



AFRICA ORGANIZATION OF TECHNOLOGY IN AGRICULTURE CONFERENCE AND EXPO 2022 (AOTA)

IN HONOR OF PROF. CLAYTON CHRISTIANSON

**CONFERENCE
CONCEPT NOTE**





MISSION



Exploiting a trillion \$ market by tailoring and implementing business and operational models with technologies for African smallholder farmers.



Alleviating smallholder farmers into the middle class through the development of export-oriented agro-industry business.



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Introduction

Though we are close to the end of the first quarter of the 21st Century, still the unexceptional is happening; **over fifty percent of farmers in Africa live in poverty from less than \$ 1.9 / day.**

These are people, primarily farmers, who want to earn a decent living and raise their children in the advanced environment of the 21st Century.

They are proud people who do not wish to continue living in poverty, and most importantly, they don't want their children to live in poverty.

Smallholders live in the same Century as we are, they watch the same TV programs as we are, they have the same vendor smartphones as we have, and they are entitled and deserve to have a better future. Yet, today it is far away and unattainable for them.

Let us remember, farmers, are the foundation and the central part of the agriculture and food value chain. They are involved in the cultivation, processing, and supply of food production, in practice, they dramatically influence countries' economies, health, and prosperity.

Stop for a moment and think about the following status; farmers work for a living and do not ask for alms or donations. Yet, for many people and decision makers they are "transparent".

Would you be ready to live from less than 1.9 \$/day? Is it even human? Would you like to raise your children by so few means, helpless to impact your future, knowing that their future will not be better than yours?

The Africa Organization of Technology in Agriculture Conference and Expo 2022 is held under the sign of continuing distress, with no apparent solution in sight to the plight of African smallholders.

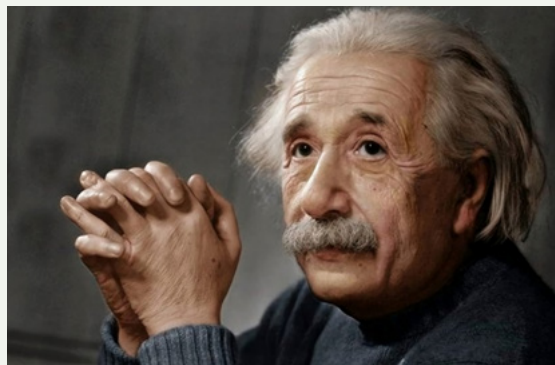
The AOTA mission is to ignite a chain reaction which will generate a pan-African reality change in the agro-sector. For this, we plan a broad, open and diversified discussion regarding the practical ways to fulfill the vision of alleviating smallholder farmers into the middle class by 2031.

The AOTA conference focuses on the route problem of smallholder with low income per hectare. We invite experts with hands-on experience, to share their experience of increasing farmers' income.

Preferred solutions to the low income per hectare problem, would preferably include the development of export-oriented agro-industry by implementing state-of-the-art combinations of business models and technologies.

As human beings, we say loud and clear that the situation in which smallholder farmers continue to live in poverty is unbearable. This statement is well addressed by the UN SDGs, and requires no further explanations.

Poverty is the result of unsuccessful past and ongoing failure actions. The obvious conclusion is that "more of the same" is not the solution. Quite the opposite, "more of the same" fixes poverty as a way of life for future generations.



**INSANITY IS DOING THE SAME THING
OVER AND OVER AGAIN AND EXPECTING
DIFFERENT RESULTS.**

Albert Einstein
Theoretical Physicist

Hence, there is an **urgent need for a CHANGE** - a radical change - in the perception of farmers' poverty and the time frame for expected results.

Such a move is complex and deserves to be led jointly by involved stakeholders, including governments, private and public organizations, NGOs, food processors, exporters and importers of agro-produce, consumers' organizations, and above all, by farmers.

WHAT, HOW, WHERE AND BY WHOM THIS SHOULD BE DONE?

Many questions await an answer. Though we don't know the answers we know that; there is an urgent need for a significant change! For this, we need practical and simple to apply answers.

The AOTA conference sends a clear message to farmers, to value chain partners in the agro-sector, and to relevant governments:

- The time to act has arrived, and it is now.
- The change will result from combined human efforts with tailored business models and technologies.
- The business opportunity for nations and the private sector is immense.
It is the result of transferring hundreds of millions of farmers from "agriculture" to "agro-industry".

This conference will provide an open and extensive platform to present business-oriented models, approaches, and technologies that have the power to bring about the coveted revolution. In other words, we offer and provide you a platform to show game-changing models with actual field results. USE THIS OPPORTUNITY!!

The Africa Organization of Technology in Agriculture Conference and Expo 2022 is inspired by Prof. Clayton Christenson, who passed away two years ago. Still, his legacy serves as inspiration for what can bring the solution to the state and plight of African farmers.

Professor Christenson devoted much of his lifework and research to the study of innovation and in particular **Disruptive Innovation**. Prof. Christenson's work shows that no other innovation but *Disruptive Innovation* can create jobs and jump-start national economies.

Disruptive Innovation occurs when **there is a combination of technology with an innovative business model/concept** that is catered toward a population segment that at the same time has no answer to its needs but is ready to accept the new service/product/approach.

Looking at modern history, we see how an attempt to infuse technology, not as part of an overall business model, has consistently failed, even in generous funded projects.

Out of a desire and commitment to lead African farmers to a promising future, we choose to follow Professor Christenson's theory of *Disruptive Innovation* as the main path to job creation, economic growth, and prosperity.

Most African smallholder farmers practice Agriculture, which is based on a revolution that took place 12,000 years ago, with the aim to produce enough food for the family to survive. In the 21st Century that is not sufficient, as modern life demands exceed the basic need to physically "survive".

To "survive" in the 21st Century, according to current standards, farmers must switch to **agro-industry**, which integrate the old agriculture revolution with the recent industrial revolution, only 200 years old.

This gigantic step will require special measures, which we believe only *Disruptive Innovation* can provide. It is thanks to Prof. Christenson's pioneer work we know that *Disruptive Innovation* will create in a vibrant and prosperous Agro-industry, with millions of new profitable jobs and economic growth across Africa.

In this spirit, *The Africa Organization of Technology in Agriculture Conference and Expo 2022* emphasizes projects of *Disruptive Innovation* nature that combine:

- **Business models**, with priority to innovative models - tested, or to be field-tested!
- **Technologies** - that can serve to implement and execute the innovative business model (including none-innovative technologies).
- **Focus on smallholders** - they stand at the heart of the global effort to eliminate poverty and bring prosperity to them and their nations.
- **Results-driven** - can present field-proven results of the relative and absolute economic change they bring towards the creation of **prosperity**.



- **Timeline** - projects who can present a clear near future expected success, based on past activities and field result.

We invite you to present your projects in which a combination of these components is made to achieve the desired change.

The conference will choose and present unique success projects that proved the ability to point in the direction of the changes needed to step forward Africa's agro-sector.

This is your chance to teach and to learn how you too can change the status quo.

This is your chance to introduce your understandings, your life work, your results, your insights, and share those with the rest of the world. This is also a great opportunity for learning from others and mingling that will help you improve your activity's results.

Following are the criteria by which the conference management will select the projects that will be eligible to be presented:

- ✔ **Sustainable** - on a business basis (even without external support).
- ✔ **Increase in revenue** - in percentages and absolute numbers, per hectare / production unit.
- ✔ **Potential global impact** - the scope and ability to apply to different crops, farmers, and countries.
- ✔ **Time** - pace of change /income growth as a function of time.
- ✔ **Persistence** - the model/project should hold the ability to generate long-term and continuous income growth.
- ✔ **In line with UN SDG.**
- ✔ **Creating economic abundance** (as opposed to preventing hunger and poverty).
- ✔ **Export** - project model with export potential products.
- ✔ **Moving from agriculture to agro-industry** - a project leading to the industrialization of the agro-sector and converting the scope of a

hectare from a "food creation unit" to an income creating "business value unit."

- ✔ **Accessible and affordable for smallholders.**
- ✔ **Creates impact at the national level** - jobs, influx of foreign currency, increased tax payment, legacy, skills, knowhow, etc.

Hence, this conference aims to expose its participants and provide the opportunity to see leading cut projects that combine state-of-the-art business models with technologies for the benefit of smallholders in Africa.

Every entrepreneur is well aware that *"the greater the difficulty and pain, the greater the business opportunity."* From this, we conclude that Africa has many business opportunities to propose to various kinds of entrepreneurs!

The process of solving the problems of smallholders in Africa is a broad cushion for development and growth for regulators, scientists, business and technological innovation, and farmers.

To date, countless conferences have been held where the focus has been only on technological innovation.

At this conference, the focus is on the innovation of the BUSINESS MODEL, which incorporates technology. This is your chance to present and see ground-breaking innovation.



Benefits of hosting AOTA Conference

In expansion to the post-conference bequest of support, AOTA Conference will advance worldwide networking in your city and have a substantial monetary effect profiting your economy.

AOTA is expected to bring together multi-disciplinary innovation specialists and experts counting smallholder agriculturists, ministers of trade, ministers of agriculture, ministers of ICT, private companies, scientists, universities, entrepreneurs, NGOs, to name a few.

The **3 days** conference will draw in between **450-500 delegates**, originating worldwide and assemble in your city.

The conference will also spark the first project in Rwanda to support Local Organising Committeeal farmers.

The project is aimed to advance agro-industry through new models that are implemented and working in other countries such as Israel. The initial project is expected to cost between \$0.5 to \$1M while focusing on mango fruits as the first crop to enter the *Disruptive Innovation* CHANGE.

It is also expected that the conference will be hosted for two consecutive years in each host country to maxi-



Vital considerations for a successful conference



VENUE

The proposed venue is the Kigali Convention Centre. The following rooms are needed

- Plenary room to accommodate 500 delegates
- 3 break out rooms with a minimum accommodation of 50 delegates
- One office for the secretariat accommodating 10 people
- Exhibition space to accommodate 20 exhibitors

REQUIREMENTS FROM THE HOST CITY

The first step of planning a successful AOTA conference is to form a Local partnership with the

- Convention Bureau
- Local ICT association, University, government (Ministry of Trade, ICT, and agriculture)

The Local partnership engages within the victory of the conference by remaining dynamic members throughout the arrangement, execution, and follow-up of the conference. The Convention Bureau takes the lead in connecting the conference organizers to community business contacts, provides financial and technical assistance. As broken down below;

- The host city will provide the venue for the event
- Introduce the Local Organising Committee to relevant partners for a possibility of sponsorship
- Provide technical support
- Cover a full site inspection for the conference director and the project manager
- Help the Local Organising Committee to negotiate discounted contracts in terms of air tickets, accommodation, among others.
- Support in marketing the event to raise the required numbers
- Support in the registration of an NGO

The AOTA will hire a Professional Conference Organiser to manage the onsite logistics and help negotiate with the vendors. The Professional Conference Organiser will also actively participate in the sponsorship criteria and also assume financial liability.

SUPPORT BY OTHER LOCAL ORGANISING COMMITTEEAL ORGANIZATIONS

To host a successful event, there are several additional tasks of organizing AOTA that will need the ministry's support and the Local ICT chamber. These include inviting industry speakers to present at AOTA, visa facilitation, VIP protocol, and so on. Confirmation of this commitment is also vital, which can be made through letters of endorsement.

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

To host a successful AOTA Conference, the bureau will support in setting up the organizing committee. The committee members will need to be active in all or part of the steps in hosting the conference. Even though some members might take more than one takes, roles and activities will vary significantly and will be required at different time intervals.

The operational structure of the organizing committee will remain small to ensure maximum efficiency. The activities that will need to be addressed in the Local Organising Committee may include;

- Program speaker
- Logistics
- Communication and marketing plan
- Sponsorship
- Budget

SITE INSPECTION

The AOTA Conference Director and project manager will visit the host country in November 2021 to meet the Local team. The proposed venue, city, accommodation will be visited. The discussions will also include the budget, the Mango project planned in the Burera district, and other areas of importance to the conference.

The site visit to include;

- Meeting with relevant stakeholders such as ministries, Embassies, NGOs, private companies, etc.
- Visit Burera district and Rwamagana for a study to launch the mango project
- Tour the destination city
- Tour recommended venue
- Tour of suggested hostels
- Meeting with Local Organising Committee



Desired Dates

The dates will be confirmed in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture. At the moment, the desired dates remain the first week of November 2022. The event will span three days (minimum) of the conference with an additional day for free field trips and meetings between the participants.

AOTA Exhibition

The extensive exhibition area is the perfect platform to promote opportunities and activities to showcase specific agricultural innovations and IT equipment. Exhibitors will be technology companies in agriculture, trade promotional organizations and associations, government agencies responsible for promoting agriculture, IT, and trade.

Social Program

An attractive social program available to conference delegates and accompanying persons is an essential aspect of the conference. Therefore, an engaging post-conference tour shall be planned as well as short activities during the actual event.

EXTRA NOTES;

Here are some of the topics that are guiding us in planning the conference:

- The conference needs to be unique and leave a practical legacy and to impact lives.
- It shouldn't become "one more conference on technological innovation."
- Use broad experience of the participants and present measurable success stories.
- Prof. Clayton Christensen has coined the term *Disruptive Innovation*. We believe that *Disruptive Innovation* is what the African agro-sector needs. In memory of the late professor Christensen, we are honored to dedicate the conference to those ready to face reality with disruptive innovation and change the world.

Suggested videos -

- [Theories](#)

- [Where does growth come from?](#)
- [Competing Again Luck](#)
- [Innovation and emerging markets](#)
- [Africa](#)
- Focus on incremental positive, long-lasting, sustainable changes that will overall **drastically increase smallholders' income**.
- Present -
 - Solutions that are multi-disciplinary and requires, in addition to the agro-sector, a connection with adjacent relevant sectors, including; academia, government, business, investment, and technology.
 - Solutions that combine a unique business model plus technology.
 - Solutions that are scalable, and easily copy between countries and crops.
- Smallholder problems are not unique to African farmers, so we are very interested in allowing successful projects outside of Africa to present their cases.
- Women are changing the world, including the agro-sector. We want to listen to them.







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