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# 2024 Fellows

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Mastercard Foundation – EARTH University Foundation  
Fellowship Program



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## Dorcas B. Sossa



- **Country:** Benin
- **University:** University of Abomey-Calavi Class of 2023
- **Track:** Agriculture Innovation through Science and Research
- **Host organization:** International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) - Benin

### **Bio:**

Through studying animal health and production in university and working as an intern at the Agro Veterinary Center Aïkpé in Zè and the National Laboratory of Veterinary Parasitology in Benin, Dorcas has developed a passion for sustainable agriculture, extensive knowledge of plant and animal production, and an understanding of veterinary parasitology. Dorcas chose the Agricultural Innovation Science and Research Track within the Fellowship and received an offer from the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) in Benin.

Dorcas's passion for research to address pressing issues within agriculture such as climate change, food insecurity, and environmental sustainability combined with her research capabilities, versatility, knowledge, and capacity for innovation will help her to succeed in her new role. She is looking forward to learning more about agricultural systems, gaining valuable research experience, collaborating with other researchers, and developing innovative solutions to agricultural challenges to share with the global scientific community. In the future, Dorcas hopes that her research will help farmers to implement sustainable agricultural practices and better address agricultural challenges, thus improving their livelihoods and contributing to rural community development in Africa.



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## Cornel M. Dominik



- **Country:** Tanzania
- **University:** EARTH University  
Class of 2023
- **Track:** Agriculture Innovation through Science and Research
- **Host organization:** International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) - Tanzania

### **Bio:**

A former Mastercard Scholar and EARTH University Graduate, Cornel Dominick has a strong academic background in agronomy and a passion for sustainable agriculture on the African continent.

Through studying at EARTH University, he gained valuable skills in food processing, crop science, environmental management, and data analysis. While in university, he also completed an internship at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) in his home country of Tanzania. Through this internship experience, he was exposed to topics such as waste management and water management and obtained important experience analyzing soil and water samples.

Cornel has returned to the IITA in Tanzania as a fellow on the Agricultural Innovation, Science, and Research Track. His previous experience interning for the IITA sparked an interest in waste management that he is looking forward to exploring further through this fellowship. Cornel's leadership abilities, problem-solving expertise, work ethic, and communication skills will help him to succeed in this organization. He hopes to collaborate with experts and gain valuable insights into innovative agricultural technology to drive positive change in agriculture and sustainable rural development throughout his career.



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## Dometilla A. Ndebugri



- **Country:** Ghana
- **University:** University for Development Studies Class of 2023
- **Track:** Agriculture Innovation through Science and Research
- **Host organization:** The Fisheries Commission of Ghana

### **Bio:**

Throughout her experiences in university, she developed a passion for aquaculture, environmental sustainability, and resource management that culminated in her dissertation titled “The Effect of Local Filtrate Materials on Water Turbidity.” Dometilla also completed an internship at Vicalex Fish Farms where she obtained practical knowledge on aquaculture, fisheries sciences, and sustainable aquaculture practices.

For her Fellowship, Dometilla will work for the Fisheries Commission of Ghana as a Fellow on the Agricultural Innovation, Science, and Research Track. Her background in sustainable aquaculture combined with her communication skills, organizational ability, and teamwork makes her a great fit for this position. Dometilla is interested in solving issues faced by farmers and fisherman such as infections and diseases in fisheries, given the importance of fisheries in the Ghanaian economy. She hopes to learn more about challenges faced in the aquaculture industry and looks forward to using her career to provide lasting solutions to aquaculture diseases and thus contribute to the growth of the agricultural sector in Africa.



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## Alaida Mumba



- **Country:** Zambia
- **University:** EARTH University Class of 2023
- **Track:** Agriculture Innovation through Science and Research
- **Host organization:** International Golden Valley Agricultural Research Trust – Zambia

### **Bio:**

Alaida Mumba, a recipient of a Mastercard Foundation Scholarship, graduated from EARTH University in 2023 with a degree in agriculture science and sustainable natural resource management. While studying at EARTH, she conducted extensive research on crop science and assisted with crop management through working on academic farms at the university. She further explored her passion for crop science through an internship at Golden Valley Agricultural Research Trust in her home country of Zambia during her third year of university. As an intern, she collected data on crops affected by pests and diseases. For her fellowship, Alaida will return to the Golden Valley Agricultural Research Trust as a fellow on the Agriculture Innovation, Science, and Research Track.

Alaida's passion for crop science and sustainable agriculture makes her a great fit for this placement. Her research abilities, decision-making skills, data analysis expertise, adaptability, and extensive knowledge of crop science will be an important asset to this organization. She looks forward to connecting with peers, mentors, and industry professionals throughout her fellowship to build a strong network that will serve her well in future endeavors. Alaida hopes to use her career to contribute to sustainable development across the African continent through fostering innovation and sustainability in the agricultural sector, specifically within crop management.



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## Mutinta Mubita



- **Country:** Zambia
- **University:** EARTH University Class of 2023
- **Track:** Agriculture Innovation through Science and Research
- **Host organization:** International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) - Zambia

### **Bio:**

While she was a student, she worked at an organic banana farm where she managed crops and made fertilizer. Mutinta also worked as an Agronomy Intern at the Golden Agricultural Research Trust in her home country of Zambia where she further explored her academic interests in crop management during her third year of university. As a Fellow on the Agricultural Employment Track, Mutinta will return to Zambia to work at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA).

Mutinta's academic and professional accomplishments combined with her creativity, adaptability, and reliability will allow her to succeed at this organization. She is looking forward to building networks, broadening her perspectives, and engaging in impactful work through the Fellowship. Mutinta also plans to further explore her interests in crop management, climate change, and sustainable agriculture. She hopes that this experience will set her up for success in her career and help her to drive lasting change in sustainable agriculture on the African continent.



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## Sharon G. Nalubega



- **Country:** Uganda
- **University:** Makere University Class of 2024
- **Track:** Agriculture Innovation through Science and Research
- **Host organization:** International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) - Kenya

### **Bio:**

Sharon Nalubega graduated from Makere University in 2024 with a degree in Agriculture science. She has a passion for sustainable agriculture and solving challenges faced by farmers to support community development in her home country of Uganda, which motivated her to apply for the Fellowship.

As a student, she gained practical professional experience in agriculture through internships and work experience. She further honed her data analysis and research skills while gaining experience in program monitoring and evaluation through conducting a research project titled “Assessment of double haploid maize inbred lines for forage.”

Sharon will complete her Fellowship at the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) in Kenya as a Fellow on the Agricultural Innovation, Science, and Research Track. She will improve her research capabilities through accessing advanced research facilities, learn more about sustainable agriculture, and better understand how farmers can address challenges in agriculture. Sharon is looking forward to improving her leadership and communication skills through this opportunity while accessing additional networking and mentorship opportunities as a fellow. In the future, Sharon hopes to use her career to help farmers increase their crop yields, address plant health issues, and contribute to the empowerment of rural communities.





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## Antoinette Gbedouhou



- **Country:** Benin
- **University:** University of Abomey-Calavi Class of 2023
- **Track:** Agricultural Employment
- **Host organization:** Société pour le Développement du Coton (SODECO) - Benin

### **Bio:**

Antoinette Gbedouhou, an alumna of the Mastercard Scholars Program, is a 2023 graduate of the University of Abomey-Calavi with a degree in Science and Technical Plant Production. Having grown up in rural Benin, she developed an interest in farming and rural development and attended an agricultural high school. As a university student, she completed several internships focusing on crop production to accompany her knowledge of crop management obtained in the classroom. She also gained valuable experience conducting field research and is skilled in communicating with people in rural areas, especially women.

Antoinette is a fellow on the Agricultural Employment track and will be working at Société pour le Développement du Coton (SODECO) where she will gain important knowledge surrounding cotton farming and its' importance in Benin. Her adaptability, teamwork experience, work ethic, and leadership abilities will help her to succeed in this role. She hopes that the fellowship will facilitate her transition into the agricultural employment sector in Benin and help her foster rural development in her country.





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## Bridget Mpairwe



- **Country:** Uganda
- **University:** Makerere University Class of 2024
- **Track:** Agricultural Employment
- **Host organization:** SNV Netherlands

### **Bio:**

Bridget Mpairwe recently graduated from Makerere University in Uganda with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture, specializing in Agriculture Extension and Education. Through her internship and volunteer experience, she gained an understanding of farm management and challenges faced by farmers, such as limited access to extension information and services. These experiences sparked her passion for working with rural communities and smallholder farms to improve their crop yields and livelihoods.

Due to her interest in empowering farmers, Bridget will complete her fellowship at SNV Netherlands as a fellow on the Agricultural Employment Track. Her work ethic, agricultural problem-solving skills, resilience, adaptability, communication skills, and leadership abilities will make her an asset to this organization. As a fellow, she is looking forward to networking with other professionals and finding mentorship opportunities. She also plans on enhancing her knowledge and skills in extension service delivery and agricultural production. In the future, Bridget hopes to empower rural communities through helping them increase self-reliance and improve sustainable agricultural production by providing agricultural resources and knowledge.



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## Clara K. Murairi



- **Country:** Democratic Republic of the Congo
- **University:** African Leadership University – Rwanda of 2024
- **Track:** Agricultural Employment
- **Host organization:** Clara Kahindo Murairi is a recent graduate of the African Leadership University in Rwanda where she studied International Business and Trade.

### **Bio:**

Clara Kahindo Murairi is a recent graduate of the African Leadership University in Rwanda where she studied International Business and Trade.

Her coursework led her to discover a passion for the transformative power of agribusiness and entrepreneurial innovation. A native of the Democratic Republic of Congo, she also conducted extensive research on grain food logistics in her home country, demonstrating her interest and expertise in logistics and agricultural trade. This research also strengthened her analytical skills and research capabilities, making her a great fit for the Agricultural Employment Track

Given her skills and background, Clara was offered a Fellowship position with the Agri-farmers Market. Her background in supply chain management, distribution networks, logistics, and market dynamics will allow her to greatly contribute to this organization. She plans to use this opportunity to gain a professional network and valuable skills that will serve her well in her career. In the future, she hopes to use her education and professional experience to catalyze positive change on the African continent.



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## Daniella M. Adjagba



- **Country:** Benin
- **University:** University of Abomey-Calavi Class of 2024
- **Track:** Agricultural Employment
- **Host organization:** Societe des Transformations Industrielles du Benin (SOTIBE)

### **Bio:**

Daniella Adjogba graduated from the University of Abomey-Calavi in 2024 with a degree in agronomy and a specialization in nutrition, food science, and technology. She has worked in nutrition, food technology, and quality control through interning at the INAPEC Coated and Confectionery Production Industry and the Food Safety Laboratory.

Daniella gained important experience in food processing, consumer health, research methods, and project management while also discovering a passion for the agri-food network through these experiences.

Daniella is a Fellow on the Agricultural Employment Track and was placed with the Societe des Transformations Industrielles du Benin (SOTIBE). She will acquire new practical and theoretical skills while also building a strong professional network in the agri-food industry in Benin. Daniella is passionate about community development and driving sustainability in agriculture, thus she hopes that this opportunity will help her to develop the food processing sector in Benin in her career. Daniella aims to create lasting change in her community and country and is looking forward to achieving these goals through this fellowship



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## Godfrey Okello



- **Country:** Uganda
- **University:** Makerere University Class of 2024
- **Track:** Agricultural Employment
- **Host organization:** Omia Agribusiness Development Group

### **Bio:**

Godfrey Okello recently graduated from Makerere University in Uganda with a degree in Food Science and Technology. He has a strong academic foundation in agricultural science and is very passionate about the power of education in strengthening communities and creating lasting change. He believes that agriculture is crucial to community development and economic growth and is looking forward to working at Omia Agribusiness Development Group on the Agricultural Employment Track.

Godfrey's leadership and educational experience combined with his passion for empowering others will make him an asset to this organization. He understands current challenges facing the agricultural sector in Africa which makes him a great fit for this organization. While Godfrey has a passion for education and hopes to explore that later in his career, a Fellowship at Omia Agribusiness Development Group will allow him to learn more about supporting farmers with access to markets for their outputs which will be valuable work experience. He hopes to teach others about better postharvest handling practices to foster sustainability, economic growth, and community development. Godfrey is looking forward to empowering people in vulnerable communities to create long-lasting change during his Fellowship and throughout his career.



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## Victoire Oussa



- **Country:** Benin
- **University:** University of Abomey-Calavi Class of 2022
- **Track:** Agricultural Employment
- **Host organization:** Cenadis Agro

### **Bio:**

Victoire Oussa graduated with a degree in Rural Engineering, Agricultural Mechanization, Fishing and Aquaculture from the University of Abomey-Calavi in 2022. She is passionate about fisheries and aquaculture and enjoys working in the field with producers.

Victoire also gained important professional experience in this field through internships where she performed laboratory work, research, and data analysis supporting fisheries and aquaculture. Her background and interests made her a great fit for the Agricultural Employment Track, as Victoire will complete her Fellowship at Cenadis Agro.

Victoire is looking forward to achieving her personal and professional goals through this Fellowship. She had hoped to work in a large agricultural company and institution and is appreciative of the Fellowship for making this possible. Victoire is also passionate about improving her community through agriculture and will gain important skills throughout this opportunity that will allow her to do so. In the future, she hopes to train young people about fish farming and create jobs in the sector, overall contributing to the development of aquaculture in her home country of Benin.



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## Sebio Gaspard



- **Country:** Benin
- **University:** University of Abomey-Calavi Class of 2022
- **Track:** Agricultural Employment
- **Host organization:** VEGOLA Benin

### **Bio:**

Sebio Gaspard graduated from the University of Abomey- Calavi in 2022 with a Science degree in Technical Plant Production.

As a student, he worked in agricultural businesses and horticulture farms to support farm operations and pest control methods. While Sebio has a strong professional and academic background in crop management and plant production, he also has a passion for teaching and believes that education can improve agricultural production, promote sustainability, and increase community development across the African continent.

As a Fellow on the Agricultural Employment Track at VEGOLA Benin, Sebio will obtain important experience in the agricultural sector of his home country. His academic background and professional experiences make him an excellent fit for this organization. Sebio is looking forward to pursuing his passion for agriculture without worrying about financial constraints through this fellowship. He also hopes to acquire new knowledge in agriculture that he can apply throughout his career to empower a new generation of farmers, thus contributing to the economic development of Africa.





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## Joseph Tchetan



- **Country:** Benin
- **University:** University of Abomey-Calavi Class of 2022
- **Track:** Agricultural Entrepreneurship
- **Host organization:** UniPod Benin

### **Bio:**

As a 2022 graduate of the University of Abomey-Calavi in Benin, Joseph Tchetan has a strong academic background in renewable energy and energy systems and is passionate about innovation and sustainable development in agricultural machinery.

His interests and background led him to found CLEAN ENERGY4ALL BENIN which is a company that produces automatic and silent solar mills for environmentally friendly and cost-effective cereal milling. His solar mills will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and noise pollution while also increasing cereal production, demonstrating their importance in sustainable agricultural production. CLEAN ENERGY4ALL BENIN was also awarded the Best Innovative Project Award in 2023 by the Mastercard Foundation, demonstrating the strong potential of this business idea.

While Joseph understands the challenges and opportunities in the agricultural machinery sector and has a very promising business plan, he has lacked the financial support necessary to start mill production. As a Fellow at UniPod Benin, he will be able to set up and equip a production workshop and scale up his prototype for the market. Joseph hopes to receive mentorship and additional entrepreneurial knowledge from UniPod Benin and looks forward to positively impacting the agricultural sector while promoting sustainability through his energy business.





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## Achille C.J. Tchidehou



- **Country:** Benin
- **University:** University of Abomey-Calavi Class of 2024
- **Track:** Agricultural Entrepreneurship
- **Host organization:** Entrepreneurial Development Component of University of Abomey-Calavi

### **Bio:**

Achille Tchidehou recently graduated from the University of Abomey-Calavi where he studied general agronomy and specialized in nutrition and food technology sciences while also developing a passion for entrepreneurship.

Achille founded Agro-Reference, a small business that invests in the processing of fruits produced by low-income female farmers in Benin and produces wines and juices that are rich in essential minerals and antioxidants. Achille hopes to provide financial empowerment to female farmers, offer additional employment in rural areas, and provide nutritional beverages through his small business. He also has gained valuable experience in other entrepreneurship support programs including the Jim Leech Mastercard Foundation Fellowship, United People Biashara, Aspire Leadership program, and the Global Agri-Food Techpreneur program.

Through a Fellowship on the Agricultural Entrepreneurship Track at the Entrepreneurial Development Component of University of Abomey-Calavi, Achille will further develop his business and transition his business to the professional world through taking advantage of resources offered to him at the incubator. He plans to gain additional skills such as design thinking, team leadership, project management, and financial planning while finding mentors and a professional network. Through scaling up his business, Achille hopes that he will support social sustainability and sustainable agriculture while positively impacting his community.



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## Adeleke Ogoutchemi



- **Country:** Benin
- **University:** University of Abomey-Calavi Class of 2023
- **Track:** Agricultural Entrepreneurship
- **Host organization:** Entrepreneurial Development Component of University of Abomey-Calavi

### **Bio:**

Adeleke Ogoutchemi, a Mastercard Foundation Scholar, recently graduated from the University of Abomey-Calavi in Benin with a Science degree in Technical Plant Production.

Adeleke grew up in a rural community in Benin and witnessed first-hand how poor agricultural practices and soil that lacks nutrients impacts harvests and rural communities. These experiences motivated him to study agriculture and use his education to uplift his community. As a fellow on the Agricultural Entrepreneurship Track, he currently works as the Waste Collection Manager at his business, Bio Planet TMC Ltd. His company produces granulated organic fertilizer at a low cost to sustain organic farming practices in rural Benin and promote sustainable agricultural practices. Adeleke's business has won several awards and funding opportunities from the Resolution Project, the Mastercard Foundation Entrepreneurship Program Fund at UAC, and the African Centre of Excellence for Water and Sanitation.

Through a fellowship at the Entrepreneurial Development Component of University of Abomey-Calavi, Adeleke will build on the existing success of his business through gaining technical and financial support, training and coaching sessions, and a professional network of experts and fellows. He hopes his business will positively impact his community through contributing to the development of agriculture in Africa, thus reducing poverty and hunger on the continent.



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## Akiola Fatolou



- **Country:** Benin
- **University:** University of Abomey-Calavi Class of 2023
- **Track:** Agricultural Entrepreneurship
- **Host organization:** Entrepreneurial Development Component of University of Abomey-Calavi

### **Bio:**

Akiola Fatolou graduated with a degree in Animal Production and Health from the University of Abomey- Calavi in his home country of Benin.

Throughout his time at university, he developed an interest in sustainability and poultry farming through internships at poultry farms and a veterinary clinic. These experiences, combined with his coursework, made him acutely aware of challenges facing the livestock sector. These challenges motivate Akiola to start his own organic egg business, using his knowledge of poultry production management to sustainably produce eggs with diversified nutritional value.

As a fellow within the Agricultural Entrepreneurship Track at the Entrepreneurial Development Component of University of Abomey-Calavi, Akiola plans to gain an understanding of essential management skills and financial analysis for effective business leadership to improve the quality of his product. He is also looking forward to taking advantage of networking and mentorship opportunities to create technical and financial partnerships. Akiola hopes that his business will generate positive and meaningful impacts in his community and country through producing eggs with added nutritional value while employing environmentally sustainable business practices. In the future, Akiola looks forward to implementing innovative and sustainable solutions to address current challenges in agriculture, further contributing to the sustainable development of his community.



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## Christian Adoh



- **Country:** Benin
- **University:** University of Abomey-Calavi Class of 2024
- **Track:** Agricultural Entrepreneurship
- **Host organization:** Entrepreneurial Development Component of University of Abomey-Calavi

### **Bio:**

Christian Adoh is a recent graduate of the University of Abomey-Calavi in Benin where he studied Agricultural Engineering and Environmental Management.

While in university, he learned about the importance of environmentally sustainable agriculture and discovered a passion for entrepreneurship, motivating him to found BIO PLANET TMC Ltd where he is currently employed as CEO. His company produces granulated organic fertilizer at a low cost to sustain organic farming practices in rural Benin and promote agricultural sustainability. BIO PLANET TMC Ltd has won several awards and funding opportunities from the Resolution Project, the Mastercard Foundation Entrepreneurship Program Fund at UAC, and the African Centre of Excellence for Water and Sanitation. Christian was also selected as a Youth Delegate at the 2023 World Bank Group Youth Summit in Washington DC, the Youth Entrepreneurship Summit in Kenya, and the EmpowerED program in Bangladesh.

As a Fellow at the Entrepreneurial Development Component of UAC, Christian plans to gain access to resources, mentorship, and networking that will expand the reach of his business. He hopes that his business will contribute to food security, social equity, environmental protection, and farmland restoration in Benin and on the African continent. Christian's relevant agricultural skills, leadership experience, and passion for sustainable agriculture makes him a great fit for this fellowship and will allow him to enact positive change through entrepreneurship in Africa.



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## Dossiya Dakou



- **Country:** Benin
- **University:** University of Abomey-Calavi Class of 2024
- **Track:** Agricultural Entrepreneurship
- **Host organization:** l'Envolve Incubator

### **Bio:**

Dossiya Daku is a 2024 graduate of the University of Abomey-Calavi where he studied renewable energy and energy systems. He grew up in a small village in Benin that relied heavily on agriculture and witnessed how food waste was a significant challenge faced by his family.

These personal experiences led Dossiya to study the intersection between renewable energy technology and agricultural innovation as a university student and found his company, GEFE2. GEFE2 is an energy company that provides electricity to rural areas in the form of mini central installations, off-grid solutions, and air conditioner installations. Dossiya also developed a Solar Smart Freezer that can keep food fresh for longer and thus reduce food waste in rural areas that do not have access to electricity, which is a key component of his business.

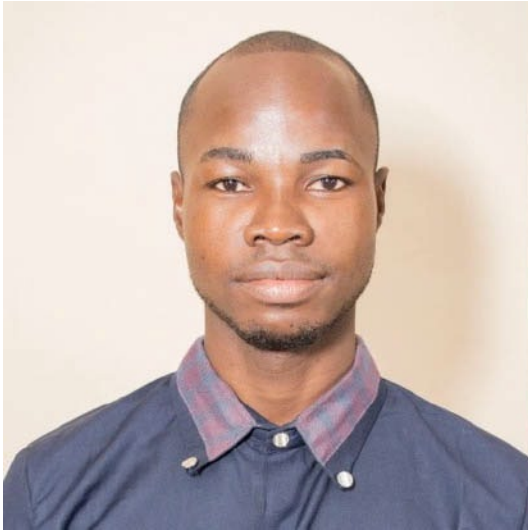
As a Fellow at l'Envolve Incubator, Dossiya hopes to scale up his business and contribute to sustainable development through deploying his technology. He will leverage entrepreneurship resources, mentorship, and networking opportunities made available to him while improving his leadership skills and gaining valuable insights into sustainable agricultural practices. Dossiya is looking forward to contributing to rural development and spreading knowledge of clean energy to improve the livelihoods of farmers while caring for the environment in his future as an entrepreneur.



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## Barthelemy K. N'serma



- **Country:** Benin
- **University:** University of Abomey-Calavi Class of 2023
- **Track:** Agricultural Education
- **Host organization:** Lycée Technique Agricole de Natitingou

### **Bio:**

A 2023 graduate of the University of Abomey-Calavi in his home country of Benin, Barthelemy N'serma has extensive experience in animal production science and technology and entrepreneurship.

Due to his academic and professional experience, he has gained an understanding of the importance of agricultural education on the African continent. He also worked for AgroDream Solutions TCM and facilitated farmer trainings, giving him valuable experience in agriculture education and demonstrating the importance of proper agricultural training.

Due to his interests and experiences, Barthelemy selected the Agricultural Education Track and will complete his fellowship at the Agricultural Technical High School in Natitingou, Benin. While agricultural activity composes almost all economic activity in this region, this high school does not adequately prepare students for careers in agriculture. He hopes to teach students about agriculture through partnering with local industries and farmers and integrating digital technologies to facilitate student's entry into the job market in this region, thus contributing to economic development. Barthelemy will also introduce the importance of sustainability, food security, and natural resource management to ensure that these students will value the environment throughout their careers. He hopes that this fellowship will jumpstart his career in teaching within the agricultural sector while also allowing him to positively impact young people and the development of this region.