

# CONFERENCE CONCEPT NOTE

**The International Business Models & AgroTech Conference and Expo (IBMAT) 4 – 5 August 2022 - In honour of Prof. Clayton Christianson.**

## About the Africa Organisation of Technology in Agriculture (AOTA).

Africa Organisation of Technology in Agriculture (AOTA) was registered in 2020 under the Rwandan laws, with a mission to;

- Exploit a trillion \$ market by tailoring and implementing business and operational models with technologies for African smallholder farmers.
- Alleviate smallholder farmers into the middle class by 2031 through developing export-oriented agro-industry businesses.

AOTA expects to achieve those goals through intensifying multi-discipline collaboration among experts and decision-makers from the governmental, private, NGO, and academic sectors.

## Executive Summary

Though we are close to the end of the first quarter of the 21st Century, still the unexceptional is happening; over fifty per cent 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, have the same vendor smartphones as we have, and are entitled and deserve to have a better future. Yet, today it is far away and unattainable for them. Despite these challenges, 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.

Poverty is the result of unsuccessful past and ongoing failure actions. Obviously, "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. Einstein said, "Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." 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. 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. Such a move is complex and deserves to be led jointly by involved stakeholders, including governments, private and public organisations, NGOs, food processors, exporters and importers of agro-produce, consumers' organisations, and above all, by farmers.

## About the IBMAT Conference and Expo – 4 – 5 August 2022

In a bid to advance AOTA objectives, an annual conference that will be rotating in Africa has been planned. The IBMAT Conference and Expo aim to bring together over hundreds of delegates originating globally. It is meant to be the tip of the point kind of conference, "conference of experts for the experts." Participants would include leading African government officials, business and agricultural academic experts, leading agrarian companies, researchers, innovators, NGOs, farmers and heads of organisations, investors, exhibitors, etc. The event would last for two days (4th – 5th August 2022). It would enable face-to-face meetings, and the sharing and exchanging of information and experiences, in the magnificent environment of Kigali, Rwanda. All this to alleviate farmers from poverty to prosperity by improving professional and business results thanks to more sophisticated use of technologies under proper business models. 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, IBMAT offers and provides a platform to show game-changing models with actual field results.

This conference is inspired by Prof. Clayton Christenson, who passed away on January 23, 2020. 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, particularly 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.

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** – the 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 industrialisation 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, the influx of foreign currency, increased tax payment, legacy, skills, know-how, etc.

## Benefits of being part of the IBMAT Conference and Expo 2022

- Opportunity to learn and network with high level leaders in the agricultural arena.
- Opportunity to grow your business in Rwanda and other countries.
- Exhibit and showcase your work at the conference.
- As a participating company or organisation, the conference will promote your brand and showcase the commitment towards the continues growth of the agricultural sector in Africa
- Academicians have also the opportunity to present their research and abstracts which will be published in leading journals.

## Partners

Initial discussions are ongoing with the following organisations;

- 1 Israeli Embassy:** Last year, we had an initial meeting with the ambassador, Dr Ron Adams. He guided us further and appointed Espoir Serukiza – Economic Advisor, who may be contacted for verification 0783127600 [economy@kigali.mfa.gov.il](mailto:economy@kigali.mfa.gov.il).  
The Embassy is expected to support the conference by covering a welcome reception and also boost the numbers by contacting relevant organisations in Israel to attend. The ambassador is also likely to be part of the opening ceremony.
- 2 Smart Africa:** Given that they are among the leading players of advancing technology with a department focusing on agriculture, we approached Garikai Nhongo at +250 781 018 528 [garikai.nhongo@smartafrica.org](mailto:garikai.nhongo@smartafrica.org) to have Smart Africa sponsor some sessions as well as enrol a speakers as per the program.
- 3 Empower Africa:** Empower Africa was founded by Ezi Rapaport in 2018 out of the vital need to create significant international awareness and impact during a unique window of opportunity to uplift Sierra Leone. Since then, the company has grown and evolved. In early 2021, it launched the Empower Africa Business Network to enable businesses and professionals to connect, partner, and create long-term value with Africa-based projects. The organisation is happy to support our conference by leading sponsorship and boosting the numbers. For verification, kindly contact [ezi@empowerafrica.com](mailto:ezi@empowerafrica.com) at +1-917-923-2612 [www.empowerafrica.com](http://www.empowerafrica.com).

- 4 Cape Peninsula University of Technology:** With the academic component of the conference, different universities will be given a chance to present and network with experienced personalities to link then theoretical knowledge to real-life practice in the field. Among the presenters will be PhD students. Discussions with Dr Darlington Onojaefe, [onojaefed@cput.ac.za](mailto:onojaefed@cput.ac.za), +27214609019, a senior lecturer and program coordinator at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, are ongoing.

## **AOTA team**

### **Executive Committee**

Mr Kagara Isaac – Legal Representative

Mr Mutangana Desire – Ass. Legal Representative

Dr Nimrod Israeli – Director of IBMAT Conference and Expo

Ms Msengo Gisele – Project Manager

### **Business Growth**

Prof. Dr Ikechi Agbugba – Advisor West African Region

Dr Offer Markman – Business modelling and business planning.

Mr Alastair Stead – Lead Sponsorship

Lenny Rukundo – Communications & social media Director

### **Financial Audit committee**

Ms Irabaruta Barbine

Mr Rebero William

### **IT Team**

Sallyxe Gatangaza IT team lead

Mugwiza Peter IT Specialist

### **Media and Communications**

Lenny Rukundo Director

### **Volunteer**

Elizabeth Ibronke Website Management and Social media