



AGRF

VIRTUAL SUMMIT 2020

Hosted by Rwanda

FEED THE CITIES, GROW THE CONTINENT –
LEVERAGING URBAN FOOD MARKETS TO ACHIEVE
SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS IN AFRICA

PANEL: THE KEY ROLE OF SMEs IN
SERVING URBAN FOOD MARKETS

7TH SEPTEMBER 2020
11:00 – 12:45 (TIME UTC+2)

REGISTRATION REQUIRED :

<https://agrf.org/agrf2020>



COLEACP

1. CONTEXT

Globally, more than ever, it is critical to ensure that our food system becomes more resilient and able to feed a growing population with sufficient, safe and nutritious food while minimizing negative environmental impacts. Africa has a key role to play in the transition to sustainable agriculture.

The rapid urbanization and population growth in the continent, combined with the regional integration processes as well as the implementation of free trade agreements, offer new opportunities for the agrifood sector and the value chain actors. Higher volumes of intra-African trade and the

elimination of non-tariff barriers have the potential to create employment, catalyze investment and foster growth in Africa.

Private sector companies and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are the driver of economic growth in Africa. SMEs source directly from millions of farmers across the continent and operate along the value chain providing multiple services (processing, transport, packaging, transport...). They employ millions of people, including women and youth.

Urban food markets are set to increase fourfold to exceed US\$ 400 billion by 2030, requiring major agribusiness investments in

processing, logistics, market infrastructure, and retail networks. The growing middle class is also seeking greater diversity and higher quality in its diets. Diet changes with rising demand for processed food will require increased investments by the entrepreneurs themselves.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted many SMEs, it has also demonstrated their resilience and adaptive capacity. Hence the need to channel towards them higher investments in finance, infrastructure (physical and digital), technology and innovations.



2. PANEL AT AGRF 2020

The topic of the AGRF 2020 “Feed the Cities, Grow the Continent – Leveraging Urban Food Markets to Achieve Sustainable Food Systems in Africa” is very timely and crucial for the future of the food systems in Africa. It is important to discuss the modes of food provision that reconnect urban food consumers and peri-urban and rural producers around sustainability values and food security and nutrition objectives.

The proposed panel from COLEACP and partners will focus on the contribution of the private sector and SMEs to resilient food systems and what actions need to take place to optimize their operations, efficiency and enhanced competitiveness to be better placed to feed urban consumers. It

will share concrete examples from SMEs but also perspectives from research, donors and financial institutions.

It will bring different public and private sector perspectives and will give the opportunity to African entrepreneurs to share their experiences on ensuring that SMEs can deliver safe and healthy food to a more demanding urban population. The panel will also emphasize the needed environment, the new skills and knowledge that SMEs and producers will need to respond to diet changes and to prosper in those markets.

The organisers of the panel led by the private sector aimed at sharing knowledge and best practices as well as call for action (investment) to SMEs by demonstrating their added value to the future of our food system.

3. KEY POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

Below some of the discussion points to trigger debate by the panel members and the audience.

- New opportunities in urban markets for SMEs and lessons learned from COVID-19 (shift to local markets and shortening food supply chains, use of innovations and technologies...)
- Experiences from SMEs and entrepreneurs serving urban food markets and lessons learned to upscale and expand best practices
- Key conditions from policy-makers and investors to support entrepreneurship and employment in agrifood chains
- Standards required by urban markets (sanitary and phytosanitary, quality, sustainability, ...).
- Needed support for SMEs to formalise their operations and be better tooled to operate in competitive markets.
- Entrepreneurship skills development for more sophisticated products with increased value
- Access to adapted finance schemes by SMEs

This panel will be action oriented, bringing key recommendations that can contribute to AGRF working groups as well as to the UN Summit on Food Systems. The organisers will widely disseminate the recommendations within their networks.

The panel will build upon rich resources (reviews, case studies) available from AGRA, COLEACP, PAFO, European Commission, AKADEMIYA and direct experiences from SMEs.



4. ORGANISERS

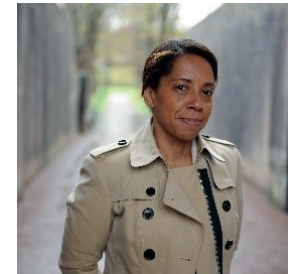
- **AGRA:** Convener of AGRF
- **COLEACP:** Association of private sector operators across Africa, the Caribbean and Pacific as well as the EU. The membership of COLEACP is largely driven by SMEs in the various stages of the horticultural value-chain. It has strong expertise for more than 40 years in export markets and has used this to disseminate best practices in order to strengthen SMEs operating in local and regional markets.
- **PAFO:** Panafican Farmers Organisations. It is critical to strengthen linkages between farmers organisations and SMEs operating in the agrifood sector.
- **AKADEMIYA 2063** supports evidence-based agricultural policymaking in Africa through three core programs: the Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System (ReSAKSS), the African Growth and Development Policy (AGRODEP) Modeling Consortium, and the Malabo Montpellier (MaMo) Panel and Forum.
- **European Commission** (Europeaid): SMEs are a key economic driver in Europe and many lessons learned can be shared with African counterparts.

5. PROGRAMME

Moderator: Isolina Boto, Head, Networks and Alliances, COLEACP

Panellists:

- Jane Maina, Managing Director, Vert Ltd Kenya
- Ayodeji Ibosiola, General Manager, L.A.T.C Agro, Nigeria
- Elizabeth Nsimadala, President, Panafrican Farmer's Organisation (PAFO)
- Jeremy Knops, General Delegate, COLEACP
- Leonard Mizzi, Head of Unit, Rural Development, Food Security, Nutrition, EC
- Ousmane Badiane, Executive Chairperson, AKADEMIYA 2063 and Member of Mamo Panel
- Marco Wopereis, Director General, World Vegetable Centre
- Solène Prince-Agbodjan, Credit Portfolio Manager, Agri Business Capital (ABC) Fund





COLEACP's programmes are funded by:

