

AFRICAN DIASPORA AGROFOOD ENTREPRENEURS

COMPENDIUM



The Food Bridge vzw and COLEACP are collaborating to benefit entrepreneurs coming from or working with African Diaspora groups.

The Food Bridge vzw is a non-profit organisation based in Brussels, Belgium. It aims to highlight and promote the inputs of the African Diaspora to the agrofood sector in Africa and Europe, focusing on projects that address the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

COLEACP is a network of companies, professional organisations and experts committed to inclusive and sustainable agriculture. Its mission is to develop inclusive, sustainable trade in fruit and vegetables and food products, focusing on the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries' trade with one another and with the European Union.

This compendium has been produced by the Fit For Market SPS programme as part of its support to The Food Bridge vzw. Fit For Market SPS is a COLEACP programme funded by the European Union within the framework of development cooperation with the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS).

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INTRODUCTION

Whereas remittances from the African Diaspora are globally acknowledged as contributing to the economic and social wellbeing of Africans, their investment as entrepreneurs is yet to gain the same recognition. Many of these self-sponsored entrepreneurial projects remain mainly under the radar of policy-making decisions of governments and development and financial agencies.

Many in the African Diaspora see a contrast between the economic growth in their country of residence and in their country of origin. This poses not only a challenge, but also an opportunity for many to apply their education and professional skills gained in Europe to support sustainable development in their country of origin, alongside achieving entrepreneurial success in their country of residence. So they initiate projects and businesses that reflect the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are vital to the development of the African continent and address the social, economic and environmental challenges in their place of origin. Those who do not themselves become entrepreneurs may support startups and small businesses in their country of origin by providing seed money, infrastructure and materials.

This Compendium, produced by The Food Bridge vzw and COLEACP, showcases the innovative businesses of nine selected African Diaspora agrofood entrepreneurs. These “snapshots” highlight the agripreneurs’ vision and their impacts on the SDGs, with the aim of fostering new collaborations and relationships for their future development.

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ESANFARMERS

- **Business sector:** agriculture (pineapple and other fruits; vegetables and legumes)
- **Year of registration:** 2007
- **Employees:** 12 full-time (5 women)

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ABOUT THE COMPANY

Brief history

EsanFarmers cooperative was founded by Steve Ebhota in 2007. The cooperative is made up of small pineapple growers from villages in Edo State, Nigeria. We offer our members training, education and small loans, and the opportunity for their products to comply with international standards.

Through our associations with European partners, including COLEACP and Fairtrade, we have been able to open our villages to overseas partners in order to learn from other farmers across the globe.

Mission and vision

Our mission is to promote good agricultural practices and farmers' wellbeing.



We aim to help and support our farmers to add value to their products, so that they can sell more and make a better income for their families.

Impacts on society and environment

EsanFarmers cooperative has been able to bring about positive changes to the way our members practise their farming. Health and safety and environmental considerations are part of our everyday life on the farm.

PRODUCTS AND MARKETS

- **Certifications:** Fairtrade (members have received COLEACP training)
- **Main markets:** Local, regional, global (small scale)

Our main market is still Nigeria, and we have also been exporting to West Africa (Niger) and to Chad. We have made small inroads into the UK market, mostly to specialist African shops.





NEXT STEPS

We are still very small in the fruit export business – we need to get our produce to continental Europe, and we need European partners to invest in EsanFarmers. We are also starting to grow cassava and to process part of it into garri.

The future is looking good. We have one of the most fertile soils in the world, with abundant rainfall and good sunshine all year round. And we now have more young educated Nigerians coming into farming.

Most importantly, a high environmental standard is now a major concern for all our members, and we are increasing our investment in every area of our business, while seeking new partners and improving our products to reach the global market.



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MISAO KIVU

- **Business sector:** agroforestry; spices and dried foods
- **Employees:** Belgium: 1 (woman); DR Congo: 7 (5 women); also 55 indirectly employed (32 women)
- **Year registered:** 2018

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ABOUT THE COMPANY

Brief history

In 2015 Sandrine Vasselín Kabonga, founder of the project, rediscovered the unique Kivu bush pepper, a fine and rare world-class pepper, and embarked on a journey to put Kivu and Congo on the world's spice road. Now Misao has grown into a fully fledged spice company, growing and sourcing over 15 different types of fine spices from Central Africa.

Mission and vision

To become the world reference for fine African spices and peppers, and a key player in the fine spices world.

Impacts on society and environment

We contribute to skills development and job



creation through setting up a new sector in the DRC economy – spices and dried goods (fruit, cocoa) for the local market and for export. We work with local cooperatives and NGOs as key actors within the remote country communities where we operate.

PRODUCTS AND MARKETS

- **Certifications:** authorised by Ministry of Environment, DRC, to work in agroforestry
- **Main markets:** local, international
- **Market position:** niche market

Locally, we supply to two points of sale in Kinshasa for the general public (B2C), as well as B2B supply for hotels and restaurants in Kinshasa, and corporates. Globally, we have physical points of sale in Belgium (Brussels, Namur, Liège) and France (Paris and Lille). We also have an online sales presence via our webshop and other online marketplaces.

Misao produces its own spices and cocoa, and sells directly or through distributors. We have no direct competitors in DRC at the same level. On the international market, our unique model combining spice "hunting" and producing has set ourselves apart from our competitors that mainly are spice merchants (intermediaries).

In this niche market we are focusing on high-added-value dried products from Africa – whole spices of highest quality, dried fruit, and best quality cocoa beans and cocoa products.

Black pepper: Poivre Sauvage du Kivu

This exceptional pepper (*Piper guineense*) is unique thanks to the Kivu terroir where it grows, which gives it its specific aromas and flavours, with floral notes of lavender and tea, and its discreet and inimitable hotness. This new variety was discovered 4 years ago by Misao. It is harvested and processed by Misao in Kivu via a cooperative that we have set up with our local partner, the NGO Cernadi, and sold exclusively by Misao. Praised by Michelin-starred chefs, it has received complimentary reviews in the European and international press. It is also available as red and white peppers.

Black pepper: Poivre Sauvage de l'Équateur

The terroir of the Equateur region (central-western DRC) gives this pepper (*Piper guineense*) its more vegetal and woody notes, with a biting and frank hotness, reminiscent of the bright sun and dense forests of Equateur. Also available in red and white.

Cinammon: Cannelle du Congo

With a unique aroma and vanilla notes, this superior quality cinnamon (*Cinnamomum seylanicum*, “Ceylon cinnamon”) is grown in the fertile lands of Bas-Congo, an ideal terroir where some cinnamon trees are centuries old. It can also be sold ground, on request.

Cocoa

Misao also produces dried cocoa beans, raw or roasted in pieces (cocoa nibs), from Forastero cocoa (90%) and Trinitario cocoa (around 10%). The cocoa plantation is located almost on the Equator, in a hot and humid environment ideal for cultivation and processing. In 2019 we started a collaboration in the province of Equateur in DRC, rehabilitating an old cocoa farm as part of a social project to create alternative income-generating activities for local populations.



NEXT STEPS

Misao's longer-term objective is to become the leader in highest quality spices from Central Africa, and ultimately Africa. Our goal is to plant high-value spices that are not (yet) found in Central Africa, and reap the revenues from them for the growth of our local cooperatives and the company.

We believe that smart agricultural products are the future of Africa's development – the placement of this statement in this sentence a bit unclear and that focusing on exporting high-value agricultural produce (such as spices, speciality coffees and cocoa beans) is the key to successful development.



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MNB LTD

- **Business sector:** agriculture (mushrooms)
- **Employees:** 7 (3 women); plus 6 casual workers
- **Year registered:** 2012

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ABOUT THE COMPANY

Brief history

CEO and founder of startup Moulins du Nil Blanc (MNB), Mrs Zilipa Nyirabyago, has 31 years' experience in food production, quality assurance and waste management within the soda beverage industry. Struggling to find a fungal biotechnology to transform coffee pulp into high-quality oyster mushroom substrate, she reorganised her company 4 years ago. Oyster mushrooms have proved to be a missing link in sustainably closing the coffee cycle.

Mission and vision

The core business of MNB is aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and includes agribusiness, responsible production and climate action. Through our programmes, we work with family agri-entrepreneurs within the mushroom value chain in Rwanda.

Our vision is for improved access to food security, producing a lot with few resources; and for decent rural employment and social justice in local agricultural value chains. We aim to integrate vulnerable people and improve the position of women and young people as real actors in changing their living conditions.



Impacts on society and environment

A cup of coffee contains only 0.2% of the biomass of the coffee cherries harvested. The process of pulping, drying, roasting, grinding and brewing leads to the ingestion of a minute fraction of the 20 tons of coffee berries produced in Rwanda by around 400,000 coffee growers (and the 10 million tons of coffee produced worldwide).

In a B2B model, MNB recycles 40 cubic metres of coffee pulp to produce oyster mushrooms, changing the lives of around 300 women and young micro agri-entrepreneurs in the cities of Gisenyi and Goma and in rural Rubavu, Rwanda.

The social impacts include combating hunger and boosting food security by producing mushrooms, vegetables and fruit; prevailing over malnutrition; creating jobs and supporting technical qualifications and self-employment of agri-entrepreneurs; providing sustainable revenues to coffee growers all year round; empowering women in poverty-stricken communities; and offering employment suitable for people with disabilities.

There are also many environmental impacts. The production method offers an alternative to waste disposal. It contributes to the national recycling rate; to a reduction in the methane generated by the natural degradation of agricultural waste in Rwanda; and to soil health through organic compost from used substrates



and kitchen waste. It also improves biodiversity by growing a variety of vegetables and fruit trees near coffee trees.

PRODUCTS AND MARKETS

- **Certifications:** certified by Mycelia company (Belgium) to produce commercial mushroom substrates and mushrooms
- **Main markets:** local and regional
- **Market position:** niche market

The sale of fresh oyster mushrooms on local markets is still developing. They are mainly sold to local hotels, and also to the cross-border market in the DR Congo. A regular large demand is needed to boost production.

Our products are fresh oyster mushrooms, and ready-to-plant oyster mushroom substrate (imigina).

Fresh oyster mushrooms (pleurotes)

Fresh oyster mushrooms are available in trays of 250 g and 500 g, and in palettes of 2 kg and 5 kg.

Ready-to-plant mushrooms

Mushroom substrate, packaged in plastic bags (tubes), is the fungus itself along with sufficient food and water to sustain it. The substrate can also be sold as a champignonnière of 125–250 tubes.





NEXT STEPS

MNB is planning to expand the business in both marketing and technical areas. We aim to initiate a marketing system, including packaging, to boost orders and contracts.

To minimise crop losses, we plan to modernise the conservation of fresh mushrooms and vegetables in solar-powered cold rooms. There is also a plan to replace the use of firewood with a local renewable energy source.

The aim is to double current monthly production from 6,000 to 12,000 ready-to-plant mushrooms to guarantee supply and meet growing market demand.

We also plan to develop processed foods with high nutritional value, that are ready to cook and that meet national and regional standards, including soups and baby foods.



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MOUSSA'S BISSAP

- **Business sector:** healthy food and beverage
- **Year registered:** 2016

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ABOUT THE COMPANY

Brief history

Moussa's Bissap is rooted in the Senegalese tradition of sharing a gift from home with people travelling away. Moussa's sister gave him a bag filled with *Hibiscus sabdariffa* calyxes when he moved to Antwerp, Belgium. He forgot the bag of precious leaves for five years, until he wanted to share more about his culture and created a first batch of "bissap", an infusion made from this special Hibiscus plant. Moussa then made 8 litres of bissap for a public event where the response was overwhelmingly positive. Then Café In De Roscam on Vrijdagmarkt in Antwerp started serving it and surprising their guests with this new refreshing and healthy drink.

Mission and vision

As well as providing a unique-tasting and healthy product, Moussa values respect for people and the environment. He works directly with local farmers and experts in Senegal, supporting a sustainable environmental approach while safeguarding every step of the production process in great detail. From farming, picking and selection, through storage and transport to production and serving, Moussa guarantees a mindful approach, generating benefits for all involved in the creation of these special drinks.

Impacts on society and environment

Moussa's Bissap works in partnership with Senegalese farmers by investing and guiding a well organised system of sustainable agriculture. We use a partnership model to inspire a sense of creativity, responsibility and productivity. By doing so, we plan to establish half of the production process, intended for the European market, in Senegal. This process will allow us to have a positive social and economic impact.



PRODUCTS AND MARKETS

- **Main markets:** local, regional and international
- **Market position:** niche market

The Original

“Moussa’s Bissap: The Original” is a perfect alternative to alcoholic drinks and sugary lemonades. With its well balanced hibiscus and mint flavour, it is as rich in drinking experience as it is refreshing, and created from the best organic ingredients straight from the African continent with passion and care.

Ginger Fever

Following up on the succes of “The Original”, creating “Ginger Fever” was a logic next step as ginger pairs very well with hibiscus. Made with the best African ginger roots and carefully balanced, “Ginger Fever” is the perfect drink for those who like “The Original” with an extra bite of spiciness.

Jungle Juice

Detarium senegalense, which grows in the deepest wild of West Africa’s Casamance forests, is an extraordinary hand-picked fruit. Moussa has developed a singular way of processing it into a unique drink for the daring!

NEXT STEPS

We plan to fully exploit our main ingredient, the flowers of *Hibiscus sabdariffa*. We are working towards using them to make teas, and we plan to introduce the flowers into European kitchens from 2022.

We wish to have a complete production in Senegal and sell our products to all of Africa, and we are also looking forward to exporting to all European countries.



PAGUMAE

The brand of SELAM LE-AGER Trading PLC

- **Business sector:** natural dry food, tea, cosmetics
- **Employees:** six (four women)
- **Year registered:** 2019

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stable additional income, and to remain local, preserving and perpetuating their traditional knowledge.

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Brief history

Pagumae was born during the COVID-19 pandemic. In this troubled period, when the world was reacquainting itself with the vital importance of health, it became apparent that Ethiopia could make a contribution.

Through Pagumae, we aim to promote and share Ethiopian ancestral knowledge to develop a sustainable activity that provides stable incomes to rural communities. The Ethiopian diet is exceptionally healthy, based on two foods that are little known in the west: teff and moringa. Pagumae offers products based on old varieties of these two “superfoods”.

The crops are cultivated by hand on isolated family farms, and the company takes care of collection and processing. This enables families in remote areas to benefit from a



Mission and vision

Pagumae aims to improve the living conditions of vulnerable rural communities through development of sustainable economic activity based on traditional Ethiopian know-how.

Impacts on society and environment

We aim to support the achievement of key UN Sustainable Development Goals by improving the living conditions of smallholder farmers, enabling access to education for their children and access to healthcare, and contributing to sustainable consumption and production patterns (both in Ethiopia and in western countries).

During the good season, we buy moringa leaves from smallholder farmers when they are not using it for their meals. We also buy the moringa beans, which normally are wasted. These farmers are marginalised in remote areas in the Sodo region, with no access to road and markets. We provide them with an additional income and organise transport of the moringa leaves and beans.

In rural areas around Bahir Dar, we employ women to bake teff crackers, providing employment and incomes that would otherwise not be available.

We support family farming models that apply the principles of agroforestry and permaculture, and that respect the land and the environment – models that are totally organic and sustainable.

We work to preserve and value traditional knowledge, and give back to rural communities their place in society and their dignity.

We also promote healthy and sustainable food in the western world, based on ancient Ethiopian foods.

PRODUCTS AND MARKETS

- **Main markets:** Western Europe, and expatriate communities in Eastern Africa
- **Market position:** niche market

We offer products that are as unprocessed as possible to preserve the power of these authentic superfoods, and to suit European tastes and eating habits. We have developed three moringa-based products and one teff-based product.



Moringa tea

Better than green tea or coffee, this energy drink is free of theine and caffeine. Moringa tea provides lasting energy throughout the day, and also acts as a fat burner and glycaemia regulator. Due to the riboflavin it contains, moringa reduces feelings of hunger, limits water retention and accelerates fat burning.

Moringa powder

This supplement boosts immunity, increases lactation for young mothers, and provides energy for endurance sportsmen and women. Moringa powder is easily integrated into daily life and can be consumed in many ways: sprinkled on a salad or yogurt, mixed in a smoothie, or incorporated in savoury and sweet preparations.

Moringa cosmetic oil

This pure, natural oil for the face and body is an Ethiopian beauty secret. Our cold-pressed, pure moringa oil provides vitamins A and E for antioxidant and regenerative action. With no chemicals or perfume, it is suitable for people with atopic skin or who are in cancer treatment.

Teff crackers

Our crackers are made from 100% teff, based on a traditional recipe. They are traditionally cooked fat-free and sun-dried, and are naturally gluten free. With a slightly nutty taste, teff crisps can be served in many ways: with guacamole, hummus, tapenade, tarama, soup, salads...



Our target customer is European (particularly from France, Belgium, the Netherlands or Germany), living in Europe or in Eastern Africa. They are likely to have a middle-class or higher income, and to be aware of the importance of nutrition. They may be looking for healthy, natural foods, perhaps vegan or gluten-free, and may want to boost their immunity or lose weight. They are likely to be sensitive to fairtrade and environmental issues.

NEXT STEPS

Our biggest challenge is to penetrate the European Union market by making our products more widely known and becoming recognised as a reliable partner offering quality products that respect the environment and local communities.

In order to become a recognised valuable actor in the business, we need to achieve organic

certification for moringa production, which will involve investment in infrastructure.

For teff products, the challenge is to publicise and promote the product, highlighting the social impact compared with competing products produced in Europe.

Our next steps are to invest in our own processing infrastructure (grinding machine, oil press) to fulfil all hygiene criteria and improve our production capacity; and to develop a communication campaign on social media.





SANJOH FARMS

- **Business sector:** agriculture (fruit, vegetables, nuts) and livestock
- **Employees:** 10 (4 women); plus temporary workers
- **Year registered:** 2014

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www.facebook.com/SanjohFarms/

Website under construction



would also like to help other farmers direct market their own products.

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Brief history

Sanjoh Farms was initially registered in 2014 as a Common Initiative Group (CIG) under the name Sansusa.

Sanjoh Farms consists of three farms dedicated to mixed organic crop cultivation and livestock production, and sustainable transformation.

We supply our palm nuts to a state-owned agricultural cooperative named CDC, and we also have a mill where we process some of our palm nuts to palm oil and sell to the local market.

Mission and vision

Our mission is to produce organic products that are sold to hotels, restaurants, local customers and international markets at a fair price, that will provide us with sufficient income.

Our vision is to create a sustainable integrated organic farm, and to process and direct market all of our crops and livestock products. We

Impacts on society and environment

Sanjoh Farms creates jobs, reduces poverty, provides healthy food to the population, and helps to raise community awareness of sustainability and environmental issues.

Our activities contribute to improving the soil, air and water quality, both on our farms and in the wider environment.

PRODUCTS AND MARKETS

- **Main markets:** local
- **Market position:** standard supplier

Sanjoh Farms is a group of three farms:

Atlantica: About 100 hectares, including 11 hectares of palm trees. Here we also grow tree crops such as bitter kola and kola nuts mixed with plantains.

West Coast Range: About 15 hectares, here we intend to build a range for eco-tourism, a

youth training centre and an extension centre for schools. We have started the project with food and tree crops: cocoa, white pepper, bush mangoes, soursop, oranges, lemons, mandarins, avocados, safou, moringa, njangsang, with plantains and chilli peppers. We intend to introduce our animals as soon as the trees have grown big enough.

Sanjoh Integrated Farm: About 2 hectares, this is our new project. We intend to develop a sustainable integrated organic farm with zero waste (aquaculture, poultry, small ruminants, snails, mushrooms, bee farming, biogas, market gardening, etc.).



Preparing moringa leaves



Palm nut bunches ready for collection by tractor



Transporting plantains

NEXT STEPS

We are still in the growing phase so we sell our products on local markets. We intend to begin a transformation as our production grows, and from there we can apply for certification.

We are presently actively looking for markets, both national and international.



New members of our cattle ranch



ASANTE MAMA AND SUNSHINE AGRO PRODUCTS LTD

- **Business sector:** agriculture (spices, herbs, tea, cocoa)
- **Employees:** 15; over 10,000 contract farmers
- **Year registered:** 2007

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Mission and vision

We aim to promote sustainable agricultural production as a business for rural farmers and to bring products directly from farm to table, enabling over 7,000 less privileged farm families to earn better incomes that can improve their access to education, health and social services.

Impacts on society and environment

Sunshine Agro Products Ltd monitors the farmers throughout the value chain, through production to environmental conservation and post-harvest management. We work with over 10,000 contract farmers, producing chilli, culinary herbs and spices, herbal teas and cocoa, and we guarantee to buy back all harvested crops from farmers. We organise farmers into groups of 20–30 and provide them with training/extension services carried out by full-time in-house agronomists and field officers. We also provide in-kind micro-loans for inputs such as seeds, pesticides, fertilisers and solar driers.

We have developed an environmental monitoring and management plan (EMMP) focused on planting indigenous trees. The company raises tree seedlings in its own nurseries and distributes them to all contract farmers, raising awareness about the importance of planting trees to protect and conserve the environment. It is obligatory for every farmer

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Brief history

Sunshine Agro Products Ltd is a social enterprise founded in Uganda by Pamela Anyoti Peronaci in collaboration with an investor, JHB International Trade and Finance of Belgium. Sunshine Agro Products Ltd is engaged in contract farming in 10 districts in North East Uganda and in Mpigi District in Central Uganda.

We recently launched our brand Asante Mama – “Thank You Mama” in Swahili – to bring products directly from farm to table and to sell online. Asante Mama was a finalist for the Eco-Excellence award held in Brussels in 2017.



participating in our contract farming business to plant at least 20 trees.

The sales of the products have greatly contributed to improving the livelihoods of a large number of rural families. Through the NGO International Friendship for Development, we support rural schools by providing educational materials; promoting inter-school sports activities; providing school meals and clean drinking water; constructing dormitories for girls and houses for teachers; and offering mosquito nets.

PRODUCTS AND MARKETS

- **Certifications:** GLOBALG.A.P. Sunshine Agro Products Ltd is in the process of obtaining organic, HACCP and ISO 22000 certifications
- **Main markets:** local, regional, international including diaspora (via website)
- **Market position:** sustainable agricultural production from farm to table

Sunshine Agro has a wide range of products sold under the brand Asante Mama, including chillies, culinary herbs and spices, herbal teas and cocoa. All products are traceable to their origin via a traceability lot number.

All herbs are purchased fresh from the farmers and dried in hygienic solar dryers, where the entire post-harvest processing is controlled, including cleaning, blending, packaging and storing of herbs, spices and herbal infusions.

Herbal teas

Asante Mama sells a wide range of herbal teas as both loose teas and tea bags, individually packaged and available as themed sets (“Reset your body”; “Detox after the holidays”).

Culinary herbs and spices

Moringa oleifera, commonly referred to as a “miracle tree”, is believed to be a “super herb” that promotes overall well-being, boosts energy levels, strengthens the immune system, improves mood and supports good digestion.

Chillies

Birds eye and cayenne chillies are available in crushed or whole forms.



Cocoa products

Cacao beans from our farm are hand harvested, fermented, washed, dried and dipped in milk chocolate. These chocolate-coated beans are ethically produced, full of antioxidants, vitamins, minerals and dietary fibre – and delicious.

NEXT STEPS

Asante Mama products are currently transported to the European Union for steam sterilisation, and packaging is outsourced to contract packers. Sunshine Agro Products Ltd intends to install its own steam sterilisation facility in Uganda.



SUZY-FARMS LTD

- **Business sector:** agriculture, animal husbandry, aquaculture, agribusiness (primary production, transformation and sales)
- **Employees:** 36 workers (15 women) + contract workers
- **Year registered:** 2018

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Mission and vision

Suzy-Farms seeks to become an inclusive leading provider of food in Cameroon and most especially in the South West region. This will be accomplished by selling our products (meat, fish, eggs and fruits) at a competitive price while exceeding customer's satisfaction. We aim at addressing socio-economic and environmental challenges within our communities.

Our objectives are to:

- Enhance food security as a leading provider of fruits, vegetables, food crops, chicks, fingerlings, catfishes, tilapias, chicken, eggs, pigs, goats and rabbits in Cameroon and beyond;
- Include low income groups along our value chain by integrating local farmers as producers, consumers, distributors and employees in our venture;
- Alleviate poverty by generating profit for multiple stakeholders along our value chain through the provision of new income streams for local farmers;
- Create an enabling ecosystems around our business to ensure economic viability and sustainability of our venture by sharing knowledge and technology with local farmers;
- Enhance community's adaptive capacity to climate change through the provision of alternative livelihoods for local farmers;
- Deliver an innovative and effective end-to-end business model to alleviate poverty and enhance viability, social impact and scale potential of our venture.

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Brief history

Suzy-Farms is an agri-aqua inclusive business that aims at addressing issues of food insecurity, poverty, malnutrition, well-being, employment and provision of alternative livelihoods to enhance local adaptive capacity to climate change threats and engagement in conservation and ecosystem restoration projects.

We have met and worked with 41 local communities around Mount Cameroon National Park (MCNP) during our research field survey from October to December 2013. Our project was focused on assessing the level of community involvement in the MCNP REDD+ conservation projects. Results showed that food insecurity, malnutrition, land grabbing and poverty were some of the factors preventing full community engagement in MCNP interventions. Providing alternative livelihoods to generate new income streams (animal husbandry and aquaculture) and inter-spacing fruit trees in crop farms were highly recommended to enhance food security and local adaptive capacity to climate change threats. We started in 2014 as an NGO called The Forgotten Green Heroes and later branched off to Suzy-Farms Ltd in 2018.

Impacts on society and environment

Our venture involves low-income groups (local farmers) as consumers, producers, distributors and employees. We target local communities and focus on enhancing local livelihoods, well-being, food security, poverty alleviation and climate change adaptability. We train local farmers on animal-husbandry and aquaculture, and encourage them to plant fruit trees in their crop farms to enhance biodiversity and increase food yield per unit area of land. Local farmers work in our farms during their six weeks training period without payment, thereby 'learning by doing'. This is a win-win approach for both the business and the farmers. Some will be retained as employees and others will become local entrepreneurs in their communities.

Suzy-Farms provides socio-economic benefits to communities by providing local employment, food security, alternative livelihoods, better nutrition, well-being and health. Local entrepreneurs generate new income streams to alleviate poverty. Education is enhanced as parents are able to make money and pay for school fees and healthcare of their family. The emergence of alternative livelihood provides commercial returns, enhances farmers' adaptive capacity to climate change threats, reduce vulnerability, restores ecosystems and biodiversity as their dependence on the forest keeps reducing gradually. All these are geared towards meeting up with the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement and the National Adaptation Plan.

PRODUCTS AND MARKETS

- **Certifications:** organic certification in progress
- **Main markets:** local, regional
- **Market position:** standard supplier

Suzy-Farms has multiple main revenue streams, such as chicks, fingerlings, meat, fish, eggs, animal feed, farm equipment, fruits, vegetables, food crops and semi-processed food. Our cash crops (oil palms, cocoa, coffee, rubber and tea) are not yet ready for the market.

We have five main customers groups to whom we sell our products:

- Local entrepreneur – We supply them with chicks, fingerlings, animal feed, farm equipment and fruit seedlings. They also buy our meat, fish and eggs for consumption and/or sell to the end consumer and make extra profit for themselves.
- Retailers, mostly supermarkets and small shops owner – They are the main distributors for our products.
- Hotels and restaurants.
- The general public buys directly at farm gate, shops and open markets.
- Local exporters – They export our products to Nigeria.



Layers poultry sector



Cocoa/plantains intercropping



Broilers poultry sector



Crop-livestock integrated farming



Plantains ready for the market



Workers at Ngatame palms farm

NEXT STEPS

We are looking forward to establishing a food processing unit in 2024 and exporting to the European Union (EU) by 2025. We need technical support in the field and guidelines on acquiring organic certification by the end of 2024, as well as rules and regulation of meeting up with EU food policies.

We are actively looking for investors to scale up the business (150ha of land is still undeveloped, support in installing the food processing unit and providing solar energy).



VAN DE DUTCHIES FARMS LTD

- **Business sector:** agriculture (fruit, vegetables, spices)
- **Employees:** 5 (2 women)
- **Year registered:** 2019

PO Box KF 484, Koforidua, Ghana
0502447114 / 0247206070 / 0031641427566
<http://vdfarms.com>



ABOUT THE COMPANY

Brief history

Richard Dickens Agbenyo, CEO and Co-Founder of Van de Dutchies Farms, has project management and financial business management experience in the Netherlands banking sector.

Although Ghana is heavily reliant on food imports, for many young Ghanaians agriculture is not seen as an option. Thus, Van de Dutchies Farms comprises experienced diasporians working together with local farmers to reduce poverty through effective mechanised farming. We are one of only a few farming corporations in Ghana that trains farmers in technological methods to improve yields and the quality of produce.

Mission and vision

The mission of Van de Dutchies Farms is to impact the world by preserving nature and our environment plus securing food on the table for all.

Our vision is to create jobs for many, as well as building a reserve for most of our local produce, despite the lack of opportunities and options for preservation.

We aim to become experts in production and food supply in West Africa, and to encourage Africans in the diaspora to give back to Africa through farming and agribusiness.

We are positioned not only to promote agribusiness in Ghana, but also act as a go-between for global investors and local farmers, in an effort to stimulate African development through agriculture. We aim to manage the risk farmers encounter financially and also bring them together with potential investors, creating a win-win platform for all.

Impacts on society and environment

Nearly two-thirds of Africa's workers are in agriculture. Moving them from traditional farming into commercial agriculture and agribusiness is a key step towards reducing poverty, creating jobs and enhancing food security.

We aim to ensure that agriculture not only secures food for all, but also creates sustainable and affordable food while respecting our environment and the ecology of our world at large.

Although we are still in the start-up phase, we are communicating with the many young people we come across, which has motivated some to start their own farms.

PRODUCTS AND MARKETS

- **Certifications:** in progress
- **Main markets:** local, regional, diaspora
- **Market position:** standard supplier



NEXT STEPS

We are actively seeking investors to accelerate us into processing, and are now in talks with some organisations and individuals.

We entered into maize farming on our 100 acre farmland in the Volta region (Mepe) in 2019, after extensive research and negotiation with our local distributors and buyers



We are currently branding our chilli pepper, which we sell fresh and dry, and we are now venturing into powdered pepper



Staking yam plants reduces disease impact and enhances yields



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