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**FOOD & CITIES**

## EDITOR'S NOTE



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I am delighted to present to you the 22nd issue of the Sahel Quarterly focused on the role of cities in food production and sustainability.

The number of people living in cities, already half of the world's population, is expected to double by 2050<sup>1</sup>. In Africa, the population is projected to reach 2.4 billion by 2050, and more than 55 percent will be living in urban areas<sup>2</sup>. While urbanization raises serious concerns, cities can also be the driving force for sustainable development. Creating access to safe and healthy food is critical to achieving this goal.

When we think of food production, especially in Africa, our minds may imagine remote villages across the continent where small-scale farmers dominate the agricultural value chains. However, we are making a huge mistake! Growing urban populations across Africa means that the responsibility for producing environmentally safe and healthy food rests upon the cities as much as the rural areas. Stakeholders in the food value chain in Africa need to work together to promote sustainable food production in cities and ensure the growth of strong food supply chains.

The objectives of this issue are to: 1) raise awareness about the increasing African urban population and the need for sustainable food strategies in cities; 2) highlight the best practices in urban food production from cities around the world and key recommendations for urban food systems in Africa; and 3) highlight innovations and initiatives that are increasing food availability and accessibility in cities across Africa.

It is my hope that this Quarterly will enlighten stakeholders in the food value chain in Africa about the need to develop sustainable strategies that promote access to safe food in cities and help spark the innovations to transform African cities into examples for sustainable food production and supply.

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1. United Nations. "As urbanization grows, cities unveil sustainable development solutions on World Day." October 31, 2019. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/10/1050291>  
2. UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) in 2018



# PROMOTING FOOD PRODUCTION IN CITIES

BY IFEOLUWA OLORUNNIPA

The United Nations projects that the global population will reach 9.8 billion people by 2050. The growing global population, coupled with increasing rural-urban migration, could add about 2.5 billion people to urban areas by 2050 — 68% of the total population. The majority of these will reside in Africa and Asia. There is a critical need to increase the supply of food in cities to ensure sustainable food access for the growing urban population.

Currently, most of the food consumed in cities is produced in rural areas and transported to urban markets for sale. There are inherent problems in this system. As people move to urban areas, there is a loss of available labour in rural areas, threatening food production. Additionally, as food is typically transported from rural areas to cities over long distances, delays and poor transport conditions lead to spoilage and a resulting loss of food. There is a need to reduce the reliance of cities on rural food production. Urban agriculture — which involves the growing of plants and rearing of animals for food within and around cities — offers an alternative source of food supply for cities. Urban agriculture provides urban residents with increased access to food and proximity to food production sites.

## Best Practices from Cities Around the World

Various cities are embarking on innovative programs that promote urban food production and provide sustainable avenues for residents to access food. Below are some practices from selected cities around the world:

- **Toronto, Canada:** The city government encourages gardening in private and public spaces as a means of promoting urban agriculture around the city. In addition to residential gardens, Toronto also has over 100 community gardens, which are established on city-owned land such as parks and community centres. The community gardens provide opportunities for residents and



community organizations to grow food for household consumption and community sharing projects.

In addition, schools in the city are involved in school gardening projects, utilising their school grounds and lawns to grow food and increase the access and consumption of healthy and fresh foods. Students are involved in the food production process as a learning strategy and the produce grown is either used in school lunches, donated, or sold at community markets.

- **Singapore City, Singapore:** In 2010, a local firm, Sky Greens, collaborated with the Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority of Singapore to build the world's first hydraulic-driven vertical farm. The farm consists of about 1,000 vertical aluminium towers, each up to nine metres high and containing 38 tiers with racks to grow vegetables. The Sky Green farm enables the city to grow more vegetables locally, maximize ground space and reduce its dependence on imports. The farm currently harvests about 500kg of different types of vegetables daily and supplies to Singapore's largest grocery retailer.



- **Dakar, Senegal:** Dakar embarked on a project that supports micro-gardening to address food insecurity among its growing urban population. Micro-gardening involves gardening on tables, using recycled materials such as old vases, tires, buckets, and bottles as support. The project offers trainings in gardening techniques and dedicates public spaces such as schools to gardening. In addition, the micro-gardening



vulnerable groups in the city, such as women, seniors, and disabled citizens. Apart from the increase in food production, the project offers additional benefits like the creation of sources of income and social cohesion.

- **New York, United States:** New York City supports the integration of gardens in public buildings and spaces to promote urban agriculture. In 2015, JetBlue airlines established a rooftop farm on Terminal 5 at JFK International Airport. Known as the T5 farm, the 24,000-square-foot space currently primarily grows blue potatoes in plastic crates. The rooftop farm also houses about 2,000 other plants and herbs such as beets, carrots, kale, mint, and arugula. The harvested produce is donated to local food pantries across the city.



- **Medellín, Colombia:** As part of its food security programme in 2013, the city promoted vegetable gardens in residential areas to improve access to healthy food for vulnerable families. In partnership with agricultural professionals, community leaders and organizations, the city of Medellín provided training on topics such as the importance of family gardens, good agricultural practices, appropriate food storage methods, and healthy diets. The program was implemented in 13 neighbourhoods, leading to 150 new



vegetable gardens in 2013 and 435 new vegetable gardens in 2014.

### Lessons for Africa

Since the majority of the growing urban population will reside in cities by 2050, it is important for cities in Africa to draw lessons from across the world to ensure sustainable food access for their urban population. Promoting food production in African cities will require the participation of private and public actors such as urban residents, community-based and private organizations, and government agencies.

- Urban residents need to maximize ground spaces or rooftops in their homes by adopting gardening in order to increase their access to fresh food.
- Community-based organizations can embark on advocacy programs and campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of urban agriculture and influence individual and household behaviour. These organizations can also serve as champions for initiatives that support food production within cities.
- Private sector organizations can promote urban agriculture through their corporate social responsibility programs and initiatives.
- Government agencies should provide an enabling environment that encourages partnership opportunities with the private sector. Government agencies can partner with schools, community leaders and private organizations to provide support for initiatives and programs that promote food production in urban areas.





# TACKLING FOOD WASTE IN CITIES

BY OSENO OSAGIE

**D**id you know that one-third of food produced for human consumption, totalling approximately 1.3 billion tons, gets lost or wasted every year?<sup>3</sup> In a world where one in nine people are undernourished, it is astonishing that more than a billion tons of food never make it to the table.

Food loss or waste occurs at all stages of the value chain, from production to consumption. Fresh produce fails to reach market stalls due to poor handling, storage, and transporting facilities. Food waste not only hampers efforts to address food insecurity, but it also results in economic losses to consumers, businesses, and municipalities. In Africa, where many farmers earn less than \$2 a day, post-harvest losses are valued at up to \$4 billion per year. At the other end, consumers throw away uneaten or spoiled food products. This can cost a family of four in the United States an average of \$1,600 per year.

Globally, there is an increasing global concern around food waste and its effect on the environment. Food waste contributes to climate change, accounting for about 8% of annual global greenhouse gas emissions. To put this into perspective, if food waste were a country, it would be the third-largest emitter of methane — surpassed only by China and the United States (FAO 2015)<sup>4</sup>. In addition, according to the World Research Institute, 24% of all the water used for food production, or approximately 45 trillion gallons, is wasted annually. Thus, with every ounce of food that is produced and then wasted, there are associated wastages in water, energy, capital, and other related resources.

The United Nations projects that by 2050, an additional 2.5 billion people will live in urban areas and will make up about two-thirds of the world's population. As a result, food waste is expected to rise exponentially in most cities by 2050. Despite the magnitude of the problem, various solutions exist to prevent and reduce food waste. Since cities are often responsible for waste management, land use, and local health and food regulations, they are on the front lines of tackling

the global food waste problem. Growing urbanization is expected to further escalate the problem of food waste further.

## How Can Cities Reduce and Prevent Food Waste?

Food waste in cities needs to be addressed at the institutional and household level to have true impact.

At the institutional level, city officials and government agencies need to create an enabling environment to reduce and prevent waste. This can be achieved by investing in better infrastructure to improve food storage and transportation within cities, as well as enforcing policies that will push or incentivize food companies to reduce waste. For example, in Italy, the national government offers tax breaks to supermarkets who donate their food leftovers to charity. In Seoul, South Korea, the government is implementing a policy that will tax urban dwellers, organizations, and restaurants for their food waste. This will nudge restaurants to reduce their portion sizes and encourage individuals to only buy the quantity of food that they need.

Furthermore, for cities to be successful in tackling food waste, fostering partnerships especially at the grassroots level is critical. Potential partners include industrial kitchens, restaurants, school cafeterias, supermarkets, local community organizations, and non-profit organizations. For example, local non-profit organizations in South Africa, in partnership with private-sector organizations, distribute 14 million meals to the hungry in Johannesburg, Durban, and Cape Town. Fostering such partnerships will ensure that surplus food



3.FAO, "Key facts on food loss and waste you should know!" Accessed November 7, 2019. <http://www.fao.org/save-food/resources/keyfindings/en/>

4. [http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/nr/sustainability\\_pathways/docs/FWF\\_and\\_climate\\_change.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/nr/sustainability_pathways/docs/FWF_and_climate_change.pdf) [http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/nr/sustainability\\_pathways/docs/FWF\\_and\\_climate\\_change.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/nr/sustainability_pathways/docs/FWF_and_climate_change.pdf)

from private businesses are delivered to organizations working to curb hunger and not wasted.

In Melbourne, Australia, a food-sharing initiative called “**Open Table**”<sup>5</sup> shares free meals to those in need in neighbourhoods across Melbourne. Every week, volunteers drive around the city collecting surplus food that would otherwise be thrown away and turn it into nutritious meals to share with the community, in order to reduce food insecurity and food waste.

At the household level, there are countless habits that individuals and families can incorporate into their everyday life to reduce food waste. Minimal changes to shopping,

cooking and eating habits, such as only purchasing and cooking food items that will be consumed daily, can contribute to reduced volumes of household food waste and ultimately save household income. Proper food storage practices in households will also help to prevent spoilage and waste. Produce like potatoes, tomatoes, garlic, cucumbers, and onions, for example, should not be refrigerated, but stored instead at room temperature to prevent rotting or spoilage. Where households have excess food, leftovers can be donated to food banks and charities before food expiration dates. Through conscious food choices, households can help create positive change to conserve some of the earth's most valuable resources.



## INNOVATIONS LINKING FARMERS TO CITIES

BY ADEBAYO SHODUNKE

In Africa, smallholder farmers account for about 80% of all farms. This implies that most of the food required to feed the growing urban population is produced by smallholder farmers in rural communities. However, the supply chain for small-scale farms is weak and inefficient, leading to huge post-harvest losses especially for highly perishable agricultural commodities. In addition, poor linkages to urban markets force many farmers in rural areas to sell their farm produce to middlemen, who take high margins on sales. This contributes to the high cost of food for consumers in the cities.

Some private companies and development organizations are implementing various initiatives to transform the supply chain and retail market for agricultural produce in Africa. Prominent amongst them is Twiga Foods in Kenya.

### The Case of Kenya's Twiga Foods

Twiga Foods, a Kenyan start-up company founded by Grante Brooke in 2014, has been operating as a digital marketplace that bridges the gap between the demand for fresh farm produce in



cities and the supply by rural farmers in Kenya. Twiga is committed to reversing the trend of inefficient agricultural supply chain and farming practices in Kenya. It has been utilising a structured platform that promotes “an efficient, fair, transparent and formal marketplace” for all<sup>7</sup>.

The company originally started by linking banana farmers to cities through a few vendors. This stimulated demand from consumers in Kenyan cities, and Twiga has now sustainably scaled to source and distribute other fresh agricultural produce including tomatoes, mangoes, cabbages, potatoes, and onions, amongst others, to numerous vendors throughout Kenya at affordable prices.

Twiga operates several collection centres across Kenya including a central pack house with cold storage infrastructure. The company also owns a large collection of mobile trucks and vans, which are deployed across Kenya to

5. <https://www.open-table.org/what-we-do>

6. BCG, “Tackling the 1.6-Billion-Ton Food Loss and Waste Crisis,” August 20, 2018. <https://www.bcg.com/en-us/publications/2018/tackling-1.6-billion-ton-food-loss-and-waste-crisis.aspx>

7. Twiga, “Our Story,” Accessed November 9, 2019. <https://twiga.ke/twiga-story/>

to aid quick sourcing, aggregation, sorting, and distribution of produce, thereby operating an efficient logistics model that minimizes post-harvest losses as compared with the informal markets where most Kenyan farmers sell their produce. Currently, Twiga sources fresh produce from a network of over 17,000 farmers and distributes through over 8,000 vendors. Furthermore, Twiga has introduced a digital platform that allows vendors to order fresh produce from farmers in Kenya and deliver to consumers in cities within a short period of time.

A key benefit for farmers who belong to the Twiga network is the guarantee of receiving payment within 24 hours of produce supply. This helps the farmers to predict their income, stabilize consumption, and incentivize their production plans to scale the quantity and quality of farm produce.

To meet its funding requirement for scaling, Twiga raised \$10 million in 2018 from the International Finance Corporation (IFC), Global Agriculture & Food Security Program (GAFSP)

and venture capital company TLcom Capital LLP. The company raised an additional \$30 million in financing in October 2019. Twiga has also received a \$2 million grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the GSM Association (GSMA).

To link smallholder farmers to markets and build efficient food supply chains, the Twiga model should be replicated across cities in Africa. It presents a business opportunity for the private sector and provides sustainable solutions to challenges in:

- Tracking the quality of agricultural produce supplied by farmers to the market.
- Creating an ideal agricultural retail system for purchasing fresh and quality produce.
- Promoting food safety and security in emerging cities and countries.
- Creating a direct link to market where farmers can supply produce and be remunerated accordingly.



## CO-SHARING AGRICULTURE INITIATIVES IN CITIES

BY ELIAS BAKARE

The concept of co-sharing facilities in agriculture has become popular, as producers face challenges in acquiring the facilities or accessing infrastructure for their operations. For instance, for more effective land preparation, smallholder farmers are co-sharing tractors through tractor-hailing services like Hello Tractor. Along the distribution chain, private sector actors like Cold Hubs in Eastern Nigeria are providing storage facilities to enable farmers to store their produce temporarily. Some of the major benefits of co-sharing agriculture facilities include access to fresh food, reduced cost of agro-products, and ultimately healthier living.

In urban areas, some innovative co-sharing facilities in the agriculture landscape include community gardens, farmers' markets, and shared food-processing facilities.

### Community Garden Initiatives

Community gardens have a long history in providing urban populations with fresh food. In the 19th century, the British government allocated plots of land to the poor to grow vegetables and flowers. These gardens were critical sources of food for many families, with many allotments passed down across several generations. In the 1890s, Americans turned to community gardens to confront social problems such as economic recession, war, urban decline, and environmental injustice by collectively growing some food crops, fruits and vegetables. In Australia in the turn of the 20th century, the growth of community gardens was a response to war and food shortages. Today, major cities in the world have sustained the practice of community gardens as a way to provide families with access to fresh food.



One of the largest and oldest community garden traditions in the United States can be found in Boston, Massachusetts, which is home to over 50 acres of community gardens. The Fenway Victory Gardens, which still operates today, is a seven-acre community garden established during World War II to help city dwellers feed themselves. In 2018, city officials estimated that all of Boston's gardens collectively offered food production spaces to 10,000 Bostonians – about 1.5% of the city's population.

In Nigeria, a community called Obodo Ahiara in Imo State has established the Obodo Ahiara Community Garden program focused on teaching women how to grow food for their household consumption. About 120 women were engaged and trained on farming techniques, cultivating crops such as cocoyam, maize, okro, pineapple, cassava, waterleaf and tomatoes. This initiative is driven by Circuit Pointe, a non-governmental organization that works on gender equality.

### Farmers' Market Initiatives in Cities

Farmers' markets are another co-sharing initiative playing a critical role in providing access to fresh farm produce for city dwellers. Farmers' markets are also providing a medium for farmers to share infrastructure and reduce the cost of selling their farm produce in the cities. In major cities all over the world, farmers' markets have become a guaranteed source of fresh farm produce especially for consumers who care about their food source.

In New York City, for instance, the Ithaca farmers' market provides a place for city dwellers to source fresh and local food, baked food and crafts. Built entirely by volunteer labor, the Ithaca farmers' market has transformed a former debris site to a beautiful, thriving community gathering place. The farmers' market opens on selective days of the week across four different locations in the city.

In major cities in Nigeria like Lagos, Abeokuta, and Ibadan, state governments are establishing farmers' market facilities that allow farmers to access shared resources to sell their farm produce to city dwellers. These facilities are often designed as buildings with multiple store outlets with access to electricity and water. In the Gbagada area of Lagos State, a corporate farmers' market was established in 2015 to enable farmers to sell their produce directly to city dwellers. Farmers' market initiatives help farmers to make higher profit margins by bypassing the middlemen who supply to wholesalers and retailers in cities.

### Shared Processing Facilities in Cities

Several shared processing facilities established in cities are also becoming popular as they provide access to processing facilities at an affordable fee. Shared processing facilities help agripreneurs to process fresh farm produce into finished food products for commercial purposes with fewer upfront requirements.

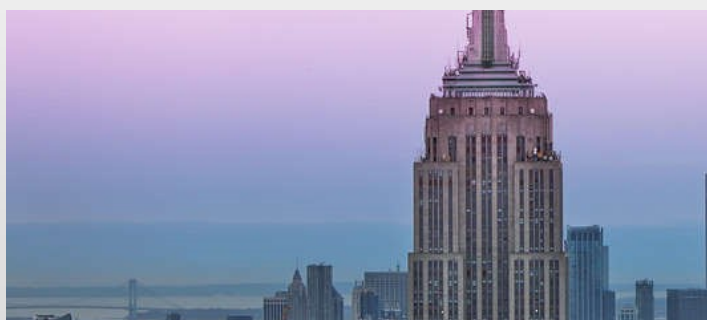


The JTC Food Hub in Senoko, Singapore, is a shared food production and processing facility that allows small- and medium-scale businesses to produce and process food without owning the core infrastructure that usually cost millions of dollars to purchase. The shared facility houses equipment such as spray dryers and microwave-assisted thermal sterilizers. The facility also has integrated cold rooms and warehouses, which can be used by food producers for a fee.

In the growing aquaculture industry in Nigeria, fish producers are adopting the use of shared processing facilities to process fresh fish at a fee. The processing facilities are usually inspected and certified by National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) and the Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON), the major regulators of the food industry in Nigeria.

Ajala Farms and Food Processing in Ibadan, Nigeria's third-largest city, is a good example of a shared processing facility. The facility enables several agripreneurs to process fresh fish into smoked fish, which is packaged and sold to their customers.

As highlighted above, the impact of co-sharing agriculture initiatives is far-reaching, ensuring access to fresh and processed food products in cities. Effective collaboration between the government, development organizations, and the private sector is key to unlocking new investments to scale these initiatives across Africa.





# STREET FOOD: AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE LOCAL FOOD CULTURE IN CITIES

BY IFEOLUWA OLORUNNIPA

Street food represents a significant part of urban food consumption. It is usually sold by the roadside in small kiosks, moving carts, or by hawkers. Compared to restaurant meals, street food provides cheaper food options and can be eaten on the go, offering convenience to consumers. Busy schedules, long commutes from homes to workplaces, and tight budgets have made street food a popular choice among urban dwellers.

As urbanization draws individuals from various regions and cultures to cities, the street food available reflects the background of diverse urban residents and diverse foods slowly gains popularity in different parts of cities. Street food also represents an important aspect of a modern travel experience, providing tourists with a link between food and different cultures.

## Popular Street Food in Various Nigerian Cities

Street food in Nigeria is colourful, tasty and is either spicy or sweet. It can be linked to various cultures across the country and most have made their way to Lagos, the commercial capital. Some popular street food in Nigeria include:

- **Bole and Fish:** Made from roasted ripe plantains, Bole is arguably the most popular street food in the Niger Delta region, particularly in Port Harcourt, the capital city of Rivers State. Bole can also be found in Lagos and other southern states in Nigeria.



The plantains are typically roasted over an open fire with heat from hot coals and usually served with fried fish, and a sauce made from a blend of tomatoes, chilli peppers, palm oil, salt, and spices. It is not uncommon for bole to also be garnished with tomatoes, onions and vegetables. It is usually sold on street corners, although certain restaurants have also adopted the food.

- **Abacha:** Abacha is an eastern Nigeria delicacy that has quickly become a popular street food in certain parts of

Lagos. It is also known as African salad and is a mix of shredded boiled cassava, sliced oil bean seed, palm oil, potash, peppers, and salt. It is typically garnished with onions, tomatoes, and spinach, and served with fish or cowhide. Abacha is usually hawked by vendors.



- **Masa:** Masa is a popular street food in several cities in Northern Nigeria. Also known as Waina, it is a cereal-based meal typically made from short-grain local rice. The rice is left to ferment for some hours and then blended and combined with yeast, salt, and sugar or honey to form a consistent dough. The dough is then fried in groundnut oil and served. Masa is either prepared with or without sugar. Masa prepared without sugar is typically served with sauce or soup.



- **Okpa:** Okpa is popular street food in South East Nigeria, particularly in Enugu City, Enugu State. It is made from dried Bambara nuts which are ground into a smooth powder and then mixed thoroughly with palm oil, warm water, sliced vegetable leaves, chopped peppers, crayfish, and salt. The resulting mixture is then scooped into banana or plantain leaves or small plastic bags and steamed. Like other street foods, Okpa can also be found in Lagos and is usually hawked for breakfast.



The abundance of street food in cities provides benefits such as access to diverse foods from across the country, employment opportunities and income for vendors, and affordable food options for low-income consumers in urban areas. Despite the benefits, street food may pose threats to public health due to poor hygiene practices in food preparation and handling by hawkers. This could lead to food contamination and safety hazards for consumers. While

### The Role of Cities in Promoting Safe and Healthy Street Food

City governments must understand the roles of street food in ensuring food availability in cities and develop policies and standards to regulate the food production processes and ensure food safety. For instance, to promote healthy practices in street food preparation in Singapore, the government passed a hawkers policy that mandated the registration and licensing of food hawkers. The city government also established “hawker centres” with stalls, amenities and infrastructure in designated areas of the city to enable street food hawkers conduct their businesses under a hygienic

condition.

City governments can also provide support for public or private incubator initiatives that offer food vendors access to shared commercial kitchen spaces and equipment, education on food safety standards, and business planning strategies to support their businesses. The involvement and actions of city governments will promote access to safe street food and enhance the production of indigenous food in cities.



## SPOTLIGHT: AFRICAN FOOD FAIRS AND FESTIVALS

BY OSENO OSAGIE

Food fairs and festivals are promoting the preservation and consumption of indigenous foods in cities across Africa. They provide participants with the opportunity to celebrate the food culture and present a platform for local food producers to showcase the variety and uniqueness of the African food. They also create an opportunity to foster strong partnerships especially among food vendors, chefs and other stakeholders in the food ecosystem. Some of the major food events in cities across Africa are below:

### The GTBank Food & Drink Festival

GTBank Foods & Drink Festival, organized by Guaranty Trust Bank Plc. in Nigeria, is an annual food exhibition and sales event that aims to showcase the diverse aspects of the Nigerian food industry by connecting various businesses involved in the production and sale of food-related items to a cosmopolitan audience of food enthusiasts.



### ABÓRI Food System Design Summit

ABÓRI, named from the Yoruba, Igbo, and Hausa words for food (ounje, nri, and abinci, respectively) is a non-profit organization of people in multifaceted sectors coming together to drive growth in the Nigerian food system. The

inaugural summit held in July 2019 in Lagos, Nigeria.

The summit is centred on the sustainability and inclusivity of the Nigerian food system and supported by Chef’s Manifesto as part of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This theme permeates the various panels, discussions, and events that occur during the summit.



Events are free of charge and open to the public to encourage participation not only by stakeholders in the food industry. The summit includes an exhibition of Nigerian food, a two-day conference, and a farmer’s market which presents an opportunity to participants to sell their products.

### Bole Festival

The Bole Festival is the biggest food festival in the South and East of Nigeria. It is a food-meet -fun event held at the Bole capital of the world – Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.





The event is a celebration of urban culture that creates a guide to Nigeria's rich heritage through food, attracting food lovers from across the world.

Beyond the food exhibition, the Bole Festival has a strong urban appeal that cuts across all age demographics. It provides an atmosphere that sets the tone for people to connect with friends and share a fun experience over a meal.

### Rolex Festival

The Rolex Festival is an annual food festival in Uganda. The festival, which is fast gaining international recognition, is in celebration of Rolex, a roadside food in Uganda, made with chapati bread, eggs, and vegetables.



The Rolex Festival celebrated its third year in 2019 in the capital city of Kampala, drawing chefs from Kenya, Mexico, and India. The third edition of the festival also saw chefs

infuse different flavours and ingredients into the Rolex meal such as chicken, beef, and molewa (dried bamboo shoots).

In recent times, Rolex has also appeared on the menus of restaurants and hotels.

### Jollof Festival

Named after the popular West African meal, Jollof rice, the Jollof Festival has gained international acclaim and is currently celebrated across cities in three continents – Africa, North America, and Europe.



Jollof rice is a rice meal cooked in tomato sauce. It is a delicacy in countries across West Africa with slight variations in cooking methods and ingredients in the different countries.

In further recognition and celebration of the meal, World Jollof Rice Day is celebrated across the world on August 22nd each year.



## SAHEL'S STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

### Towards a Greater Lagos: An Expert Consultation on Agriculture and Nutrition in Lagos State

On the 10th of September 2019, Sahel partnered with United People Global (UPG) to host an expert consultation focused on discussing key issues limiting the development of the agriculture and nutrition sectors in Lagos State. A total of 25 individuals who represented a diverse group of key players in the agriculture landscape in Lagos, including development partners, food processors, and financiers attended the meeting.

During the meeting, the experts participated in group sessions and discussed key issues in the agriculture and nutrition landscape across three priority areas:

- Poor post-harvest handling and food waste management.
- High cost of food to the populace
- Limited engagement of youth in the agriculture and nutrition sectors.

The experts also identified actionable solutions to address the challenges discussed across the three priority areas. The actionable solutions are highlighted below:

Actionable Solutions	Responsibility
<b>Actionable Solutions to Address Post-Harvest Handling and Food Wastage</b>	
Deploy resources to check and control the illegal taxes charged to transporters by cartels	Government
Provide an enabling environment for entrepreneurs to set up storage, processing and distribution facilities within the markets in Lagos communities	
Remodel and formalize the market structures in Lagos	
Provide a special fund for entrepreneurs interested in building storage facilities, e.g., a community cold-chain storage facility	Private sector
<b>Actionable Solutions to Address the Excessive Cost of Food</b>	
Develop a road map for food production and sourcing in Lagos State	Government
Define all foods as staple foods and mandate zero VAT on food	
Construct and improve road networks to ease the transportation of goods from rural farms to urban markets	
Build modern storage facilities/silos in Lagos to store seasonal crops and ensure year-round supply	
Empower farmers with the knowledge and skills to increase food production quantity and quality	Government and private sector
Provide technical and financial support to key sector actors to increase the adoption of technologies such as irrigation, greenhouses, and precision farming for year-round food production	
Promote locally produced food and create market linkages to increase local sourcing of food	Private sector
Maximize other means of transportation such as rail, air, and water transport systems	Food producers, retailers, and processors
<b>Actionable Solutions to Address Limited Engagement of Youth in the Sector</b>	
Create innovative sources of funding for youth agripreneurs	Government
Provide social-economic support to youth, such as access to land and agricultural inputs like seeds, fertilizers, mechanization, etc.	
Create an enabling environment for the adoption of technology in agriculture to make food production more attractive	
Incorporate agriculture technology in university programmes to expose youth to modern agricultural systems	
Revise and strengthen the national policies on youth, e.g., the National Youth Policy	
Write and publish the success stories of youth entrepreneurs in agriculture highlighting the key lessons	Private sector
Organize online platforms and dialogues for agribusiness professionals and youth agripreneurs	Government and private sector (Public-Private Partnership)
Organize mentorship programs for youth interested in agribusiness	
Create a trusted portal for agripreneurs to access agricultural-related information	



UPG plans to organize a conference titled “Towards a Greater Lagos” in November 2019 where experts will further discuss the highlighted actionable solutions.

### An Industry Breakfast Meeting to Unlock Nigeria’s Agriculture and Nutrition Potential

On the 8th of October 2019, Sahel Consulting partnered with the Nigeria Economic Summit (NES) Group to host an industry breakfast meeting during the NES 25th Anniversary in Abuja. The purpose of the meeting was to engage leading industry actors to discuss critical sector issues and solutions for stakeholders to strengthen the growth and productivity of the agriculture and nutrition sectors in Nigeria. Over 40 industry stakeholders including international development partners, NGOs, processors, regulators, and government agencies participated in the meeting.



During the industry breakfast meeting, stakeholders analysed key priorities and actionable solutions in eight key areas, for sustainable development in the agriculture and nutrition sectors. The eight key areas include:

During the discussions on the eight priority areas, participants emphasized the need for industry stakeholders to focus on the most critical value chains and leverage partnerships and strategic actions to maximize the opportunities that exist in the agriculture sector in Nigeria. The following are specific action points outlined for industry stakeholders:

- **Technology for agriculture transformation:** Opportunities exist for government agencies and private sector actors to establish technology service centres where farmers can access innovative agricultural digital products and services. These service centres should include models that accommodate farmers’ purchasing power and ensure increased access and

services. These service centres should include models that accommodate farmers' purchasing power and ensure increased access and adoption of agriculture technologies. media can increase the awareness on land use and climate change among smallholder farmers by using local languages to disseminate information.

- **Access to finance for agriculture:** There is a need for the government to develop and enforce policies that support the reduction of credit interest rates to single digit rates. Appropriate government agencies should ensure that financial institutions increase their lending threshold to farmers and align their interest rates with the low profit margin of smallholders. In addition, the existence of farmer clusters and cooperatives can be leveraged by development organizations to train farmers on financial inclusion and readiness to strengthen their abilities to manage finances.
- **Post-harvest management:** There is a need for state governments to refurbish existing storage facilities and remodel existing market structures through privatization for effective post-harvest management. In addition, the government should prioritize the establishment of good road networks linking rural communities to major urban markets.
- **Youth engagement in agriculture:** The media and development organizations should encourage the participation of youth in agriculture by publishing the experience of major entrepreneurs in agribusiness highlighting their success stories, failures and key lessons.
- **Governance, value chain prioritization, and research for agriculture transformation:** The government should consider critical factors in selecting priority crop value chains, such as domestic consumption, import substitution, and export promotion. In addition, it should invest in strengthening research infrastructure across the nation, engaging end-users in research formulations and implementations to maximize research efforts.

## SAHEL'S CORPORATE SHARED VALUES

Sahel is passionate about making an impact on society. We are focused on initiatives that support the education of children, build agribusinesses, and develop the next generation of leaders. The third quarter of 2019 brimmed with activities focused on engaging students in the faculties of agriculture in Nigerian universities and community development.

### Sahel Scholars Programme (SASP) 2019: Agribusiness Conferences in Nigerian Universities and Student Internship Opportunities

The SASP is focused on providing access to cutting-edge industry knowledge in the agriculture and nutrition sectors for eligible university students from faculties of agriculture in Nigeria. In 2019, Sahel partnered with the faculties of agriculture in five universities in Nigeria to organize SASP agribusiness conferences and engage top performing students in their penultimate year for internship, mentorship and scholarship opportunities: Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike (MOUAU); Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti (ABUAD); Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB); Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (ABU); and Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife (OAU). The conferences were held in July and August 2019 and focused on the theme, "Feeding Millions, Making Billions: The Opportunities for an Agripreneur." Over 1,200 students attended the conferences and about 25 university lecturers were engaged. Sahel hosted five distinguished agribusiness experts as guest speakers during the conferences.

During the SASP conferences, the Sahel team and guest speakers shared deep insights about the opportunities that exist in agribusiness, leveraging the success stories of agripreneurs in the landscape to inspire the students.

Over 200 students in their penultimate year from the five universities were screened through written tests and interviews for internships and mentorship at Sahel. Five students were selected for internships at Sahel Consulting Agriculture & Nutrition Ltd. and Sahel Capital Agribusiness Managers Ltd. Three out of the five students successfully completed their internships on November 1, 2019.





### Sahel's School Renovation Project 2019

In September 2019, Sahel partnered with The Lady Painter to renovate a seven-classroom block at Ikota Primary School, Lekki, Lagos State, Nigeria. The initiative was one of the selected projects to be implemented under Sahel's Corporate Shared Values (CSV) programme in 2019.

This project improved the learning environment for more than 450 nursery and primary school pupils in the school. The renovation focused on fixing the dilapidated windows, doors, floors, ceilings, and roofing, and repainting the entire block, including with inscription of some educational aids on the walls.



The students and school management expressed their gratitude to Sahel for sponsoring an initiative that guaranteed a more conducive environment for learning.

### Sahel's Health Impact Project 2019

In March 2019, the Sahel team embarked on a health impact project by reaching out to different hospitals in Lagos State to understand their operational gaps and potential needs. After thorough reviews, Sahel partnered with the St. Kizito Clinic in Lekki, Lagos, Nigeria, to provide some equipment needed to improve the services of the hospital. In September 2019, the Sahel team visited and donated three otoscopes, two bag valve masks, four body mass index (BMI) machines and four blood pressure (BP) machines to the clinic. The Sahel team had a fulfilling experience in contributing to the effectiveness of the hospital to improve the health of patients.



## SAHEL CONSULTING SPEAKS

### **Society for Corporate Governance Nigeria Breakfast Meeting, Lagos, Nigeria**

Ndidi Nwuneli spoke on “The role of Good Governance in Business Growth and Stability for SMEs on July 25, 2019.

### **The African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) 2019, Accra, Ghana**

Ndidi Nwuneli was a keynote speaker at a plenary session on “The Role of the Private Sector in Transformation” at the AGRF 2019 held in Ghana on September 5, 2019. She spoke on “Proving the Business Case of Smallholder D4Ag Solutions Masterclass”.

### **Lagos Business School’s International EMBA Week 2019 Programme, Lagos, Nigeria**

Fisayo Kayode was a panelist at the LBS international EMBA week on September 18, 2019. She spoke on “Exploring Agribusiness and Export-Import Opportunities in Nigeria”.

### **The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation 2019 Annual Nigeria Partners Forum, Abuja, Nigeria**

Olumide Oyebamiji spoke on the "Success Stories on Agricultural Transformation in Nigeria" panel during the BMGF annual Nigeria partners forum at the Transcorp Hilton Abuja hotel on September 19, 2019.

### **Helvetas Switzerland Annual Symposium, Switzerland**

Ndidi Nwuneli was a keynote speaker at the Helvetas Switzerland Annual Symposium 2019 in Bern, Switzerland. She spoke on the “Power of Youth and Economic Development within Africa” on October 1, 2019.

### **Nigeria Economic Summit Group (NESG) 2019, Abuja, Nigeria**

Ndidi Nwuneli was a facilitator at the NESG 2019 industry breakfast meeting on agriculture which held in Abuja on October 8, 2019.

### **Nigeria Economic Summit Group (NESG) 2019, Abuja, Nigeria**

Ndidi Nwuneli facilitated a session on “Business Leadership” at the NESG 2019 in collaboration with the Harvard Business School in Abuja on October 8, 2019.

### **Harvard Kennedy School 2019, United States of America**

Ndidi Nwuneli spoke at the Harvard Kennedy School on “Nourishing Africa’s 2.4 Billion People: Leapfrogging Through Innovation and Technology” on October 17, 2019.

### **Social Enterprise Forum, Ethiopia**

Ndidi Nwuneli spoke on the “Small is Beautiful, or Bigger is Better” panel during the Social Enterprise Forum on October 24, 2019.

### **Bluemoon Fireside Chat, Ethiopia**

Ndidi Nwuneli spoke on “1 Million Entrepreneurs, 2.4 Billion Africans and \$1 Trillion Food Economy” at the Bluemoon fireside chat in Ethiopia on October 25, 2019.

### **Lagos State University’s Agritech Conference – Sustainable Innovation for Green Economy**

Fisayo Kayode spoke on “Transitioning from Archaic to Modern Farming System” at the Lagos State University’s agritech conference on November 2, 2019.



## SAHEL CAPITAL SPEAKS

### **ANDE West Africa Regional Conference, Lagos, Nigeria**

Olumide Lawson spoke on “Investing in Agri-food SGBs to Improve Nutrition in Africa” panel during the ANDE West Africa Regional Conference on July 24, 2019.

### **Nigeria and Entrepreneurs Summit and Honours (NESH), Lagos, Nigeria**

Kunle Iludiran spoke on “The State of Entrepreneurship and Leadership in Nigeria” at the Nigeria and Entrepreneurs Summit and Honours on August 20, 2019.

### **Pan-Atlantic University’s Training Programme for Agriculture Reporters in Nigeria, Lagos, Nigeria**

Remi Bodunrin spoke on “Safety and Quality Issues in Food Production” during a training programme organized by the Pan-Atlantic University in Lagos to inform journalists on the importance of safety and quality issues in the food value chain. The training was conducted on August 29, 2019.

### **University of Lagos Finance Symposium, Lagos, Nigeria**

Kunle Iludiran spoke on “Let’s Get Invested” at the University of Lagos Finance Symposium, held at the University of Lagos on September 16, 2019.

### **Impact Investors Foundation (IIF) Annual Convening and Awards, Lagos, Nigeria**

Mezuo Nwuneli spoke on “Structuring Blended Finance: Approaches that Work” panel at the Impact Investors Foundation (IIF) annual conference on October 10, 2019. Sahel Capital Agribusiness Managers was awarded the “Investor of the Year” at the event.

Some pictures of the award are below:



### **CNBC Africa: Exploring Impact Investing for Development, Lagos, Nigeria**

Mezuo Nwuneli spoke on “Exploring Impact Investing for Development” on CNBC Africa on October 18, 2019.

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