

## Partner Event - Traditional Vegetables: Power on Africa's Plate

Partner Event Number, Date and Time:
7 September 2020 09:30
Partner Event Title and Organizers:
Traditional Vegetables: Power on Africa's Plate
Key speakers/presenters:
<p><b>Sognigbe N'Danikou</b> Scientist - Traditional Vegetables Conservation and Utilization World Vegetable Center</p> <p><b>Srinivasan Ramasamy</b> Lead Entomologist, Flagship Leader -- Safe and Sustainable Value Chains World Vegetable Center</p> <p><b>Ester Simfukwe</b> Coordinator - Legume Agronomist World Vegetable Center</p> <p><b>Gabriel Rugalema</b> Regional Director, Eastern and Southern Africa World Vegetable Center</p> <p><b>Maureen Mecozzi</b> Director, Communications World Vegetable Center</p>
Main themes/issues discussed
<p><b>Sognigbe N'Danikou</b> introduced several traditional African vegetables (TAV)—amaranth, spider plant, okra, jute mallow, Ethiopian kale, African eggplant, roselle, vegetable cowpea—and discussed TAV collection, classification, conservation and breeding. Many traditional vegetables have been displaced in favor of high-energy staple crops; few have been registered in national crop variety catalogs, which prevents broad distribution and use. The World Vegetable Center has Africa's largest vegetable collection, including 2,400 TAV accessions. WorldVeg distributes TAV seed through seed kits and online orders. WorldVeg African eggplant and amaranth lines have been successfully commercialized.</p> <p><b>Ester Simfukwe</b> stressed the importance of crop diversity in the field, which leads to food diversity on the plate. Nutrient-rich TAVs combat malnutrition and offer opportunities for</p>



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women and youth to prosper along the value chain, from primary production to processing and marketing.

**Srinivasan Ramasamy** explored ways to increase production and productivity of TAVs. WorldVeg screens TAV lines with resistance to pests and diseases, develops improved cultural practices to enhance harvests, and trials safe biocontrols for plant protection.

**Gabriel Rugalema** discussed “push-and-pull” factors to expand consumer demand for TAVs while improving supplies and markets. TAVs are authentically African but greater consumption is hampered by underdeveloped seed systems and supply chains.

## Summary of key points

- **Collect and conserve TAV germplasm now** before it is lost.
- TAVs are an affordable source of **essential dietary nutrients**.
- **Strengthen TAV seed systems** to support wider distribution and use.
- Optimize **safe TAV cultural practices** to supply markets.
- Develop **new TAV-based value chains** to create jobs, generate income.
- Ensure **production and distribution infrastructure** can support TAV value chains.
- **Promote TAVs** to generate interest, increase consumption and demand.

## Call to Action Key Points

- More **investment in TAV research**.
- Africa-wide **collecting missions** will help rescue African vegetable landraces and discover new breeding material.
- Develop **key infrastructure to support production and use** of TAVs: laboratories, rural roads, farmer support systems, distribution centers, cold chains.
- **Create awareness** of the economic and nutritional value of TAVs through public outreach activities.
- Institute **policies** to support TAV research, breeding, production, processing, distribution, and consumption.
- Support TAV primary production, processing and marketing to create **employment opportunities**.
- Develop, pilot and scale **good agricultural practices** for TAVs.
- Build new **TAV-based vegetable value chains**.