



# JULIA KIAGE-OTAYA, MSc

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Lagos, Nigeria

## PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

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A strategic and passionate Scientific and Regulatory Affairs Executive with over 14 years of experience orchestrating transformational changes in food safety, regulatory advocacy, innovation, governance, research, nutrition, sustainability, health and wellness. I possess excellent analytical, problem solving, persuasion, communications skills and as well as experience working with diverse teams all which has provided invaluable ability to quickly grasp challenges faced and continually provide value accretive solutions.

## KEY SKILLS

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Creativity and innovativeness | Nutrition Education | Food Science | Dietetics | Public Health | Research | Food Safety | Product Development | Wellness | Risk Management | Quality Assurance | Stakeholder engagement & Management | Policy and procedure development | Leadership | Persuasion | Problem solving | Advocacy | Governance

## NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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- Former Vice Chair of the Kenya National Executive Codex Committee.
  - Member of the Kenya National Executive Codex Committee through the Kenya Association of Manufacturers
  - Led advocacy efforts to reverse proposed labelling restrictions for drinking water in Kenya.
  - Through ICBA, recognized by the US Department of Commerce for the Advocacy work on the removal of unnecessary requirements and labelling restrictions on energy drinks standards in Kenya which avoided disruption of US imports valued between USD 9-12 million annually.
  - In collaboration with the Kenyan and global Quality, Safety and Environment team, lobbied for inclusion of European Union approved process for fluoride treatment into the East African Mineral Water Standard.
  - In partnership with corporate SRA and ICBA, held a regulator stakeholder workshop to create awareness about food colours.
  - Supported Coca-Cola in developing +20 standards for new innovations in the non-alcohol beverages sector
  - Executed a best in class employee wellness programme at Coca-Cola in 2014 as the Business Unit Values Champion.
  - Developed a three-year nutrition and wellness strategy for Coca-Cola Central East and West Africa.
  - Part of the organizing committee for Codex Africa meeting hosted by Kenya in 2017 and 2019.
  - Collaborated with the Uganda National Bureau of Standards, to hold the inaugural food safety workshop in Uganda that targeted industry professionals, academia, consumer bodies to discuss issues on food safety in the beverage sector.
  - Developed and implemented a stakeholder mapping tool for nutrition and health professionals in +30 Sub-Saharan Africa countries which resulted to strong regulatory partnerships for the Coca-Cola Company across the region.
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## EXPERIENCE

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### SENIOR DIRECTOR, SCIENTIFIC AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS, WEST AFRICA

#### THE COCA-COLA COMPANY: AFRICA OPERATING UNIT

April 2022 – To Date

Scope: Nigeria, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Senegal, Mauritius, DRC, Congo Brazzaville, Liberia, Cape Verde, Cameroun, Benin, Reunion, Mayotte

- Provide scientific & regulatory thought leadership, stewardship and governance to the business unit to enable achievement of the company's vision.
- Identify, develop, and execute initiatives, programs, partnerships, and stakeholder networks, with the objective of minimizing regulatory and scientific barriers and/or leveraging regulatory and scientific opportunities to protect brand and company trust.
- Provide strategic leadership
- Ensures development and retention of best-in-class SRA talent.
- Serves as a key leadership member of the Franchise
- Provides strategic leadership within the SRA function and expertise to the organization in some of the areas of regulatory science e.g. Nutrition, food safety
- Ensures approvals of new products, manufacturing permits etc.;
- Identifies and mitigates upcoming regulatory developments and challenges and maintain contacts with government and key opinion leaders on regulatory matters.

### SENIOR MANAGER, SCIENTIFIC & REGULATORY AFFAIRS (SRA), EAST AND CENTRAL AFRICA FRANCHISE

#### THE COCA-COLA COMPANY: AFRICA OPERATING UNIT

April 2015 – April 2022

Scope: Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia, Somaliland, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Namibia, Botswana.

- Represent Coca-Cola in the country bureau of standards technical committees to develop standards
- Provide regulatory thought leadership to PAC and the KAM in the proposed development of RPET regulations for Kenya.
- Support QSE teams in the country IMCR process
- Review and approve new ingredients and suppliers as per KORE and regulatory requirements
- Provide regulatory leadership in the supply and innovation workstream country projects
- Initiate registration process for new product launches in conjunction with our bottling partners and country Bureau of Standards in the 18 markets.
- In collaboration with the innovation and supply chain team track the sugar reduction productivity initiative in the franchise
- Organized 3 food safety workshops in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania in partnership with the respective Bureau of Standards to advocate for food safety issues.
- Ensured Coca-Cola participated in nutrition related conferences: African Food and Manufacturing Summit (2017, 2019 Kenya), Federation of Africa Nutrition Societies (2015, Tanzania), Kenya Medical Association Conference (Kenya, 2014 and 2015).
- Providing scientific and regulatory thought leadership, stewardship and governance to the Franchise to enable achievement of the company's vision.
- Enhance and develop relationships with external experts, government agencies, NGOs and other stakeholders on issues relating to nutrition and health, food safety and food regulatory matters to advance company positions.

### SCIENTIFIC AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS MANAGER, ISLANDS

**THE COCA-COLA COMPANY: CENTRAL EAST AND WEST AFRICA BUSINESS UNIT**

2014 - 2015

Scope: Mauritius, Madagascar, Reunion, Mayotte, Comoros, Seychelles.

- Implemented the Food Information and Regulation labelling for all the country products in Reunion and Mayotte as per the European Union regulation in a span of nine months.
- Delivered ambassador training to over 1200 bottler employees in Mauritius focusing on product credentials.
- In partnership with the University of Mauritius, led a workshop for government, industry, academia and civil society players to create awareness on the importance of diet and physical activity in managing non-communicable diseases

**HEALTH AND WELLNESS MANAGER (SCOPE: 30 SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN COUNTRIES)****THE COCA-COLA COMPANY: CENTRAL EAST AND WEST AFRICA BUSINESS UNIT**

Aug 2012 – Mar 2015

- Built strategic partners with over 30 partners across the business unit. They were drawn from government, universities, nutrition associations and medical research institute.
- Brought on board the Kenya Medical Research Institute with whom we had a one-year MOU to support health and wellness programmes.
- Led 4 consecutive employee wellness week programmes.
- Developed a stakeholder mapping tool to identify key stakeholders in the region and developed a vibrant action plan for the active healthy living programmes in the region.
- Supported employee ambassador programmes where I have been able to train over 3,000 employees in over 6 countries on the Coca-Cola ingredients.
- Developed compelling employee wellness programmes and campaigns that earned me the 2014 CEWA Values Champion.

**MANAGER, NUTRITION AND HEALTH****UNILEVER: EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA**

June 2009 – July 2012

- Part of the food fortification task force that implemented fortification of Vitamin A, zinc and iron in fats, oils, flour and sugar in Kenya.
- Secured a partnership with the Ministry of Health in Kenya in a campaign to support the Blueband National Growth Challenge.
- Developed health communication materials for brand communication (Blueband and Lifebuoy).
- Secured the Ministry of Health's support in launch of Royco through communicating the importance of vegetables in the diet.
- Represented Unilever in Nutrition alliance meetings in the government of Kenya and Kenya Bureau of Standards in the development of standards.
- Acted as liaison for partnership projects with World food programme (WFP) and Global Alliance for improved Nutrition (GAIN).

**MANAGER, NUTRITION AND HEALTH (SHORT TERM ASSIGNMENT)****UNILEVER: SOUTH AFRICA**

Feb 2011- July 2011

- Drafted and implemented a heart health strategy for the Flora Brand in South Africa

- Worked with external consultants to publish a nutrition and health teacher resource guide for schools in South Africa.
- Strengthened partnerships with external stakeholders to form an expert group that supports fats and fatty acids.
- Worked closely with an external agency to set up a Unilever website for Key Opinion Formers.
- Conducted a 3-week challenge research to test the effectiveness of Flora Proactiv on cholesterol

## UNIVERSITY LECTURER (UNITS TAUGHT, HIV/AIDS, FOOD SCIENCE AND NUTRITION)

### **JKUAT, Catholic University of East Africa and Kenyatta University**

Jan 2008 - May 2009

- Creating course outlines for units taught.
- Teach students and set examinations for the same units.
- Guide and supervise nutrition undergraduate students on final year research projects.

## EDUCATION

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### UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

2025

Masters of Business Administration

### JOMO KENYATTA UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE AND TECHNOLOGY

2006

Master of Science: Food Science and Postharvest Technology

### KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

2001

Bachelor of Science: Foods, Nutrition and Dietetics

## MEMBERSHIPS

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- Previously a member of food additives, labelling, processed fruit and vegetables, water based flavoured drinks, dairy and codex technical committees in Kenya Bureau of Standards, East Africa Community and COMESA Business Council.
- Currently a member of the Food additives, Labelling, non-alcoholic beverages and water technical and codex committees in Nigeria.
- Chairman, Fruits and Vegetables subcommittee – Manufacturing Association of Nigeria

## PRESENTATIONS

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- What is the future of nutrition, health and wellness in Africa during and after Covid-19 pandemic | AFMASS Food Expos Virtual Seminars, 2020.
- Regulatory landscape of non-alcoholic beverages | African Food and Manufacturing Summit – Kenya, 2019.
- Panel discussion on regulations in Tanzania | African Food and Manufacturing Summit - Tanzania, 2018.
- Balanced and Safe Nutrition – A critical pathway to prevention of NCDs | Nigerian Institute of Food Science and Technology Conference – Abuja, Nigeria, 2013.
- Calorie balance – The importance of physical activity | Nigerian Society of Nutrition Conference – Nigeria, 2013.
- Beverages and health | Nigerian Society of Nutrition Conference – Asaba, Nigeria, 2012.
- Serum zinc and vitamin A levels among pregnant and lactating mothers in Kenya (Poster) | International Congress of Nutrition – Thailand, 2009.

- Serum zinc levels among HIV positive pregnant mothers in Thika District | Uganda Association of Nutrition (UGAN) congress, 2009.

## **COURSES AND TRAINING**

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- Managing transitions, 2024
- Coca-Cola Value Chain Academy | Supply Chain rising, 2023
- Coca-Cola Leader of Others Programme | Harvard University & Coca-Cola University, 2017.
- Pegasus leadership Programme | Coca-Cola University (Residential in India), 2015.
- Leading and motivating | Coca-Cola University, 2014.
- Negotiations | Coca-Cola University, 2012-13.
- Strategic thinking | Coca-Cola University, 2011.
- Finance and System Economics | Coca-Cola University, 2009.
- Manager Excellence | Coca-Cola University, 2010.
- Project Management | Coca-Cola University, 2010.
- Women in Leadership | Coca-Cola University, 2010.
- African Nutrition Leadership Programme | North Western University – Potchefstroom (SA), 2010.