

# Coping with climate change in the Pacific Island Region, a matter of survival

**Interview with Isso Nihmei, young Ni-Vanuatu deeply committed to his community**

**Can you tell us about yourself?**

→ My name is Isso Nihmei. I am 24 years old. I was born and raised up in the remote island of Futuna, Vanuatu, in a traditional household. After High School I attended the Australian Pacific Technical College and graduated with a Certificate in Community Service. When I came home to Futuna from schooling I became the youth president in my community and started social activities with youths to involve them more in agriculture.

In 2012, I attended the "Ready Blong Wok" programme at the Vanuatu Youth Challenge and was placed for an internship with the SPC-GIZ on a national Climate Change Adaptation Program. I started building my career on climate change and agriculture.

I spend a lot of time with my community after work and on weekends trying to learn

and practice custom skills that help us develop sustainably into the future.

**What inspired you to start working with the "Coping with climate change in the Pacific Island Region" (CCCPIR) programme and what does it consist of?**

→ Climate Change is a reality in the Pacific and Vanuatu is facing a lot of challenges especially in agriculture. The sector experiences low yields and crop failure due to high temperature, heavier rainfall and longer drought period. This has changed my life to focus on assisting, helping and work very hard to improve life expectancy in local communities and find possible ways to minimize the effects of climate change within rural and local communities.

Changing rainfall patterns, longer drought periods, increased cyclone intensity and rising sea levels are likely to

affect all communities and key economic sectors. Addressing climate change is therefore an urgent priority in the Pacific and countries have consistently highlighted their needs at regional and international forums. The CCCPIR programme aims to strengthen the capacities of Pacific member countries and regional organisations to cope with the impacts of climate change.

**What contribution does your programme have towards Data Revolution for Agriculture?**

→ From my point of view grouping agriculture technologies, methods and sharing information is important to better access to research data, improved visibility into development initiatives, data sharing across organisations and these advances can help unite efforts in the fight against global hunger and climate change. ◀



Isso Nihmei

Q&A

# "AgriKari". Market place and platform to exchange information on agriculture

**An interview with Jeanvier Jong Loy, determined young Surinamese developer and entrepreneur**

**Can you tell us about yourself? What inspired you to start the UniCode NV venture?**

→ I am Jeanvier Jong Loy. I live in Suriname, South America. I am a 30-years-old software/web/mobile app developer and entrepreneur. I am also studying for a degree in Software Engineering.

My company started as a group that participated at the Suriname National Hackathon organized by IT-Core on the 23rd of August 2014. We won first place. This made us applicable to represent Suriname in the AgriHack, in which we won 3rd place. After this success we decided to develop our skills and make a business out of our passion. Out of all the success as a team, the company UniCode NV was born. Our team gathers 5 people, 4 men and a woman.

**Can you tell us about your company and what it does specifically?**

→ Unicode NV is a software development company, which for now has one main product "AgriKari". AgriKari is an application that enables farmers to bring their products directly to the buyer. We have built a marketplace, whereby the buyers can place their orders. The application also enables users to exchange information on agriculture. This can be related to marketing or advise on the purchase of products for managing pests and diseases in the field.

The application is built on web-application technology. The future plans are that we will provide web development and software solution services to clients.

**What contribution does your innovation have towards Data Revolution for Agriculture?**

→ Our innovation will record statistics for the agriculture. Because of the data that will be available from these statistics, farmers will be able to put out more efficient strategies and get the maximum output available. Since Suriname is our home base and the product will be launched there, we can also say that we will make it possible to globalize the Surinamese statistics.

**Which event do you plan or intend to attend about Data Revolution for Agriculture?**

→ There is a "Made in Suriname" ICT & Agriculture fair in April 2015. This is the first official event I will attend regarding agriculture. ◀



Jeanvier Jong Loy

# AgroTrack and e-Haho, bridging the gap between farmers and buyers in Rwanda

**An interview with Davis Mugira, young “full-time passionate” entrepreneur and software developer from Rwanda who founded the Spiderbit start up.**

**Can you tell us about yourself?**

→ My name is Davis Mugira I am an entrepreneur, a software developer and a UI designer from Rwanda. Currently, I am the CEO at Spiderbit, Since 2012, I have been a developer and a designer at Spiderbit, where I work on software development projects and design art works.

**What inspired you to start this venture/company and what does your company do specifically?**

→ I started freelancing when I was at University developing websites and apps for small enterprises; the drive came as a desire to do something I am passionate about full-time. Again, it has always been a lifelong dream to run my own company. At the end of my studies in 2012, straight

away I founded Spiderbit Ltd.

Spiderbit is a startup company specializing in software development. Currently, we are working on an agriculture solution called AgriTrack/e-Haho. It is a mobile-based e-Commerce platform that connects farmers to buyers. E-haho is a complete solution to enable farmers to list their product prices to wide network of buyers on both mobile and web platforms.

**What contribution does your innovation have towards Data Revolution for Agriculture?**

→ AgriTrack/e-Haho enables farmers connect to the local, regional and global market despite the fact that there is limited access to the Internet in rural villages in Rwanda. With this system Farmers use

their mobile phones to send the data about their product prices, quantity and location. This information is stored and made accessible to crop buyers upon request in real-time manner..

**From your personal experience, what is necessary to succeed in your field and when will you count success?**

→ Some of the characteristics to success for a start-up is identifying a niche, Innovative ideas and great personalities (determination, resilience,.. etc) of the founders and the team are important, and of course good skill set of the team. We will count success when the system bridges the gap between farmers and buyers, and at least 80% of the farmers in Rwanda are using the system as mode of selling for their products. ◀



Davis Mugira

# Syecom Ltd: Providing ICT services to agricultural research in Ghana

**Interview with a “passionate changemaker”, Solomon Elorm Allavi, Chief Operations Manager and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Specialist at Syecom Ltd (Ghana)**

**Can you tell us about yourself?**

→ I am the Chief Operations Manager at Syecom Ltd, an agricultural research and geospatial survey and mapping consultancy company in Ghana. I am an active young professional in agriculture close to five years, with interest in geosciences and geospatial technologies use in agriculture.

**What inspired you to start this company and what does it do specifically?**

→ I am a passionate changemaker. Providing employment for others and myself in this fast-paced and highly competitive knowledge economy has been my ambition during and after my tertiary education. I am inspired by the opportunities that abound in the midst of all the challenges in Ghana and in other emerging economies. Constraints in

agriculture that require deployment of productive ICTs has been my inspiration to start Syecom Ltd. Over the past 4 years, we have been engaged in the provision of agricultural research and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) consultancy services for a wide range of local actors in agriculture and international development organisations. Our services include: farmland geospatial survey and mapping; provision of AgroClimatic information services; soil testing services, and agricultural research documenting value chains approaches and ICTs in agriculture.

**What contribution does your innovation have towards Data Revolution for Agriculture?**

→ Through support from CTA, we are finalizing work on an E-farms platform to profile farmers' data to enable them and

other interested stakeholders request access to such data. This data is intended to be private data for our farmer clientele but will be made open subject to data usage agreement(s) for the benefit of the big data community. Syecom Ltd is very open to support collaborative efforts to collect data for agriculture for the benefit of the sector at large.

Agriculture in Africa has huge growth potential. I envision more orientation towards large scale commercial agriculture and an increasing number of graduate youth taking up professional farm activities. I intend to improve and strengthen the growth trajectory of Syecom Ltd in the next 5 years in this regard. Partnerships with institutions in agriculture for big data services will also be expanded. ◀



Solomon Elorm Allavi