



SAHEL AGRI-MEDIA WORKSHOP

March 21st, 2024

Preamble

To address the limited coverage of critical agricultural development and innovations within the Nigerian media landscape, Sahel Consulting Agriculture & Nutrition Limited organized a one-day interactive workshop which brought together 12 anglophone and francophone journalists to explore storytelling & agricultural journalism, accountability reporting and the agenda-setting role of the media.

The goal was to enhance the journalists' skills and knowledge to improve the quality and breadth of agricultural reporting in mainstream media. The workshop was conducted by both agri-business and journalism education & practice experts.



Setting the Pace



Aisha Hadejia

Partner, Sahel Consulting

Moving beyond surface-level headlines, it is crucial to adopt a strategic approach in media coverage that delves into the realities, challenges, and opportunities of agri-business. This holistic perspective paves the way for inclusive and sustainable agricultural practices.

The media must play its role in elevating public discourse by examining case studies like the [Advancing Local Dairy Development in Nigeria \(ALDDN\)](#) Program, the [Collaborative Seed Program \(CSP\)](#), and the [FMAFS Capacity Support Project](#). These programs serve as valuable models, informing policy decisions and intervention designs for a more effective and sustainable agricultural sector.





What is agricultural journalism?

The participants learned all about agricultural journalism; mastering how to use data, insights, and expert interviews to tell the story of agriculture in Nigeria. This session was facilitated by James Amailo, an Analyst at Sahel Consulting.

The interactive deep dive session covered the role of agriculture in the Nigerian economy and the prevailing challenges in the sector. Critical facts and figures were studied, and participants had the opportunity to share their experiences and thoughts on the concepts presented.

By the end of the session, participants gained insights into the country's agricultural output, economic indicators, supply and demand gaps, social aspects and the fundamentals of agricultural journalism.



The Narrative Imperative

Dapo Olorunyomi

Publisher/CEO, Premium Times, CJID

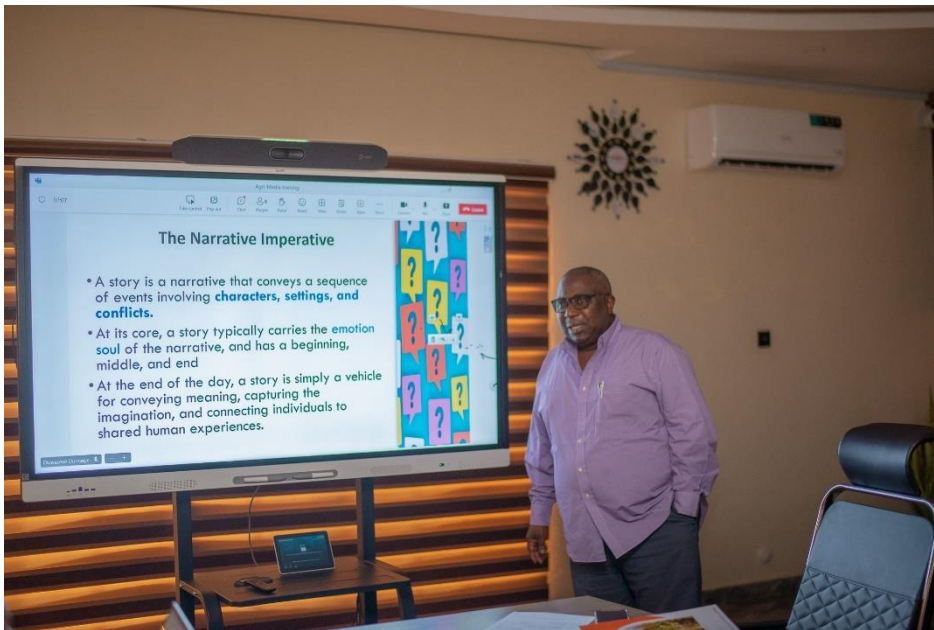
To broaden the journalists' perspectives, a presentation was delivered by renowned media expert, Mr. Dapo Olorunyomi. The session focused on the principles of storytelling and highlighted the legal objectives of agricultural journalism.

Mr. Olorunyomi shared valuable insights on effective storytelling techniques, emphasizing the importance of conveying information accurately and ethically within the agricultural context.

Another presentation was conducted by Taiwo-Hassan Adebayo, a Business & Climate African Correspondent from the Associated Press. Adebayo delved into various story ideas and patterns that journalists could cover, emphasizing the importance of identifying credible sources for their reports.

The session also stressed the significance of dedicating ample time to in-depth research to enrich their reports with valuable insights.

Collectively, these presentations equipped the journalists with the essential skills and knowledge to elevate their agricultural reporting and deliver more impactful stories.



Feedback from Participants

“I learned effective approaches to conducting in-depth reportage on the pastoralist-farmer conflict, with a specific focus on reporting solutions to mitigate the conflict”.

– Gabriel Ewepu (Vanguard)



“I gained a deeper understanding of the significance of collaboration among policy makers, farmers, agri-business merchants, and agricultural research institutes to address systemic issues in the sector and ensure food security” – Mary Cynthia (Premium Times)



Next Steps/Recommendations

- Newsrooms must develop strategies to facilitate coverage of evidence-based, instructive reports of the food and agricultural sector in Nigeria.
- To fulfill its pivotal role as both a watchdog and a guide dog, mainstream media must proactively forge strategic partnerships with policy makers, farmers, agri-business merchants, and agricultural research institutes. By holding those in positions of authority accountable and vigorously showcasing exemplary agricultural models, the media becomes a potent force in shaping informed policies and driving impactful interventions within the sector.
- Initiate collaborative and transnational reportage amongst selected journalists to establish coordinated regional outlook of food and nutrition security in Africa.
- Newsrooms should embrace a solutions-oriented reporting approach, especially when covering issues of insecurity, pastoralist-farmer conflict, to help prevent and mitigate conflicts.

