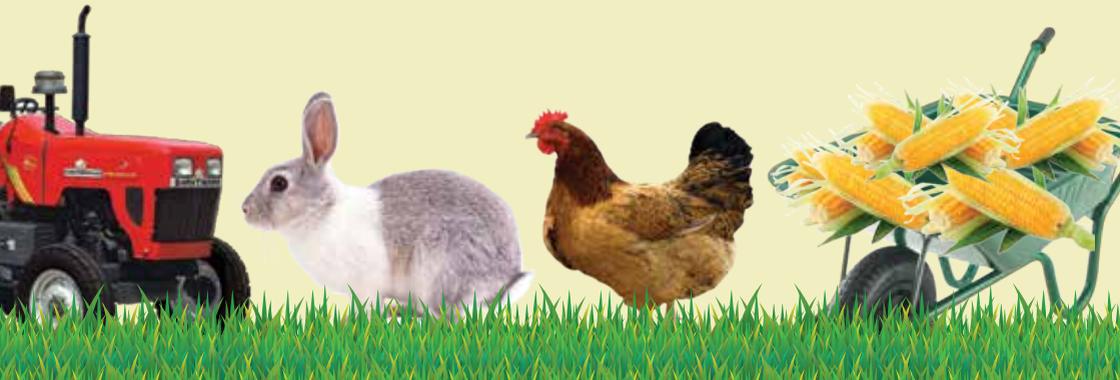




RUFORUM
TOP 15
African Young
Entrepreneurs
2016



RUFORUM Young African Entrepreneurs 2016

Bio-Phyto

Led by Zodome Gildas

Bio Phyto is a company created in 2013 and based in Benin (see www.biophyto-benin.com); it is currently headed by Zodome Gildas. It specializes in production and commercialisation of organic liquid pesticides. The product range includes: Top Bio-an insecticide, insect repellent, and fungicide, Agro Bio-an organic fertilizer, and cosmetic organic pharmaceuticals (see, <https://youtu.be/XvHxZg47pBc>).

The company has two patents and three product lines which are certified as 100 percent organic by ECOCERT (ECOCERT is an organic certification organization, founded in France in 1991 and conducts inspections in over 80 countries).

The company has seven permanent staff including a core management team consisting of four qualified individuals with commendable experience. The company also employs 20 casual labourers, 1000 rural providers of raw materials, and two semi-industrial production units. The company has so far invested €125,000. Bio Phyto has received support from IITA, IFDC, and World Bank among other partners. IFDC, World Bank, among others.



biophyto
Rendre possible l'agriculture biologique

InnoFaso

Led by Omar Coulibaly

InnoFaso is a company created in 2012, specialising in the production of nutritional solutions to fight malnutrition in Burkina Faso and the ECOWAS region (see www.innofaso.com).

InnoFaso is currently led by Omar Coulibaly. Two products; Plumpy'Nut, a therapeutic food ready to use for the management of severe acute malnutrition and Plumpy'Sup™, a nutritional supplement soy ready to eat and targeted for the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition.

InnoFaso products have found wide adoption and application by humanitarian agencies including the WFP and UNICEF in anti-malnutrition campaign programs. The company employs 14 permanent staff, 34 casual labourers and more than 100 rural providers of raw materials. InnoFaso owns one semi-industrial smallholder farmers production unit. Since its inception, the company invested €1,067 in its operations.



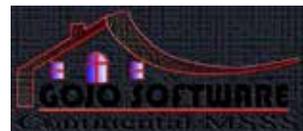
Ubiquitous Farm Management

Led by Selam Girma Mengistu

Selam Girma Mengistu Sole Proprietorship also known as Gojo Software, is a company established in 2012 in Ethiopia (see www.gojoet.com). The company was established with a focus to set up “ubiquitous farm management and traceability system for small holding Africans”.

The system will build a cloud service to enable farmers lean on science, receive real time data access and manage their farms from anywhere through Internet of Things (IoT) farming. The system will enable farmers to join the export market as well as to access financial services.

The company has 15 permanent employees. The company envisages US\$100,000 startup capital and is currently having collaboration with AFAAS as well as exploring partnerships with other venture fund providers.



Green Afro-Palms (GAP)

Led by Ababio Kwame

Green Afro-Palms (GAP, www.facebook.com/greenafropalms) is a registered company created in 2012 in Ghana. The GAP has specialised in the Palm oil value chain from production to oil extraction, sales and marketing of palm oil. It has a variety of products including: Palm kernel oil, Palm fiber cake, and Palm kernels (see, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D6u8QswD-3E>). with product lines being under development. The firm is currently led by Ababio Kwame, a young and dynamic entrepreneur. The company model is built around joint venture with palm oil farmers who benefit from the company's clean planting materials and extension services p and guaranteed market program.

The GAP activities including farm management, agro-processing, education and sensitisation are aimed at achieving quality and sustainability. Refineries, soap manufacturers, individual retailers of palm oil products, farmers and oil palm processors are part of the company's clientele. The company employs 43 permanent employees in addition to a management team of five qualified young individuals. Kwame Ababio, the company's CEO is a recipient of several entrepreneurship awards. The company's investment capital is estimated at \$200,000 of which \$80,000 has already been invested.



FarmDrive Limited

Led by Mary Joseph and Ritah Kimani

FarmDrive (see, www.Farmdrive.co.ke) is a Kenya-based social enterprise created in 2015. It is owned by a team of young and vibrant ladies including Mary Joseph featured in this series. The company combines agriculture, finance, and technology to unlock access to financial services by smallholder farmers. The company collects agronomic, remote sensing, and market data that are required to create income predictive algorithms specific to each farm financial needs based on the nature of their farming activities.

Financial institutions are subsequently presented with de-risked and pre-vetted clients to whom they can immediately disburse loans using mobile money. The entire loan process—from loan application to total repayment are facilitated and managed through the company's SMS mobile phone application. Since the beginning of operations in May 2015, FarmDrive has registered over 2000 farmers and disbursed over KShs. 6 million (US\$60,000) in loans. The company's management team consists of six individuals experienced in agronomy, financial services, computer science, and data analytics. The implementation plan has been cost at \$2.5 million.



Safi Organics Limited

Led by Samuel Rigu

Safi Organics (<http://safi.strikingly.com>; www.safiorganics.co.ke) is a private limited company created in Kenya to produce and sell an environmentally friendly, affordable soil conditioner and fertilizer derived from farm waste (see, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yprMymjl2dM>). The firm is currently headed by Samuel Rigu. Safi Organics uses environmentally friendly reactors and unique recipes enabling low-cost and decentralized conversion of farm waste into carbon-negative soil conditioner; a product that reverses soil acidification and retain nutrients and water longer.

Safi Organics soil conditioner (Safi Sarvi®), improves crop yields by 30% and increases farmers' income by 50 percent. The product also actively sequesters in the soil 1.5 tons/acre of CO₂ per planting season. Safi Sarvi® is being patented. The product has so far been marketed to 600 farming households in Kenya. Safi Organics management team is composed of five young multinational experienced individuals. The team has won gained national and regional recognition with a number of prestigious continental and international prizes. The company's investment capital is \$120,000 of which \$35,000 has been already invested.



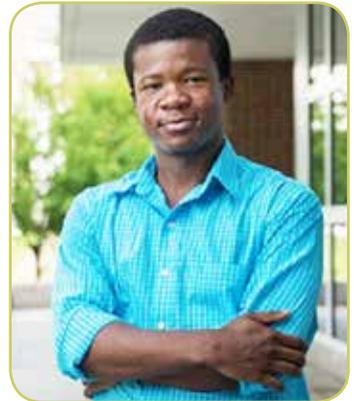
SafiOrganics

J-Palm Liberia

Led by Mahmud Johnson

J-Palm Liberia (<http://www.jpalmiberia.com/>) is a palm oil processing company created in 2014 in Liberia. The firm is currently headed by Mahmud Johnson. J-Palm produces a range of palm oil-based health and beauty, food, and industrial products using a 'no-waste' manufacturing process (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kXsyqwM_Sis; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bgsXCpmmECY>). The product range includes: crude palm oil for consumption and soap production, Kernel Fresh-an organic skin moisturizer and hair conditioner, Palm Fresh-laundry and beauty soaps assortment, Palm Kernel Cake-a high-energy and high-protein byproduct of palm kernel used as animal feed, and Palm Kernel Shells that are used to create biomass pellets for industrial and residential heating.

The company operates a unique smallholder farmer engagement model; smallholder farmers are provided with simple screw-press machines and in return they provide a fraction of the oils produced to J-Palm. This allows smallholder farmers to reduce drudgery and tap nearly half of all of Liberia's palm fruit that often goes to waste due to rudimentary processing technologies. The company has well-structured customer segments based on their various products. The J-Palm enterprise currently owns two palm kernel oil processing factories, in addition to three screw press. It employs eight permanent staff and 34 casual labourers. The social capital investment is estimated at US\$180,000 with about 80% coming from grants and 20% founder's equity.



**J-Palm
Liberia**

ColdHubs Limited

Led by Nnaemeka Ikegwuonu

ColdHubs Limited (www.coldhubs.com) headed by Nnaemeka Ikegwuonu was created in Nigeria in 2015 as a social venture that designs, assembles, installs, and commissions solar-powered walk-in cold rooms (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P6CEDr4qHRc>). The solar-powered walk-in cold rooms are designed with a purpose of alleviating the challenges faced by smallholder farmers, wholesalers and retailers in their enterprises on perishable fruits and vegetables. The intention is to ensure a 24 hour, seven days a week cold storage that will facilitate extending the shelf life from two to 21 days. The solar-powered walk-in cold rooms technology is helping address post-harvest losses of fresh fruits and vegetables in Nigeria and thereby farmer incomes are beginning to be realised on a positive trend.



The Hubs are installed in rural communities, markets, and farmer cooperatives where there is clustering of farmers and retailers. Targeted markets are in three African countries that are major producers of fruits and vegetables. The core team is composed four young individuals with technical expertise in agriculture, clean energy, and business development. The team has experience in running similar projects and the CEO is a multi-award winning social entrepreneur who has been recognized worldwide for his groundbreaking innovations that improve yield and incomes of smallholder farmers. The total capital investment is estimated at \$150,000.

Casa Mango

Led by Djiby Diagne

CASA MANGO headed by Djiby Diagne is a company which will be operationalised in 2016 in Senegal. It will establish a processing unit making producing a variety of mango products as a process of value addition to abundant mango harvest in Casamance where more than half of the current harvest is often lost.

The company will engage with mango farmers in contract farming focused at providing smallholder farmers direct market access and, reduced post-harvest losses thereby improving farmer income and livelihoods. The targeted products line includes: a variety of mango juices, mango powder, chips, and energetic bars among others.

CASA MANGO is further focused at providing premium products with organic and fair trade certification using semi-industrial equipment. The company is targeting both local and international markets. The total social capital investment has been cost at Cfa 5,000,000.



LANDFIRST (Pty) Ltd

Led by Phethile Nkosi

LANDFIRST LTD headed by Phethile Nkosi, is a South African Company created in 2015 to commercialize solar-powered mobile, aquaculture vegetable growing units installable in any backyard. The solar-powered mobile aquaculture systems are unique for their gender inclusivity as they can be operated by persons of all groups, women and men, physically challenged individuals and agriculture hobby and fun seeking persons. The system was designed to address the challenge of power outage common in many African countries as well as address the water management in the traditional aquaponics farming system.

The company offers a range of products and services such as aquaponics systems sales, aquaponics system water-testing services, aquaponics technology transfer (learnership), up scaled aquaponics farming design & consulting services, agri-processing services, high value fresh produce, and agri-tourism. The company's target market includes Hobbyists, physically challenged individuals, small-scale farming enthusiasts, co-operatives, organic fresh produce markets, restaurants, and processed fresh food markets. The management consist of two individuals with experience in running similar projects. The total capital investment is estimated at R 3,000,000 (US\$ 240,000).



Cibio FoodLab

Led by Brian Mwakaiba

Cibio (www.cibioap.com) is a firm of multi-talented youth including Brian Mwakaiba featured in this series. The company was founded in 2014 in South Africa and has created a product known as “FoodLab”. The FoodLab is a container food production system that makes use of state-of-the-art aquaponics systems combined with renewable energies in one system that produces record food yields (<https://youtu.be/IUulOFpitOo>). The FoodLab was created to inspire young learners (secondary school students) to pursue science based subjects as part of the STEM agenda and actualize science in the world of reality and nature. Through aquaponics, it provides quality organic food for learners grown by learners and it offers a platform to inspire youth entrepreneurship. Cibio has a team of experts that facilitate the onsite installation, teacher training in innovative curriculum delivery, and offer full time support for system maintenance and customer care.

The initiative allows corporate clients the opportunity to track and monitor the impact of the FoodLab over an extended period of time, walking a path with learners and potential entrepreneurs, and creating a track record of measurable corporate social investment. The company revenue streams include sale of units to corporate clients, equipment hire and maintenance, short trainings and client backstopping among others. The company has so far invested US\$ 25,000 in FoodLab operations.



WEKEBERE

Led by Tashobya Stephen

WEKEBERE Company (www.anatalsys.blogspot.com) headed by Tashobya Stephen was created in 2015 in Uganda. The company uses WEKEBERE, a hand-held fetal monitoring system that monitors conditions of unborn babies in real time (see, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bYSvoTvJyh8>).

The hand held fetal monitor is particularly useful in remote areas that hard to reach in terms of health service delivery. The portable fetal monitor consists of a belt with sensors that the expectant mother wraps around the abdomen. The active sensors on belt send vital signals regarding the fetus to a microcontroller that transmits a color-coded result of the fetal status.

This technology was developed as an effort to address the high rates of maternal mortality as well as infant deaths associated with complications during pregnancy especially in rural areas of Africa with poorly developed public and private health care systems. The management team is made of four students coached by two academic mentors. The company plans to invest US\$5,000 to further develop the WEKEBERE fetal monitoring system and seek partnerships for commercialization.



Empire Agricultural Services (EAS)

Led by John Bosco Birenge

Empire Agricultural Services (EAS) headed by John Bosco Birenge is an organic company founded in 2011, certified by CERES and operates as a marketing agent to provide smallholder farmers with an opportunity to meaningfully participate in the agriculture value chain and improve their household income. The company partners with farmers' cooperatives and empowers them to improve the quantity and quality of produce through increased access to markets, appropriate farming technology including technical advisory services on in-input supply, farming practices, harvest and post-harvest handling among others (<https://youtu.be/yE5xh7rWJD0>).

The EAS also provides: pre-finance, procurement, bulking, processing, and exporting services. Currently, the company's core commodity is the Organic Certified Arabica coffee. Future products envisioned include premium vanilla and cocoa. In the 2016 season (April – June), EAS managed to export 19,200 kgs of 100 percent Organic Certified Coffee (Arabica) to the USA. The EAS also serves several local buyers along the coffee commodity value chain. The company has 14 staff including a management team of five professionals with experience in the agricultural sector including agribusiness and extension services. The company has invested an estimated US\$185,000 over the last five years.



Soja kwa Afia na Ubora wa Ucumi Kwetu, SAUK

Led by Bikulo Bachiyeka Richard

Bikulo Bachiyeka Richard is planning to set up a company “Soja kwa Afia na Ubora wa Ucumi Kwetu, SAUK ” in DR. Congo, making reality a business idea conceived in 2015. The company will specialize in extraction and commercialization of soy oil and peanut oil. Business opportunity analysis undertaken has indicated that soy oil and peanut oil products are on high demand in Bukavu with barely any competitors on the local market.

The focus is to ensure that SAUK will become a leader in agri-processing with an agro-industrial complex from where youth with ambition and farmers interested in transforming their lives and livelihoods can derive meaningful economic and financial profit.

SAUK will be a “limited company”, this will provide opportunity for smallholder farmer’s inclusion in its key transaction and operations as well as have a voice in decision making. In the interim a social capital estimated at US\$35,520 is envisioned to be invested.



HappyFarmer

Led by Moonga Chowe

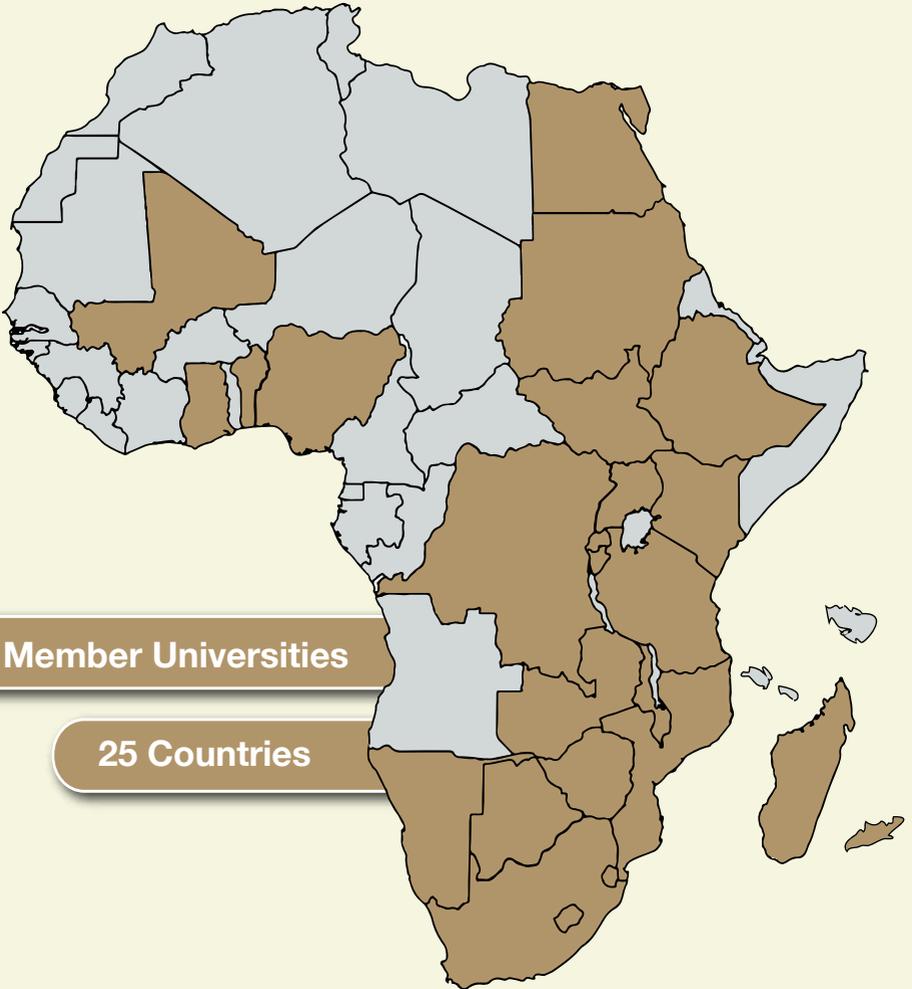
HappyFarmer headed by Moonga Chowe is a farming-centered platform created in 2016 in Zambia with different services offered through a subscription service arrangement. The platform was created to address smallholder farmers' lack of information relevant to increasing farmer agricultural production and productivity (<https://youtu.be/vXub4zkYLnU>). Registered farmers will work with the company to archive their farming activities and priorities. HappyFarmer will in turn monitor farmer crops from planting to harvest. It will also track livestock at unit to individual level whilst providing alerts to farmers through an SMS system.

The SMS and voice-based mobile application will operate on a fee-for-service model, with farmers paying a premium SMS rate for all interactions with the system. There are also plans to charge agricultural service providers and relevant government agencies for access to aggregate data. Targeted customers are small and medium scale farmers in Zambia. The management team consists of four young individual experts in crop production, animal production, economics, and computer science, respectively. An estimated US\$15,000 is to be invested in the development and operationalisation of the platform.



No.	Enterprise	Team Leader	Country
1.	Bio Phyto	Zodome Gildas	Benin
2.	InnoFaso SA	Omar Coulibaly	Burkina Faso
3.	Soja kwa Afia na Ubora wa Ucumu Kwetu (SAUK)	Bikulo Bachiyeka Richard	DRC
4.	Ubiquitous Farm Management	Selam Girma	Ethiopia
5.	Green Afro-Palms (GAP)	Ababio Kwame	Ghana
6.	FarmDrive Limited	Mary Joseph and Rita Kimani	Kenya
7.	Safi Organics Limited	Samuel W. Rigu	Kenya
8.	J-Palm Liberia	Mahmud Johnson	Liberia
9.	ColdHubs Limited	Nnaemeka Ikegwuonu	Nigeria
10.	CASA MANGO	Djiby Diagne	Senegal
11.	LANDFIRST (Pty) Ltd	Phethile Nkosi	South Africa
12.	CIBIO	Brian Mwakaiba	South Africa
13.	WEKEBERE	Tashobya Stephen	Uganda
14.	Empire Agricultural Services (EAS)	John Bosco Birenge	Uganda
15.	HappyFarmer	Moonga Chowe	Zambia





Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM)

Plot 151/155 Garden Hill, Makerere University Main Campus
P.O. Box 16811 Kampala, Uganda,
Tel: +256 417 713300 (Office) | Fax: +256 414 534153
Email: secretariat@ruforum.org
Website: www.ruforum.org, <http://respository.ruforum.org>