

# SARAH NJERI GIKONYO

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## PERSONAL PROFILE

I am an energetic and committed technical professional with over 20 years of work experience in the technical field gained in the FMCG industry. During this period, I have gained valuable experience in packaging and new product innovation and renovation, new products industrialization both in company owned factories as well as in third party sites.

I have extensive experience in Packaging project management, having led projects related to packaging cost improvements, innovations and CSV programs involving public/private partnerships.

I am a good team leader and a committed team player, who works well in multi-cultural and multi-disciplinary teams, having worked in project teams comprising of local market organization as well as center based experts and projects teams.

I have previous experience as a Packaging Consultant having carried out the ITC/FAO/IMA Kenya Country Packaging Needs Assessment.

## **WORK EXPERIENCE**

### **Head of Manufacturing Services**

**Sep 2015 –2018**

### **Nestlé Equatorial African Region Ltd.**

#### **Responsibilities**

- Responsible for industrialization of process, packaging and product related innovations and improvements in the region's manufacturing facilities
- Implementation of Total Delivered Cost (TDC) projects involving packaging and raw materials development cost optimization
- Supporting the development of local raw and packaging material suppliers to support new factories in the region
- Support selection, installation and commissioning of new packaging machines in the new factories.
- Training and development of the packaging and product specialists in the region
- Represent the organization in relevant standards development (Am currently representing the company in the Packaging Technical committee among others)
- Ensuring local packaging suppliers implement the Nestlé Packaging Safety and Compliance system to be approved for food contact.
- Ensuring new product recipes meet the nutrition health and wellness agenda of the organization

#### **Achievements**

- Successfully led the identification, testing and implementation of packaging, recipe and process related TDC projects that are expected to deliver 800,000CHF savings in 2018

- Industrialization of over 10 new popularly positioned products (PPPs) across EAR with the appropriate but affordable raw and packaging materials ensure affordability.
- Identification, selection and development of more than 10 new packaging and raw materials suppliers in Ethiopia, Kenya, Angola, Zimbabwe and Congo to support growing business requirements.
- Coaching, guiding and development of new Application Group teams following the earlier restructuring that saw the previous team exit the organization.
- Providing technical inputs in the Make vs Buy studies in the region including the Ready to Drink Dairy projects in the region
- Successfully led the first successful industrialization of the project on artificial colour replacement in Ambient Culinary in Nestlé.
- As a member of the Kenya national technical committee on packaging standards, we have successfully developed 6 new standards for specific packaging materials that did not exist in the country before and leveling the field for Nestlé and other organization.

## **Manufacturing Specialist**

**Mar 2015 – Sep 2015**

### **NPTC Singen**

#### **Responsibilities**

- Technical project leader for the project to replace artificial colours in Ambient Culinary in Africa and South America, a key commitment by Nestlé globally to remove artificial colours in its portfolio.
- Supporting deployment of PTC led innovation projects at the Global Research Centre for Culinary products
- Supporting factories across the world improve on machine output and improve efficiencies.
- Development and roll out of Ambient Culinary manufacturing standards that led to significant Asset Intensity improvement

## **Africa Regional Packaging Manager**

**Jan 2010-  
Mar 2015**

### **NESTLÉ Equatorial Africa Region Ltd.**

#### **Responsibilities**

- Market NPDI champion for the EAR region
- Responsible for coordinating the introduction of new products in the Equatorial Africa region
- Overseeing the installation of new packaging equipment and pack formats in the new factories.
- Coordinating Leadership development programs for the Technical function.

#### **Achievements**

- Successful installation, commissioning and setting up of new packing facilities in Democratic Republic of Congo and Angola.
- Coordinating successful introduction of new and renovated products in the Equatorial Region including Maggi seasoning, Cerevita Family Cereals and a new range of Cerelac Infant Cereals.
- Training of all Innovation managers on project management and Innovation management.

**Research and Development Manager  
Foods, Nutrition and Health**

**Jul 2007- Dec 2009**

**Unilever Central Africa**

**Responsibilities**

- Country contact and Nutrition pillar lead – WFP/Unilever Partnership program
- Team leader, AMET Research and Development Project managers Forum
- Innovation and Renovation projects management
- Development of R&D technologists in the region

**Achievements**

- Successfully implemented the School feeding program in 60 schools targeting 20,000 children in Kenya
- Developed training and Education materials to be used to teach schools going children basic Nutrition and health.
- Set up the training and certification program of new project managers in the region
- Development and industrialization of new product recipes and packaging for Blueband for Spread, Knorr Cubes and Royco among other launches

**Packaging Research and Development Manager**

**Jan 2003-Jul 2007**

**Unilever East and Southern Africa**

**Responsibilities**

- Defining and developing packaging specifications for margarine, spices, tea and personal care products like soap and toothpaste
- Ensuring packaging complies with both internal as well as statutory requirements in terms of quality, usability on the packing line and product protection.
- Carrying of performance related packaging trials in the factories and on the roads to determine suitability for use.
- Representing the organization at the national packaging standards development committee.

**Achievements**

- Development packaging and recipe for a new Blueband relaunch that lead to more than 10% significant uplift in volumes.
- Support the installation of new high-speed lines for margarine and spice filling requiring packaging materials of equally high performance that increased the output by 20%.
- Development of local suppliers for flexible laminate packaging to replace previously imported materials thereby reducing out of stocks by approximately 10%.

## **Packaging and Research and Development Technologist**

**Aug 1998-Dec 2002**

### **Foods**

#### **Unilever Kenya Ltd.**

##### **Responsibilities**

- Recipe, Packaging and process development for new and renovated products
- Cost optimization of existing products and processes
- Ensuring compliance with Statutory and internal Standards

##### **Achievements**

- Part of the project team involved in packaging and recipe development for new products in black tea, cereals, cooking aids and personal care products
- Implemented cost savings projects of more than 500K Euros in a year by reviewing the specifications, process and packaging of various recipes, packaging formats and processes.

## **Technical Development Assistant**

**1996 - Aug 1998**

#### **BestFoods Kenya Ltd**

##### **Responsibilities**

- Working with the Marketing function in new product and packaging consumer research
- Recipe and packaging process development
- Quality auditing of packaging and raw material

##### **Achievements**

- Successful recipe development and consumer trials for a range of pre-extruded flavored porridge mix under the brand name Maizena.
- Optimization of the Knorr range of Soups and Bouillons that resulted in more than 10% improvement in gross margins.

### **KEY SKILLS/ PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| ▪ Project Management                         | ▪ Nutrition Education and Health promotion  |
| ▪ TPM and Continuous Improvement             | ▪ Coaching and People Development   |
| ▪ Innovations management                     | ▪ Training of SMEs  |
| ▪ Product/Recipe and Packaging Development   | ▪ Manufacturing facilities Support  |
| ▪ Supplier Selection and development         | ▪ Cost Optimization and Lean Manufacturing  |
| ▪ Quality Auditing                           | ▪ Specific product development and manufacturing ( Dairy, Cereals, Spices, Fats and Oils) |
| ▪ Packaging Safety and Regulatory Compliance |   |

## EDUCATION and QUALIFICATIONS

Period	Institution	Course
2013	Institute of Packaging	Diploma in Packaging
2004	Marketing Society of Kenya	Marketing Practitioners' course
2003 -2004	Kenya Institute of Management	Diploma in Business Administration
1991-1995	University of Nairobi	Bachelor of Science Food Science and Technology
1986-1989	Limuru Girls School	Kenya Certificate of secondary education

## PROFESSIONAL TRAINING – (SELECTED)

Year	Course	Facilitator
1998	ISO 9000	Kenya Bureau of Standards
2000	Quality Systems Auditing	SGS
2001	Flexible Packaging Training	Unilever R&D Netherlands
2004	The Future of packaging	Unilever South Africa
2006	Manager as an Effective Coach	Hay Group South Africa
2008	Career Coach for Young Professionals	Hay Group South Africa
2008	Project Leadership Training	Unilever South Africa
2008	Nutrition and Health promotion in Africa	Unilever South Africa
2011	ISO 22000 Internal Auditor Training	SGS
2012	Business Value Creation Course	Nestlé EAR
2012	Packaging Safety and Compliance	Nestlé Quality Assurance Center
2012	NQMS Auditors training	Tack International
2012	Leadership Development Training	Nestlé EAR
2013	New Product Development and Introduction	Nestlé South Africa
2013	Packaging machinery Training	Nestlé Senegal
2013	People Development Training	Tack International
2014	Packaging Trends and developments	Nestlé Indonesia
2015	Cereals and Cereal products technology	Nestlé Research, Orbe, Switzerland
2016	Processing of herbs and spices	Nestlé Research Singen, Germany
2016	Packaging and processing of Dairy products	Nestlé Research, Konolfingen, Switzerland
2017	Packaging Train the trainer course	UN-ITC
2017	Nestlé Leadership Academy Graduate	Nestlé Leadership

### Memberships

- Marketing Society of Kenya
- Institute of Packaging Professionals Kenya
- Kenya Bureau of Standards Technical Committee on Packaging

**Referees: Available upon request**