



THE AFRICAN CAPACITY
BUILDING FOUNDATION

FONDATION POUR LE RENFORCEMENT
DES CAPACITES EN AFRIQUE

Sowing the Seeds of Change: Transforming Africa's Agricultural Landscape





“Africa’s vast consumption market, with 80% of goods purchased, presents immense opportunities for agribusiness. ACBF focuses on empowering individuals through mindset shifts and capacity building, ensuring sustainable growth. By investing in businesses rather than providing grants, we foster long-term viability.”
– ACBF Agribusiness and Food Sovereignty.

As Africa's population expands, its reliance on agriculture presents opportunities and challenges. The continent's potential for self-sufficiency and economic growth is immense, yet it needs to be improved by heavy food imports and widespread hunger. To unlock this potential, addressing the continent's agricultural challenges head-on is critical. Despite being a cornerstone of Africa's economy, agriculture is often associated with low productivity, limited value addition, and negative attitudes and perceptions, particularly among the youth. We must recognize agriculture as a lucrative, technology-driven, knowledge-intensive and environment friendly industry to change this narrative. Building a robust knowledge base on sustainable, high-quality food production is critical, as is shifting mindsets, especially

among the younger generation, who too often view agriculture as back-breaking, unprofitable and labor-intensive.

The African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) is a catalyst for transforming Africa's agricultural sector. Its human-centered approach to capacity building through the Agribusiness and Food Sovereignty pillar is strategically positioned to contribute to its organizational goals, the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals 2 (Zero Hunger) and 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and the Africa Agenda 2063, which calls for building resilient food systems. By investing in human capital, ACBF aims to cultivate a new generation of agricultural leaders.

With a sizeable portion of the population, ranging from 60% to 80%, engaged in agriculture, particularly women and youth, prioritizing agricultural development is crucial for Africa's economic growth. ACBF goes beyond technical training, focusing on incentives and developing mindsets through coaching and mentorship to foster leadership and create growth environments. Effective agricultural plans and projects hinge on leaders' ability to mobilize resources and inspire action, empowering individuals to become change agents by creating a fertile ground for innovation and entrepreneurship.



By utilizing the 5A framework:



Analytics



Articulation
(of a shared
vision)



Alliance
Building



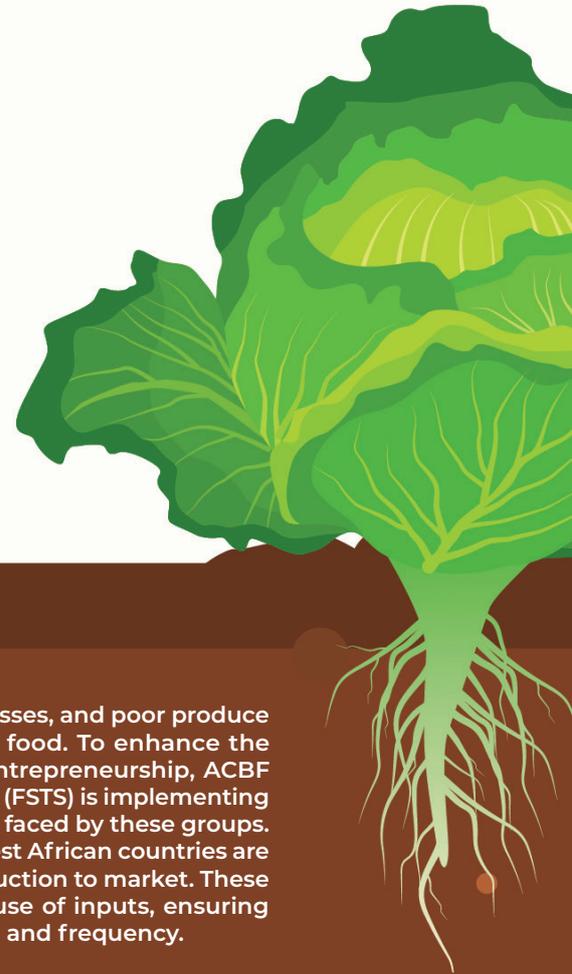
Action



Assessment

ACBF seeks to transform food and agricultural systems across Africa effectively.

The training approach addresses significant yield gaps, post-harvest losses, and poor produce quality in the face of increasing demand for quality and nutritious food. To enhance the involvement of women and youth in value-added agriculture and entrepreneurship, ACBF through its strategic partner, the Food System Transformation Solutions (FSTS) is implementing a comprehensive strategy aimed at addressing the specific challenges faced by these groups. Using a train-the-trainer approach, over 300 individuals across three West African countries are receiving comprehensive training on the entire value chain, from production to market. These trainers will educate farmers and their organizations on the proper use of inputs, ensuring adherence to market specifications regarding quantity, quality, and frequency.





Case example: A Harvest of Hope: Empowering Women in West African Agribusiness

ACBF's collaboration with the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) on an agribusiness development program in Sierra Leone, Gabon, and Burkina Faso targets women entrepreneurs in agribusiness, supporting them to scale their operations and become successful models for others.

Women, once marginalized in the agricultural sector, are now breaking barriers, defying stereotypes, and becoming powerful forces of change. Teaming up with on-the-ground partners that include The Sierra Leone Chamber for Agribusiness Development (SLeCAD), La Maison de l'Entreprise du Burkina Faso (MEBF) and ACT-Afrique Gabon, ACBF is providing a lifeline to hundreds of women and youth entrepreneurs. Equipped with financial support, technical assistance, and training, these women are beginning to scale their operations, improve their livelihoods, and inspire fellow women and youth to drive their own community development.



Ms Fatoumata Kamara 30, a young entrepreneur from Sierra Leone, is an inspiring figure. With program support, she has expanded her farm, increased yields, diversified her products, added value, hired more skilled workers, and grown her farming business. Her initial success has not only improved her family's quality of life but also created income-generating and livelihood opportunities for others in her community.

In 2015, Ms Kamara and her business partners founded MAF SL, Ltd., a limited liability company in Sierra Leone. MAF Ltd.'s mission is to positively impact the livelihoods of people and communities by promoting organic, sustainable and inclusive crop production systems while creating favorable social, economic and environmental conditions for their advancement.

Over the years, MAF SL Ltd. has grown from a small farm to a medium-scale operation, owning 400 acres of farmland in Karene District and 10 acres in Kambia District. The company specializes in growing a variety of crops, including cassava, rice, vegetables, maize, cashew nuts, potatoes, pineapples and ginger. MAF SL Ltd. has also established an agro-processing project, efficiently producing cassava, rice, maize and cashew nuts on its 400-acre farm in Karene District. This production supports value-added processes and is supplemented by an out-grower scheme that actively engages 80% of women and youth from 10 communities in the district. Ms Kamara attended a Cassava Value Chain

Training program in Brazil, co-organized by EMBRAPA (the country's national research and innovation institution), the Brazil-Africa Institute (IBRA), and ACBF. In addition to gaining exposure to international agribusiness development standards, she had the opportunity to network with fellow entrepreneurs, potentially paving the way for future collaborations and joint ventures in Sierra Leone and West Africa.

The Foundation and the Brazilian agribusiness ecosystem have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with IBRA to further extend the benefits of similar training and mentorship programs within the context of South-South bilateral cooperation. By investing in and supporting a critical mass of rural entrepreneurs like those at MAF SL Ltd., the Foundation and its partners aim to shape a more positive narrative of progressive, prosperous and sustainable women- and youth-led agribusiness and food systems transformation in Africa.

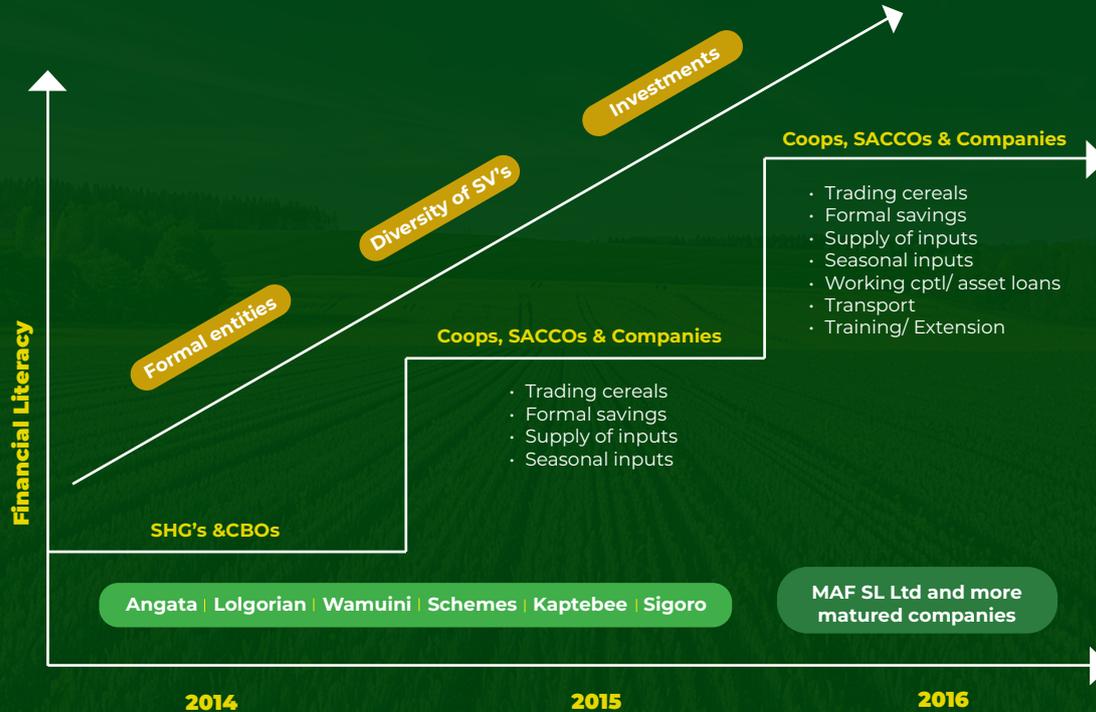


Further Unlocking Africa's Agricultural Potential

Africa's agricultural sector holds immense potential for growth and development. Import substitution presents a vast opportunity to create jobs, stimulate local economies, and reduce the continent's vulnerability to global food price fluctuations. For example, West Africa imports a staggering US\$40 billion worth of rice annually despite having ample arable land. Significant economic gains are realized by increasing local production and improving market linkages.

Realizing this potential requires a systemic approach, and ACBF's current targeted intervention phase is a crucial step toward building a robust agricultural sector. By fostering partnerships and addressing capacity constraints within African governments, partners, stakeholders, and communities, ACBF aims to create a sustainable and resilient food system. Strengthening agribusiness ecosystems demands synergy between agriculture, trade, and infrastructure sectors, making private sector involvement essential in advocating for conducive policy environments.

ACBF Support and Institutional Development model



The project has gained visibility through public launches in Sierra Leone and planned events in Burkina Faso and Gabon.

Africa's future hinges on the success of its agriculture. The Agribusiness and Food Sovereignty program aims to change practices, shift mindsets, foster innovation, and forge strong collaborations. Together, we can transform Africa's agricultural sector into a powerhouse of prosperity and sustainability. The seeds of change have been sown; it is time to cultivate them into a thriving economic engine that benefits all and drives Africa's sustainable development.





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