took office on 1 April 2015.

Jean Baptiste Hategekimana – Chairperson of the Rwanda Youth in Agribusiness Forum (RYAF)

Jean Baptiste Hategekimana, currently serving at RYAF as the Chairman, is a farmer who specializes in Tamarillo/Tree tomatoes. He grew up in Rwanda, from a modest family but close to agriculture in rural area, the North-East-East. From a passion that was developed since primary 5, under guidance of his father, who was a politician, he tested the field agriculture in 2006 after completing studies in secondary, Biology Chemistry and Latin, where after planting and managing 36 trees, he has made 485,000Frw, close to 580\$ of today. This experience was paired to different training opportunities where he decided to join the Faculty of Agriculture at National University of Rwanda in Agribusiness Department (2007-2011). Ready for graduation in 2011, he has planted 2500 Tamarillo trees and this made a net profit of 6,000\$ in only 6 months of production (2012-2013). In 2012, he formally registered his company, Kizinga Farm Ltd. He is a fan of slow and country music, watching soccer and meeting new people.

Michael Hailu – Director, Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA)

Michael Hailu, an Ethiopian national, is the Director of the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) based in the Netherlands. CTA is a joint institution of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States and the European Union working under the Cotonou Partnership Agreement. Mr. Hailu has over 25 years of professional experience in agricultural research and development in Africa and Asia. Prior to joining CTA in mid-2010, he held senior leadership positions at the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) based in Nairobi, Kenya and at the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) in Indonesia. Mr. Hailu has led the development and implementation of CTA's 2011-2015 strategic plan refocusing the Centre's work on three priority themes—supporting agricultural policies and strategies; enhancing inclusive value chains; and strengthening capacities of ARD institutions and networks in knowledge management and ICTs. He has degrees from the University of Pittsburgh and Addis Ababa University. He has also been trained in strategic leadership at the Stanford University Graduate School of Business.

Leonard Mizzi – Head of Unit, Rural Development, Food Security, Nutrition – Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission, Brussels.

Leonard Mizzi is a Maltese national, having started working in the Maltese public administration (Office of the Prime Minister in the late 80s) then moving to the Maltese private sector between 1996-2006 where he was the first Director of the Malta Business Bureau in Brussels- the joint office of the Hotels and Restaurants Association and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Malta. Since 2007 he joined the European Commission (DG Agriculture and Rural Development), first dealing with ACP countries and development and then inter-institutional affairs. In 2017, he joined DG DEVCO. Dr. Mizzi is a graduate of the University of Malta, CIHEAM-IAMM (Montpellier) and has a Ph.D from Reading University, UK – with a specialisation in food demand economics. He has been a visiting lecturer at the University of Malta, Open University and Boston University and occasionally College of Europe (Bruges). He is the author of a number of articles, specialising in Euro-Mediterranean issues, Malta-EU relations, agribusiness in island states and agribusiness and SME development.

Maness Nkhata – Managing Director, Lakeshore Agro-processors Enterprise(LAPE), Malawi

Maness Nkhata grew up in Malawi. Studied Business administration at The polytechnic which is the constituent of University of Malawi. After not Finding formal job and with the background of farming, she became an entrepreneur in 2007. She is now the Managing director of LAPE and Kakoma estate where she has been implementing several projects and managing donor funds for more than 10 years. Because of her work as a youth, Maness studied with Southern University Agri Centre in Louisiana and CGIAR, Nairobi, Kenya where she got certificate in Agribusiness and Entrepreneurship as well as Certificate in Women Leadership and Management respectively. Because of her achievements in Farming and agro-processing, she became first ever Board Chairperson for National Youth Council of Malawi at the age of below 30. She has experience working with development partners such as USAID, IFAD, USDA, NORAD, the public sector, the private sector as well as multi stakeholder set-up. During her free time, Maness likes reading current affairs in newspapers and swimming.

Gerald Otim – Founder and Chief operating officer, Ensibuuko, Uganda

Otim is the Cofounder and Chief Operations Officer at Ensibuuko. His journey is an interesting one: As a young farmer, he experienced first-hand the difficulties faced by a youth growing an agribusiness in a community where banks are inexistent and youth and completely excluded. He moved on to establish Ensibuuko, a Ugandan startup helping modernize banking infrastructure for Savings and Credit Cooperatives as a means to improve the delivery of financial services to Uganda's unbanked population. Ensibuuko was the winner of the first Agrihack competitions organized by CTA in 2013 in Kigali, Rwanda. They have developed a cloud-based Microfinance Software, specially designed for Financial Cooperatives. In Uganda, alone there are 6000 cooperatives serving 52% of the population. These institutions are mainly rural and composed of women (mostly in their youth and practicing agriculture). Ensibuuko's software is currently used in over 70 institutions reaching over 600,000 people in Uganda alone and is now available in two other countries: Zambia and Malawi.

Website: www.ensibuuko.com Twitter: @ensibuuko

Patrick Sakyi – Expert mobile commerce business, Farmerline, Ghana

Patrick Sakyi grew up in Ghana. Coming from a farming family, he chose to study agriculture. He got the opportunity to study rural economics and management at the University of Ghent in Belgium. Passionate about agriculture and rural development, he moved back to Ghana right after his studies and proceeded to work there as a research assistant on several agricultural projects. Hence, he was a natural fit when he joined Farmerline as the monitoring and evaluation associate. Patrick now leads Farmerline's mobile commerce business, offering tailored innovative services to rural farmers through mobile technology. In his free time, he loves to write. His article, [Sharing the experience of rural life: a wisdom pot for the modern world](#), has been featured by Rural 21- The International Journal for Rural Development.

Betty Wampfler – Professor, SupAgro, France

Betty Wampfler is Professor of Agricultural Economics and Development Economics at Montpellier SupAgro in France. She is responsible for the Master 2 "Markets, organizations, quality and services in support of agriculture in the South (3A / MOQUAS) open to students and professionals.

His research activities, conducted in institutional economics, focus on the transformations of family farming. It also supports various development initiatives in West and Central Africa and Madagascar in the field of agricultural finance, the structuring of family farms and the installation of young people. In particular, it supports Cameroon's AFOP program in its training and supports the installation of young people in agriculture.

She is a founding member and currently president of the CERISE Association, a platform for French development, training and research organizations for ethical finance.