



AFRICAN DIASPORA AGROFOOD FORUM

Theme: From Local to Global;
strategizing for growth in
agrofood entrepreneurship

20th to 22nd October 2023
Gare Maritime Tour & Taxis
Brussels Belgium





INTRODUCTION

The Food Bridge vzw, on behalf of all the partners, welcomes you to the opening conference of the 7th African Diaspora Agrofood Forum.

The contributions of African Diasporas to the development of the continent will always be part of the migration narrative. Thus African diasporas have an interest and play important roles in the political, economic and socio-cultural development of the continent.

Over the years discussions about the role of African diasporas in development, focused on remittances. However, funding entrepreneurship in the continent, is an important component of the role of African diasporas as development actors in Africa. African diasporas fund either their own businesses or entrepreneurial projects of other people in their communities and other countries. Such investments have empowered many African youths and women too, helping create jobs and sustain local economies.

The theme for this 2023 edition is From Local to Global, strategizing for growth in the agrofood sector.

This theme reflects how connected our global foodsystem is and the need to have a diverse and inclusive approach, that links the local food systems to the global. For many African nations, achieving the SDGs is not yet feasible especially SDG 2, Zero Hunger. So the continent needs more agrofood entrepreneurs with innovative ideas, whose businesses can benefit Africa and the world.

ADAF23's focus is on new trends, resources and innovations that can facilitate access to finance and premium markets, enabling sustainable growth in the African agrofood sector.

The impact of recent global political and health upheavals, showed how vulnerable the current global food system is and the need for input from diverse stakeholders, whose projects and approaches at the local level and globally, can help reduce some of the challenges our food system is facing.

We thank all the partners and sponsors, who understand the need to develop a vibrant African diaspora entrepreneurship ecosystem and are working with us, to support African diaspora entrepreneurs active in Africa and Europe.

We appreciate the support we received from the Caribbean chamber of commerce in Europe, FAO Brussels office, ENABEL's PEM Wecco & N'zassa projects, IOM's O'Remit Project, EUDIF, Entrepreneurs for Entrepreneurs, International solidarity City of Brussels, the office of Ms Lydia Mutyebele, alderwoman in charge of equal opportunities in the city of Brussels and African Diaspora entrepreneurs.

7th African Diaspora Agrofood Forum

Day One

Event Moderators

Mr Jo Spalburg, Executive Director / Secretary General, Caribbean Chamber of Commerce Europe and Ms Diana Dimbueni, PR & Communications Expert; Board member, The Food Bridge

9.00am -9.45am - Registration and welcome coffee

10am – 10.20am - Welcome And Opening Remarks

Ms Maureen Duru - Founder | Director , The Food Bridge

Ms Lydia Mutyebele - Alderwoman City of Brussels

10. 25am – 11.40am - Diaspora Engagement In Policymaking For Entrepreneurship And Development

Moderator : Ms Bwalya Nwali, Independent Consultant & Founder Networking for Africans in Belgium

Her Excellency Tokozile Xasa, Ambassador of South Africa to Belgium,

Mr Raschad Al-Khafaji, Director FAO Liaison Office with the European Union and Belgium,

Ms Marise Habib, Chief of Mission, International Organization of Migration (IOM) for Belgium and Luxembourg

Mr Sven Huyssen , Director of Operations ENABEL

Mr Kwaku Boamah, President Sankaa vzw Belgium and Coliso Ghana

11.40am – 11.50am - Presentation Of The 2023 Compendium Of African Diaspora Agrofood Entrepreneurs by Mr Ralph Genetzke, Director ICMPD

11.50am – 12.05am - Coffee Break

12.10pm – 13.40pm – Harnessing African Diaspora Contributions For Impactful Growth In Agrofood Entrepreneurship

Moderator: Ms Cherine Layachi, Campaigner, Diaspora Projects Soliris Brussels .

Mr Alpha Diallo, Founder Africapaid and Welli Farms Senegal

Ms Agatha Nsimiire, Founder Econgranja Uganda

Ms Vanessa Ngoga, Founder Cabou Burundi

Ms Virna Rakotonirina, Founder Nature Madagascar

Mr Maranatha Nduaya, Founder Kipeps Belgium

Ms Solange Domaye, CEO Symfonio.bio Netherlands

13.45pm– 14.05pm -African Diaspora Agrofood Entrepreneur Of The Year Award presented by Mr Bjorn Macauter, General Manager Entrepreneurs for Entrepreneurs

14.05pm – 14.35pm Lunch Break & Networking

7th African Diaspora Agrofood Forum Day One

14.40pm – 15. 40pm - **Breaking Barriers; Re-Evaluating Funding Opportunities And Strategies For African Diaspora Owned Businesses**

Moderator: Mr Francois Stepman, Senior Knowledge Management Expert

Ms Stella Opoku-Owusu, Executive Director, AFFORD UK

Ms Fridah Ntarangwi, Co-founder and Managing Director ZidiCircle
Netherlands

Mr Arturo Biglia, Intervention Officer- Entrepreneurial mobility ENABEL

15.45 – 16. 30 - **A Place On The Top Shelf; Marketing African Food Products In Europe**

Moderator: Ms Rhoda Yeboah, Account Manager & Event Host

Ms Orfirah Hogeman-Helstone, Founder, Route To Bloom Netherlands

Ms Liesbeth Van Meulder, Advisor Private Sector, Rikolto Belgium

Mr Koen Van Troos, Fairtrade Belgium

16.30pm – Closing Remarks And Vote Of Thanks

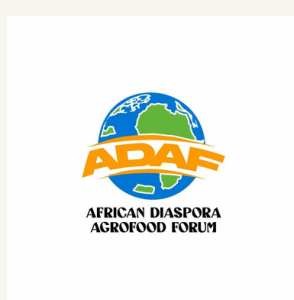
Partners



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Speakers Profiles

Mr Raschad Al-Khafaji FAO Liaison - Office with the European Union and Belgium.

Mr Al-Khafaji after working in different international agencies, joined FAO's Fisheries and Aquaculture Department at the headquarters in 2003 as Liaison and Meetings Officer.

From 2013 to 2019, he served as Cabinet Attachee in the Office of the Director-General and subsequently became interim Deputy Director of Cabinet. He was Special Assistant to the Director-General from 2019 until he took up his position in Brussels. He holds a Master degree in Economics with an emphasis on International Development and Marketing, from the Wirtschafsuniversität Wien (Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration) in Austria. He is fluent in Arabic and German (both mother tongues), English, French and has basic knowledge of Italian and Spanish.

Ms Marise Habib, Chief of mission IOM Belgium and Luxembourg

Marise Habib was appointed Chief of Mission of the Country Office for Belgium of Luxembourg of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in 2022. Marise Habib joined IOM in 2010, and has since held multiple positions working across the Organization's Operations and Emergencies, and Migrant Protection and Assistance portfolios, in Jordan, Yemen, Afghanistan, Headquarters' Transition and Recovery Division, the Country Office for Senegal, and the Regional Office for West and Central Africa.

Prior to her work with IOM, Marise worked for the private sector in the United States, and as a journalist in Egypt. Marise holds a Master's degree in Migration and Refugee Studies, and Bachelor's degrees in International Affairs and in Journalism.

Mr Sven Huysen, Director of Operations at Enabel, the Belgian Development Agency.

Sven Huysen has a background in economics and additional studies in political sciences and international relations. With more than twenty years of management experience, including fifteen years at the strategic level, Sven has a well-established track record in guiding organizations. He brings over twenty five years of international experience in strategic, operational, and project management across various contexts.

Sven has dedicated twelve years to fieldwork in several African countries, including Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Cameroon, and Benin, working in different sectors, including non-governmental organizations, humanitarian agencies, government bodies, and multilateral organizations. This hands-on experience has given him a deep understanding of the complexities of development work.

Mr Kwaku Boamah, President Sankaa vzw and Founder COLISO Ghana

Mr Kwaku Boamah Acheampong was head of the International Partnership Department of the Belgian NGO- Fund for Development Cooperation-FOS. He is currently active in the hospitality and agrofood sectors in Ghana, in addition to his consultancy roles for different international development projects in Ghana and Belgium.

With over 30 years experience in the development sector, Mr Boamah is the president of Sankaa vzw, a Flemish government funded federation of over 80 organizations in Belgium. He is also the co-founder of COLISO Ghana, which focuses on sustainable livelihoods in rural communities and has carried out over 35 projects on health, education, water, sanitation and agriculture in rural communities of Ghana.

Mr Boamah is an active community leader in Ghana and Belgium, where he also serves as the President of the Ghana council.

Speakers Profiles

Ms Lydia Mutyebele, alderwoman housing, patrimony and equal opportunities, City of Brussels

Ms Mutyebele has a law degree from the ULB and also a degree in private international law. After that, she worked as a lawyer before being hired at various political offices in Brussels.

In 2006, she was elected for the first time as a municipal councilor of the City of Brussels, where she held various mandates as a director at various non-profit organizations and public companies. She was also member of the board of the Public Welfare Centre (CPAS-OCMW) of the City of Brussels.

Ms Mutyebele is very active in different Brussels associations, such as the non-profit organization 'Groupement des Femmes Africaines Inspirantes et Actives'. The association helps women to develop all their talents at a professional level. She is also a musician by training and now leads a gospel choir.

Ms Mutyebele affirms through her work that Brussels is a dynamic and multicultural city where everyone has the right to be treated with respect regardless of social, geographic and cultural background. She believes politics must be within the reach of all citizens

Mr Ralph Genetzke, Director, ICMPD

Ralph Genetzke is a Director at the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) and Head of Mission in Brussels, Belgium, since 2011. He oversees ICMPD's outreach to EU institutions and EU Member State representations, diplomatic missions and other organisations or institutions relevant to ICMPD's work in Brussels.

Ralph is also the Project Director of various EU-funded capacity building facilities including the EU Global Diaspora Facility (EUDiF), the Migration Partnership Facility (MPF), and the MIEUX+ (Migration EU eXpertise) Initiative. As a former staff member of the European Commission (DG DEVCO, now known as DG INTPA), Ralph has more than 20 years of experience in the field of migration and cooperation between the EU and countries outside the EU.

Regularly engaged in discussions as a panellist or moderator, he is committed to discussing migration and asylum issues in all their complexities without losing sight of practical and feasible solutions. His particular interest lies in translating policies into practical cooperation with partner countries outside the EU, be it at EU level using various financial instruments, or at bilateral level. Ralph holds a BA in Russian Studies from the University of London and an MA in European Studies from the College of Europe.

Ms Stella Opoku-Owusu, Executive Director, AFFORD

Stella has over 20 years' experience in the development sector at community, national and international levels, working with diaspora communities; extensive experience and knowledge of diaspora, migration and development, in policy and practice. She oversees AFFORD's work on Diaspora Investment, Enterprise and Employment, AFFORD's engagement with Diaspora & Migrants, Network Building and Training and is responsible for driving AFFORD's learning and policy advocacy. She was nominated Co-Chair for the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD - Quito) Civil Society Day 2019; and has provided expertise to governments on diaspora engagement policy through consultancy, training programmes and speaking engagements. In 2022, she was selected as a Steering Committee member of the UN's Migration Multi-Partnership Trust Fund. Stella is also a board director with AFFORD Europe, based in Belgium.

Ms Orfirah Hogeman-Helstone, Founder Route to Bloom Netherlands

Orfirah is a growth expert for businesses that want to scale their tasty, healthy and sustainable foods. In 2023 she founded Route to Bloom to mentor, coach and train food entrepreneurs to create and grow the household brands of the future. She helps to develop their unique roadmap into new channels and ensure their long-term success.

From working at large corporates like Unilever, Nestlé and Danone to NGOs, start-ups and scale ups, Orfirah brings over a decade of experience in food, retail & food service in The Netherlands and other European markets. Her background is from the Caribbean (Surinam & Curaçao) and she lives in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, with her husband and three children.

Speakers Profiles

Mr Arturo BIGLIA, Intervention Officer – Entrepreneurial Mobility Enabel, Belgian Development Agency

Arturo Biglia is Intervention Officer at Enabel, the Belgian Development Agency. He has a background in political sciences and international relations.

Currently involved in the implementation of the PEM N'Zassa project that aims at facilitating the creation of business partnerships between Ivorian and Belgian, notably from the African diaspora, entrepreneurs, Arturo has solid expertise in migration and development.

Arturo is a young professional with experience in operations and project management. He has dedicated the first years of his career to multilateral organizations in different sectors such as democracy support and election observation, and spent two years in Morocco working on migration governance at the regional level.

Mr Solange Domaye, CEO Symfonio.bio Netherlands.

Ms Domaye is a passionate advocate for Africa's economic upliftment through entrepreneurship and strategic partnerships with European stakeholders.

Drawing from her leadership at Symfonio, she champions sustainable agricultural practices and brings unique products like fonio to global markets. Skilled in mediation and inherently curious, Solange's mission is to galvanize European investors towards the African market, bridging them with ideal collaborators.

Her deep understanding of the sub-Saharan region, coupled with impeccable negotiation tactics and her tenure as an Honorary Consul, allows her to navigate diverse linguistic and cultural landscapes with ease.

Offering both astute strategic insights and collaborative prowess, Solange is a trailblazer in bridging continents for sustainable business growth.

Fridah Ntarangwi- Founding & Managing Director at Zidicircle

Fridah is an active participant in diaspora engagement Matters on entrepreneurship and investments in Europe and Green SMEs development in Africa. Fridah is the Founder of Zidicircle that developed the first diaspora entrepreneurs and Investors training programmes out of the Netherlands and Founded Zidicircle Coop investment platform through which SME investments are pooled and invested by diaspora Angel investors. Through her management the Zidicircle coop is investing in Diaspora startups in Europe and Green SME's in Africa.

She was recognized by the European Union(EMEN project) for promoting migrant entrepreneurship, the Duisenberg Woman in Finance award, listed by the municipality of Amsterdam as the top female entrepreneur and listed as a top female entrepreneur in the Netherlands by Sheatwork.

She sits on the Global Diaspora Summit Advisory Board convened by the IOM-UN Migration and the Government of Ireland, the Zidicircle Coop Board, and various SME's.

Previously Fridah worked for the Central Bank of Kenya, PGGM (dutch pension Fund), Financial Access and KWAL among others. Fridah holds a bachelor of commerce degree from the Catholic University of E.A and a masters of science in Finance -Financial markets specialization from the Duisenberg school of Finance Netherlands.

Speakers Profiles

Mr Francois Stepman, Knowledge management expert

François Stepman is a Senior Knowledge Management Expert with a strong experience in the development of platforms that aim to improve dissemination of scientific knowledge in the African continent.

François has an extensive knowledge of the context of agricultural research in Africa as he has constantly been involved in various initiatives for the last fifteen years: Advisory Services for Resilient Agri-Food Systems (ASRAFS), CGIAR (Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research), Platform for African - European Partnership in Agricultural Research for Development (PAEPARD), Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA). He has worked for over 10 years in West, South and North African countries and therefore has a perfect knowledge of the different national and regional stakeholders that should be involved to ensure the proper involvement of all interested parties in this project.

Mr Jo Spalburg, Secretary General and Director, Caribbean chamber of commerce in Europe

Jo Spalburg is a professional, multi-cultural and multi-lingual marketing consultant, expert in Media and Travel related products and services. He has more than 30 years of international sales; marketing experience, while based in 9 different countries on 3 different continents (Europe, the Americas and Southern Africa).

Spalburg occupied various sales and marketing positions -at Headquarters, Regional and Local level- for some of the leading international hospitality and travel companies. He also served the public sector for a number of years at the National Tourism Organisations and the Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO) as Director of Marketing Europe, before starting to work as an independent marketing consultant in 2003.

Spalburg worked on the development of strategic marketing plans for many leading and emerging destination (including Abu Dhabi Barbados, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Mozambique, Puerto Plata, Singapore and Suriname), while employed by a number of leading consultancy firms, including: Howarth International France, Tourism Intelligence International (Germany), Deloitte's Emerging Markets Group (EMG) Ltd (UK), International Travel Communications (New Jersey, USA), Instituto de Calidad (Spain), VIP Consultants (FWI), and more recently the Caribbean Media Corporation (CMC).

In 2019, Spalburg co-founded the Caribbean Chamber of Commerce in Europe (CCCE) in Brussels and started to work as secretary general for the multilateral, non-for-profit organization; thereby expanding his sectorial activities and making a valuable contribution to the sustainable economic development of the region.

He holds an MBA in Hospitality Management, with a major in Marketing, from CORNELL/ESSEC (IMHI, France) and speaks six languages, including Dutch, English, French, German, and Spanish, as well as Italian.

Rhoda Yeboah, Account Manager & Event Host

Rhoda Yeboah is a versatile professional who works as an Account Manager and experienced event host. She has the communication skills to engage an audience and ensure the set goals of events are achieved. Whether it's a live show, corporate event or a virtual gathering, Rhoda brings an abundance of energy, charm, and expertise to every occasion, leaving a lasting impression on attendees.

Speakers Profiles

Mr Koen Van Troos, Head PR & Advocacy, Fairtrade Belgium.

Koen Van Troos is currently working as head PR & Advocacy at Fairtrade Belgium. In his current position, Koen aims to advocate for EU and Belgian policies and programs that add to living incomes for smallholder producers and living wages for workers in international value chains. Koen has a background in political sciences and has thorough experience in advocacy focusing on issues such as food security, rural development, global value chains and fair trade.