

U.S. SUPPORTS FIVE BENINESE WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN DEVELOPING THEIR BUSINESSES

AWARDED \$10,000 IN SEED MONEY

Paris, Washington DC, Zanzibar, 06.01.2022, 01:41 Time

USPA NEWS - The United States, through the U.S. African Development Foundation, awarded \$10,000 in seed money each to five Beninese Academy for Women Entrepreneurs (AWE) participants to grow their businesses. U.S. Ambassador to Benin Patricia Mahoney and USADF Country Representative for Benin Eric Newman presided over the award ceremony at the U.S. Embassy on December 22, 2021. Ambassador Mahoney praised the women, saying: "Ladies, you are the cream of the crop. You are examples of entrepreneurship and female leadership that others can follow. The AWE program exists to help women like you increase your capacities and change your communities. I'm proud of you and I believe your country is also proud of your achievements." Source: U.S Embassy/Benin

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FUND WINNERS ARE-----

Assiba Carine Bokovo – Ms. Bokovo founded Assiba Fee to combat infant malnutrition via moringa based products. She was inspired by her own experience using moringa to boost her breast milk production after giving birth to her first child.

Mèdémè Elisabeth Ahouandjinou – An orphan and the eldest sibling of a family of four, Ms. Ahouandjinou began selling palm nuts in 2014. Recognizing the strong demand for palm oil to produce cosmetics and medicine, she founded Jardin D'Afrique, which produces palm oil for local use in Benin and export to Nigeria.

Conscience de Dieu Agassoussi – Ms. Agassoussi founded INAPEC in 2016 to offer healthy snacks with an African taste. Their products include various nuts, minced coconut and blown rice.

Marlene Kindji – Ms. Kindji created Badémè Natural Foods to provide healthy snacks based on dried vegetables and spices.

Béata K Adonon – Holding a master's degree in nutrition and food technology, Ms. Adonon worked at a horticultural farm where she learned how to use aromatic plants to make natural and herbal teas. Recognizing the health benefits of these teas, she founded Harmoniks. The Academy of Women Entrepreneurs (AWE) is a U.S. government initiative established in 2019 to support and empower women entrepreneurs around the world. Through an inclusive learning community, women around the world have opportunities to explore the fundamentals of business, such as preparing business plans and raising capital, with the goal of building a better future for their families and communities. In Benin, AWE is implemented by the African Women Entrepreneurship Program Benin Chapter (AWEP-Benin), an association of women entrepreneurs who are alumnae from US entrepreneurship exchange programs. To date, more than 240 Beninese women have completed the AWE DreamBuilder curriculum, developed in partnership with the Thunderbird School of Global Management at Arizona State University.' Source: U.S Embassy/Benin.

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-19795/us-supports-five-beninese-women-entrepreneurs-in-developing-their-businesses.html>

Editorial office and responsibility:

V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Jedi Foster, RSR

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Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619