

FIFTH ANNUAL
AFRICAN DIASPORA AGROFOOD FORUM

Sept 17th 2021 | 10 am | Conference
Sept 19th 2021 | 10 am | Exhibition

Theme: **Recovery, Resilience and Sustainability: African
Diaspora Agrofood Entrepreneurship in a Changing world**

DAY 2

DAY 1

AFRICA DIASPORA AGROFOOD FORUM 2021 5TH EDITION

17TH & 19TH SEPTEMBER 2021

CONTEXT

The African Diasporas in Europe play an important role in their countries of origin because most migrations are not just for the benefit of the migrants but for the benefit of those left behind. Hence the remittance of millions of euros, from the different African Diasporas across Europe to Africa. The development and wellbeing of many African communities and families depend on the remittances from African Diasporas. Their contribution to Africa's development is so important that the African Union has recognized the Diaspora (including old and new diasporas) as the 6th region of Africa.

Having observed how the economic growth in their countries of residence contrasts with the one in Africa, more African Diasporas aspire for the same economic growth and development in their countries of origin. This contrast is not only a challenge but an opportunity too, for many to utilize their education and professional skills from Europe, to foster sustainable development in their countries of origin and self-actualization in their countries of residence through entrepreneurship. Thus they initiate projects and businesses reflecting some of the Sustainable Development Goals (SGDs) which are vital to the development of Africa and, in turn, address the social and economic challenges in their places of origin. Even those that do not become entrepreneurs support entrepreneurs, start-ups and small businesses in the countries of origin with seed money, infrastructure and materials.

Whereas the remittance of African Diasporas is acknowledged globally for the economic and social wellbeing of Africans, the investment of Africans as entrepreneurs is yet to gain the same recognition. Many of these self-sponsored entrepreneurial projects still remain mainly under the radar of development policymaking decisions of governments, development and financial agencies.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, the world bank had a forecast of 9 percent decline (to the tune of \$44 billion) in remittances to Sub-Saharan Africa in 2020 and this amount will likely be lower for 2021. This reflects not just the impact of COVID-19 on African Diasporas and different communities across Africa but also the need to develop the private sector and promote entrepreneurship, to build wealth within the continent.



African
Diaspora
Projects
Initiative



Botanic Garden
Meise



EVENT OBJECTIVE

Achieving the SDGs in Africa is a complex challenge that needs multi stakeholders input including from members of the African Diaspora. Although food security in Africa ranks high in the list of development policies of African governments, global agencies and donor countries, food insecurity and hunger are still increasing with the continents growing population. This growing population is mostly young and unemployed, which adds more strain on the social and economic resources of the nations.

Having a sustainable agrofood sector is not just important for Africans in the continent but also those in the Diaspora as they also consume food exported from the continent. Thus insuring that there is a sustainable agriculture, producing safe food in Africa is of importance to many in the Diaspora, as well as a continuous flow of 'home' food from Africa to the different African Diaspora communities.

Over the years, although their contribution is not highlighted in Africa's development discourse, many African Diasporas are using their unique position to play important roles in the growing agribusiness and food sector in the continent. They have projects in the agrofood sector helping to increase food security, create jobs, alleviate poverty and build resilient communities.

The aim of this forum is to bring together development experts, policy makers, financial experts, African Diaspora entrepreneurs and Diaspora communities to discuss the role and potentials of the African Diasporas in finding solutions to the challenges of food insecurity and building the agrofood sector. It creates an opportunity to showcase the projects of African Diasporas, foster collaborations and create links to relevant resources and networks.

The 2021 African Diaspora Agrofood Forum will be the 5th edition of the Forum. Conferences will be held online (via Zoom) on Friday 17th September and an exhibition fair of agrofood products by African entrepreneurs will be organised on Sunday 19th September at the Meise Botanic Garden, Bouchout Castle Meise, Belgium.

The theme of the 2021 Forum is **Recovery, Resilience and Sustainability: African Diaspora Agrofood Entrepreneurship in a changing world**. This theme reflects the global impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the aspirations of many for recovery and growth in a sustainable economy.

As the world recovers and adjusts to the changes brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is of interest to know what policies are in place for entrepreneurs in the agrofood sector and how beneficial they are to African Diasporas entrepreneurs. The contributions of the African Diaspora Entrepreneurs at the forum will also help stakeholders and experts to understand how the COVID-19 pandemic affected them and their plans for the future.

There will be four online sessions on Friday 17th September: (1) the first session will reunite policymakers, global agencies, international organisations and diplomats; (2) the second session will showcase African Diaspora agrofood entrepreneurs; (3) the third session will be about innovative and scientific researches that are beneficial to the agrofood sector; and (4) the fourth session will focus on financial resources.

The exhibition fair will take place during the Friends' Day of the Meise Botanic Garden on Sunday 19th September, 10:00 – 17:30 (CET). It will be an opportunity for African Diaspora Entrepreneurs to promote their projects and present their products to the public.

The main organisers of the Forum are The Food Bridge vzw, the Meise Botanic Garden, Sankaa vzw, and COLEACP.





REGISTER

PROGRAMME OF THE CONFERENCE DAY

17TH SEPTEMBER 2021, 10:00 – 14:30 (CET)

10:00 – 10:10 Welcome

Maureen Duru, Founder & Director, The Food Bridge vzw

Jutta Kleber, Education Officer, Meise Botanic Garden, Belgium

10:15 – 11:30 Re-strategizing policymaking for a post COVID-19 agrofood sector

Escipión J. Oliveira Gómez, Assistant Secretary General, Structural Economic Transformation and Trade, OACPS

Jeremy Knops, General Delegate, COLEACP

Mr Maxy Reginald Uzor Ogbede, Minister, Embassy of Nigeria to Belgium and the EU, representing H.E. Mr Obinna Chiedu Onowu, Ambassador of Nigeria to Belgium and the EU

Raschad AlKhafaji, Director, FAO Liaison Office with the European Union and Belgium

Carine Nsoudou, Director, Africa-Europe Diaspora Development Platform (ADEPT)

Moderator: Yentyl Williams, Founder and Director, Africa, Caribbean and Pacific Young Professionals' Network (ACP YPN)

11:40 – 12:40 African Diaspora entrepreneurs as transnational stakeholders in African development

Richard Dickens Agbenyo, CEO and Co-Founder, Van de Dutchies Farms Ghana

Lina De Munck, Founder, Soul Food Mama; Co-Founder, Origine et Saveurs

Mousa Faye, CEO, Moussa's Bissap

Suzanne Awung, CEO, Suzy farms Cameroun and Facilitator for sustainable agriculture trainings for rural farmers

Andrew Bamugye, Founder and Managing Director, Destiny Farms Ltd

Moderator: Yentyl Williams, Founder and Director, Africa, Caribbean and Pacific Young Professionals' Network (ACP YPN)



12:50 – 13:40 Innovating for growth in the African agrofood sector

Sarah Kiyingi Kaweesa, CEO BIO JIGSAW Ltd; Winner of FAO's Ugandan Diaspora Entrepreneur of the year

Xavier Scheldeman, Head of Research, Meise Botanic Garden

Fombong Forkwa, Co-Founder, Wasterminators Ltd Cameroon

Moderator: Jutta Kleber, Education Officer, Meise Botanic Garden, Belgium

13:50 – 14:30 Accessing Resources for sustainable agrofood entrepreneurship

Elke Briers, International Consultant, King Baudouin Foundation

Lamin K Darboe, CEO, Bantaba

Mateja Dermastia, CEO, Anteja ECG

Moderator: Maureen Duru, Founder & Director, The Food Bridge vzw



COLEACP is co-organising this event through its Fit For Market SPS programme implemented framework of Development Cooperation between the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) and the European Union.

