



AYLFAIN

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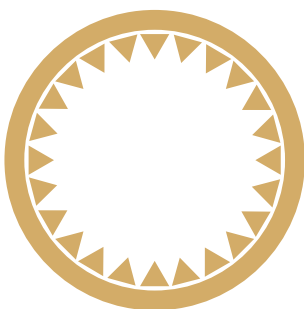


Young farmer on a mission to educate youth to venture into piggery



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@AU-IBAR, 2020

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Editorial

The story of Africa's worrisome youth unemployment is often told alongside the story of the continent's fast and steady economic growth. With this reality, this second edition of the ALYFAIN newsletter features evidence of the growing reality of youth unemployment on the continent. There have been many ideas about creating jobs, and the youth in the agriculture sector, with specific reference to the livestock value chains, have no shortage of ideas.

In this edition, we get a glimpse of youth engagement in apiculture. To increase agricultural productivity and efficiency, a gender and youth-sensitive development approach is portrayed in this initiative. It is a classic example of redressing the gender and age imbalance in agricultural productivity overall.

Feeding people in Africa in decades to come is a key concern and requires ingenuity and innovation to produce more food on less land in more sustainable ways. Climate change is sure to exacerbate already tight resource constraints by making weather more extreme. Population growth, changing diets, land and water scarcity are also long-term trends that threaten our continent's shared vision of a more prosperous future in which well-fed people can achieve their full potential without damaging their environment. Already, these pressures are forcing farmers and researchers to reassess mainstream farming techniques and consider alternative approaches to securing

food, including integrated crop-livestock management. This edition demonstrates that youth are ready to take this century's agricultural advances into a new era of opportunity by adapting climate-smart agriculture practices.

In the 2020 African Economic Outlook 2020; themed 'Developing Africa's Workforce for the Future', Dr. Akinwumi A. Adesina, President African Development Bank Group, notes the importance of making Africa's growth more inclusive requires adopting climate-smart agricultural techniques.

These stories provide the reassurance that despite current unemployment challenges with the youth, there is a sliver of good news: Africa's growing youth population comes with high energy, creativity, and talents, which are "also the key to future prosperity," further notes the 2020 African Economic Outlook.

It now depends on all of us to implement youth engagement strategies at all levels and, in the long-run, grab the unemployment bull by the horns. We commend the young people who have shared their stories in this edition and continue to be indebted to the European Union for continued support towards promoting youth in agribusiness through the Pan-African Support to the AU-IBAR for a Sustainable Development of Livestock for Livelihoods in Africa - Live2Africa Project.

Prof. Ahmed Elsawalhy,
Director, AU-IBAR



Young farmer on a mission to educate youth to venture into piggyery

An internship is an integral part of an academic programme that enables students to gain work experience and satisfy the requirements for their qualifications. Many who go through the programme look forward to an on-job experience for a limited time that would prepare them for employment once they graduate.

For Juliet Ejezie, the opportunity to work as an intern at Songhai Farm in River State, Nigeria, was, however, an eye opener that made her realize she didn't have to be employed to do all that appertains to her degree in Animal Science. At the end of the industrial attachment, Juliet walked past the gates of the huge farm determined to run her own agricultural enterprise.

"The experience was really inspiring. Everything at the farm was done to the highest standards and in a sustainable manner. They make their own feeds and every ingredient is generated from the farm," explains the 26-year-old lady.

What surprised Juliet during the internship was the fact that the pigs unit was headed by a woman – a Mrs Ibierebo Offruma. Impressed by how efficient Mrs. Offruma managed the unit, the major issue that lingered in her mind was how she could start and manage her own pigs' farm profitably.

Luckily for Juliet, there was a space in her uncle's farm and



with financial support from her family she was able to kick-off her journey in pig farming in 2017. Today, Juliet is the proprietor and farm manager at Dozliet Animal Farm tucked away in Umuahia, Abia State in Eastern Nigeria. She buys piglets and rears them to maturity, then sells them to slaughterhouses and other business people. She started with 50 pigs but has been able to maintain up to 200 in a cycle successfully.

Juliet ensures that the feeder

pigs attain the weight of 50kg and above before selling them at a profit. This business venture has not only provided her with a platform to pursue her career and make a living but she is also mentoring young people to venture into pig farming.

Based on the experience she gained at the Songhai Farm, she ensures acceptable management practices, including proper book-keeping and good sanitation measures to prevent diseases from spreading

to her stock.

Although Juliet says pig farming is lucrative and rewarding, the high cost of feeds and diseases like swine fever can impact return on investment. In the beginning, she used to buy industrial feeds from local farm supply stores. She has since learned the dietary requirements for pigs and can make various classes of feeds from readily available materials such as cassava and plantain peels.

“Feeds take up to 80 per cent of pig production costs and one cannot make profits if you rely on industrial feeds, which are very costly. I know the rations of mixing the different ingredients to produce high quality feeds that ensure the pigs grow to the desired weight for the market,” she says.

Juliet, who also works as a volunteer with Climate Smart Agriculture Youth Network, has been hosting free seminars and using her farm as a demonstration site to impart knowledge to young people interested in pig farming.

She has also authored a book titled “Pig Farmers Guide For

Beginners” which is part of her efforts to educate and inspire other people to venture into pig farming.

“Pig farming is lucrative but can also be a loss making venture for a farmer who does not understand the requirements very well. The book is therefore meant to help prospective farmers understand the basic requirements in setting up a pig farm and good farm management practices,” she explains. It also helps farmers learn how to adapt their farming systems to their environment if they aim is to make profit, while also maintaining good standards.

As a member of African Youths in Livestock, Fisheries and Aquaculture Incubation Network (AYL-FAIN), the network will help more young farmers succeed in agribusiness through financing opportunities to learn best practices from their peers across the continent.

With availability of finance, Juliet would like to venture into commercial production of Palm Kernel Cake (PKC) feed, which is a replacement for maize in diets of growing pigs. “I have submitted a proposal for 10 million Naira

funding to the government owned Nirsal Microfinance Bank for the establishment of a PKC plant which will also produce palm kernel oil and I can only pray that it is considered. This would enable me create additional revenue stream by selling surplus feeds to other farmers,” she says.

She also plans to increase the number of animals from the current 200 pigs to a 1000 despite in the next two years and enhance her education programme on pig farming to inspire more young people to venture into the business.

Juliet’s advice to the youth is to venture into agriculture, especially the livestock resource value chain, since the sector has numerous opportunities for wealth creation.

Her daily routine involves feeding the pigs, cleaning the pens and disposing the waste, looking for feed stocks in the neighbourhood or negotiating better prices for her produce. When she is not at the farm you will find Juliet in her study, either reading or writing.





In juice production, Manyaka found solace for lack of employment

Youth unemployment in Cameroon is a significant problem prevailing in urban areas, based on high unemployed rate of young people. Many graduates from Universities and tertiary learning institutions are languishing in abject poverty after failing to secure jobs in the formal and informal sectors.

According to modeled International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimates, unemployment in Cameroon was 5.69 as of 2019. Its highest value over the past 28 years was 12.22 in 1999, while its lowest value was 4.57 in 2007.

It is this situation that 32-year-old Manyaka Serge is determined to change. Manyaka, a member of the AU-IBAR-led African Youth in Livestock, Fisheries and Aquaculture Incubation Network (AYL-FAIN) has ventured into agro-business to create jobs for his fellow youths in the western Africa nation.

Through BioManyaka Juice, as a social enterprise, it is possible to provide healthy fruit juices to customers. The enterprise also creates awareness among the youth on various opportunities available in the agricultural sector for wealth creation.

To preserve all the benefits, the flavors of fruit juice and provide quality, Manyaka selects fruit with the greatest care.

“The quality of the juices depends on its raw material: over all areas of crops, so, experts pick fresh healthy fruit. The processing of the juices is also given particular attention, to preserve all the qualities of the fruit,” says Manyaka

Manyaka uses the venture as a platform to share knowledge and experiences earned from her interaction with peers under AYL-FAIN with the youth in her community. And the efforts are already paying off as more and more young people are embracing agribusiness.

Manyaka says through the network, youths across Africa can showcase their abilities, to be mentored and assisted in accessing the market for their products. He would like those in his community who are not yet part of the continental network to benefit too.

“BioManyaka Juice is a micro social business put in place to promote job creation for the youth, healthy living and wealth creation in our communities,” he

says.

Youth gain knowledge of opportunities in the production of bio juice, which is healthier than the industrially manufactured ones. He believes such an initiative will boost national development since it will engage more youths in the growth of the economy.

“When we have many youths engaged in viable economic activities especially in the agricultural sector which is the mainstay of our economy then we will be able to reduce the burden of unemployment and thus help meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030,” he notes.

Manyaka laments that African countries have failed to ensure a robust agricultural sector, especially the animal resources sub-sector due to reluctance of the youth to engage in agri-business, which he describes as the sleeping African giant.

His Bio-Juice enterprise is also working with the youths to ensure environmental conservation. He says that involving youth in agri-preneurial activities enhances best agricultural practices that reduce post-harvest losses and mitigate greenhouse gas emissions.

“I advocate for use of environmental friendly materials and climate smart agricultural practices. As a youth, I am committed to ensuring that young farmers are aware of the effects of climate change to livelihoods and they are trained to adopt practices that will ensure the risks are mitigated and our food security is assured,” he says.

The only hurdle that is standing on his way to achieving this noble dream is access to finance to scale up his activities.

Manyak is certain that with increased capital he will be able to enhance his technical capacity to reach out to more youths and influence them to venture into agriculture, specifically animal resource production, as a way of job creation while mitigating climate change.

He also requires financial support to create awareness of the health benefits of wide range of bio-juices and penetrate more markets in neighbouring countries.





Young Agri-Entrepreneur Shines in Rural Zimbabwe

By Xhinua

While agriculture forms an integral part of Zimbabwe's economy, many young people still think of it as back-breaking labor that offers little economic benefit. However, things are slowly changing. A growing number of young people are starting to see agriculture as a viable career option.

28-year-old Terence Maphosa is among a new generation of agri-entrepreneurs who are invigorate the agriculture sector with their innovative initiatives. A Political Science graduate from the University of Zimbabwe, Maphosa's dream was to land a white-collar job in the city after finishing college.

A year and a half after graduating from college, circumstances pushed Maphosa to start breeding and selling indigenous chicken breeds, popularly known as roadrunners at his rural home in Mhondoro-Ngezi, about 170 km from the capital Harare.

Roadrunner is a colloquial name for a free-range exotic breed of chicken that scavenges for food. Their meat is tougher and is considered by many to be tastier than broilers.

His breeds include the Black Australorp, Koekoek, Light Sussex, Kuroila, and Jersey Giant.

While many young people in Zimbabwe view agriculture as the domain for the less educated

and consider rural to urban migration as the only ticket out of poverty, Maphosa has made a name for himself in the village.

Apart from rearing exotic chicken, Maphosa is also involved in crop farming — but he focuses on corn, sunflowers, sorghum and soya crops to reduce the costs of buying feeds.

Indigenous chickens have gained popularity among Zimbabweans as they offer a healthier organic option and a business opportunity.

Unlike broilers, the birds are cheaper to rear as they thrive on natural foods such as grains, worms, and insects.

Maphosa's success in agribusiness has caught the attention of many young people on social media where he regularly posts about his day-to-day life.

"A lot of youngsters are now appreciating farming, and slowly we are getting there," he told Xinhua.

"The reason why our generation doesn't see farming as something lucrative is because of our background. When growing up, we were taught to go to school, to be doctors, to be nurses, to be lawyers, to be engineers, nobody pushed us to be farmers. So apparently, they did not push us to be practical, they pushed us to work those white-collar jobs," he said.

Thanks to farmers such as

Maphosa, a resurgence of interest among young farmers is happening. More and more young people are starting to see agriculture as a viable career path.

"People are now showing the desire and hunger to go into farming, specifically in my field, the roadrunner business," he said.

Maphosa said agriculture's image is changing. Youth are now turning to farming and value addition of farm produce.



“The way we are doing things, I wouldn’t deny we are making farming look cool, like being proud of your surroundings, you influence the next person to say let me try this,” he said.

Through Maphosa’s social media posts, young people at home and abroad are being motivated to venture into agribusiness.

His Twitter account has gained a significant following, and his name has become a subject of discussion on Twitter.

Maphosa’s simple and authentic rural life, and his appreciation of traditional Zimbabwean food has also attracted many.

With more educated youth such as Maphosa joining farming, youngsters are beginning to view agriculture as an intellectually stimulating and economically sustainable career.

Like most developing countries, agriculture remains the mainstay

of Zimbabwe’s economy. Attracting young people to rural agriculture is vital since nearly 60 percent of Zimbabwe’s population lives in rural areas.

Besides, , agricultural activities provide employment and income for 60-70 percent of Zimbabwe’s population, supplies 60 percent of the raw materials required by the industrial sector and contributes 40 percent of Zimbabwe’s total export earnings, according to the Food and Agricultural Organization.

Agriculture also contributes approximately 17 percent of the country’s gross domestic product.

With people below the age of 35 constituting more than 50 percent of the country’s population, and given the country’s high youth unemployment rate, the agricultural sector offers huge potential for job creation.

The Zimbabwean government has, over the years, taken various initiatives to support youth in agriculture.

Government sees the inclusion of the youth, in the agricultural sector as key in its efforts to plug the country’s food supply gap and achieve food security at both household and national level.





Nigerian young lady sweetens life for youth and women beekeepers

When Chibugo Okafor and her friend decided to walk across a remote village in Nigeria, little did she know the leisure trip would birth an idea that would transform the apiculture sector in the western African nation.

Born and bred in the United Kingdom (UK), Okafor had little knowledge of the abundance of high-quality organic honey in her native country. Along the trip, they stumbled upon a woman who was harvesting honey using traditional methods, and she decided to sample the sweet produce.

“The uniquely rich taste of original honey sparked the idea of a social enterprise based on utilizing the apiculture sector to empower women and youth,”

says 28-year-old Chibugo.

When she took some of the honey for sale in a local town, it was quickly bought, Chibugo rolled up her sleeves and embarked on research that would define the success journey in social entrepreneurship.

Today, she is the Founder and CEO of Kendake Honey – a social enterprise focused on processing and packaging organic honey. The company, established in 2017, is empowering and investing in youth and women by training and providing them with agricultural inputs, job opportunities and then access to market through off take of their honey.

“There are a lot of Non - Governmental

Organisations (NGOs) engaged in beekeeping that come to Africa and train people, give out hives and agricultural inputs but when you go to the communities you find there is lack of infrastructure and markets for their produce,” says Chibugo.

“By consistently being able to buy honey from the farmers we are providing a sustainable way of income for the farmers to meet their families’ financial obligations and improve their livelihoods. This is at the core of Kendake Honey vision,” she adds.

Kendake Honey has grown tremendously over the last three years to become not only a household name in Nigeria but has also made inroads in the global scene. Last year, the pure

original honey was awarded in the London International Honey Quality Awards for its unique taste and quality.

But achieving this feat has not been a rosy affair for the youthful woman agripreneur, currently studying for her MBA from Oxford University in the UK.

Chibugo started by buying honey and processing it for sale, and that is when she realized that despite the huge market in Nigeria, more than 98 percent of the honey was laced with syrup and sugar. Inappropriate harvesting techniques are also to blame for adulteration.

“The issue of adulteration prompted me to start my farm to supply the market with pure organic honey and that is what has given Kendake Honey a competitive edge in the market,” explains Chibugo during a Zoom interview from the UK. She started the farm with 25 beehives but this has since increased to about 400 as the market for his produce continue to widen.

In January 2019, because she didn't fully understand the farming process in rural African areas, Chibugo suffered a setback following a fire outbreak on one of the farms. She has since managed to pick-up and move on, taking seriously every lesson learned along the way.

“Due to the expensive nature of herbicides, farmers in the villages sometimes literally burn the ground to get rid of weeds and they use firewalls to prevent certain areas from being burned. I didn't know this and had to learn the hard way,” she notes.

Chibugo first trained in the UK as a pharmacist before she returned to Nigeria on her own.

She didn't have prior knowledge in the business world, and that is why she dedicated the first two years building structures for Kendake Honey and mobilizing women and the youth to be part of the success journey. She can now concentrate on her Oxford University MBA studies where she is also involved in the Oxford Social Entrepreneurs Programme.



In an interview whose excerpts are published on the Oxford University's website, Chibugo commented: “Oxford is great, it's becoming a hub for all things entrepreneurial and the community in the city is very pro-entrepreneurship. The Oxford University MBA has also been very useful to me as it is founded on social responsibility in business.

Chibugo is the co-ordinator of the Youth in Apiculture Network, comprising about 500 youths who engage each other by sharing experiences and best practices in beekeeping and other issues such as climate change adaptation.

She is also the regional president for the African Youth in Livestock, Fisheries and Apiculture Incubation Network (ALYFAIN) for West Africa.

“AYL-FAIN has enabled the youth to rethink the way they view

agriculture and the possibilities that are abound in the sector,” she says. “Through sharing of success stories, exchanging ways on how best to advance their agribusinesses and collaboration with like-minded people, the youth are able to sustainably grow their businesses.”

Raising capital for Kendake Honey was not an issue for Chibugo, who leveraged private funding. However, she agrees that this financing model is not readily available for youth in Africa. Access to finance and knowledge in agriculture are major impediments to their participation in livestock resource development.

Contrary to the perception by the youth that agriculture is not an attractive job in Africa, she says the farm is the most adventures and fun and full of successes.

“I encourage the youth to move to the farm especially in a country like Nigeria where oil is the largest export and you will find the demand for the product dropping in the next 10 years or so. The next sort of pace that people will be benefiting from is agriculture and the youth are the best suited group to develop the sector,” Chibugo advises.

Asked about the company's future in the next five years, she commented: “What makes Kendake Honey different is the connection to various networks and initiatives, which allows for social impact. I am hoping that we are able to spread our reach in terms of numbers of beekeepers that we are supporting.”



Livestock Wealth allows everyday investors to profit from farming

By **JEANETTE CLARK**

Ntuthuko Shezi describes himself as an innovator: someone whose job it is to change the way the world works and lives. He also refers to himself, rather tongue in cheek on his email signature, as the Cow Executive Officer of South African company, Livestock Wealth. His business has built a platform where cows are one of the products available to local and global investors. In October 2015, Shezi – an electro-mechanical engineer by training – and his team launched a platform that allows anyone, anywhere in the world, to profit from farming in South Africa. In the same way someone can purchase stock in a company or invest in a money-market account, the platform enables its clients to invest in livestock and crops raised or cultivated on a farm.

Five years down the line, Livestock Wealth has R100 million (about \$6.1 million) in assets under management and offers investors four different products: a free-range ox, a pregnant cow, a connected garden or a macadamia nut tree. The prices of these products are fixed with Livestock Wealth's commission built-in. The investment terms and prices range from R2,000 (about \$122) for a macadamia nut tree and a profit of between 95% to 105% after six years, to R18,730 (about \$1,141) for a pregnant cow with a profit of R1,873 (about \$114) to R2,622 (about \$160) after 12 months.

“The premise of all the products is very simple,” explains Shezi. “Each of them looks like and behaves like a bank fixed deposit that follows the life cycle of that product.”

For Shezi, raised in Ndwedwe in KwaZulu-Natal province, livestock and land equate to real and tangible wealth. It is a concept entrenched in his family by his grandmother who recognised the livestock she owned as assets she could leverage when funds were required, e.g. for tuition for Shezi's mother.

“There are a lot of farmers who own assets but who can't derive value out of it in terms of liquidity or profit. You have millions of people who are city dwellers who want to own these assets and make a profit when it goes to market or at harvest. Livestock Wealth makes the link,” Shezi says.

For the farmers, the investment brings liquidity and capital to boost productivity or better utilise available farmland.

The most popular product in Livestock Wealth's portfolio is the free-range ox, according to Shezi. A client can invest R11,529 (about \$702) in a healthy and fully maintained free-range ox that's in the last six months of its lifespan. The ox grows in the farmer's care over the six-month period until it is ready for sale and slaughter. The investor earns a minimum profit of R576 (about \$35) and a maximum of

R701 (about \$43) – depending on the weight of the ox and the meat price.

The pregnant cow product works in a similar manner: a verified pregnant cow can be purchased and after 12 months, the investor receives the initial investment amount plus a 30% share of the income on the sale of the calf.

With the macadamia nut tree, the investor only sees a return after six years. The capital is used by the farmer to get the tree to production and the profit is, on average, close to 100%.

Livestock Wealth is currently not offering the fourth product, the connected garden, to new investors as Covid-19 caused a limited route to market for the mostly herbal produce cultivated. The benefits and challenges of a new idea

Shezi remembers the nerve-racking 24 hours after their website went live when the team launched Livestock Wealth in October 2015. Twenty-six pregnant cows had been loaded onto the platform and the company had just executed a well-attended press launch. They were waiting for investors to bite. “That first day I kept looking at the website and nothing happened,” he remembers. “Two days later, we got our first transaction and we were ecstatic, over the moon.” The first batch of products, those 26 cows, sold out in three weeks. In the beginning, Livestock



Wealth had to operate in what Shezi – a fan of arcade games – calls “single-player mode”. The company and Shezi had to be the ‘farmer’ at the one end of the transaction. Only once they had investors onboard and traction in terms of awareness did the company start taking on partner farmers and moved into the role of agent, linking the buyer to the seller.

At present, Livestock Wealth is a registered credit provider with the National Credit Regulator (NCR) and registered with the Agricultural Produce Agents Council; although, when it started, the company operated in a regulatory vacuum. Initially, the company was the seller and simply provided cows to buyers, a transaction with no regulatory conditions attached. Once it

acted as an agent, it ensured it had registration and accreditation under the Agricultural Produce Agents Act in place.

Although Livestock Wealth does not technically provide credit to the farmers and functions only as a conduit or agent for the sale, Shezi says the NCR registration has been invaluable. “We engage with the farmer on a contractual basis, as the agent. At the same time, we function as if we are loaning them your money by doing credit checks on the individual farmer and his company, making sure he can be trusted with your investment. This way there is extra protection for the investor,” he says.

Livestock Wealth has 58 partner farmers situated across South Africa. Some of the locations are Lichtenburg in the North West,

Richmond in KwaZulu-Natal, Tzaneen in Limpopo and Senekal in the Free State. It has 11 employees and four field staff members who “roam the land”.

The company is open to more applications from farmers to have it act as their agent but Shezi is mindful that any marketplace remains a careful balancing act. “We have to match supply with demand. We cannot have a situation where we promise access to market and there is an oversupply,” he says.

Over time, more investment options were added and technology developed to support investors’ customer experience. Livestock Wealth features a calculator on its website that enables investors to see the potential return of the products

they are interested in. Shezi admits finding the right skills at the right price to develop the technology has been one of the major challenges. "Building the tech to support the growth has been tough. When you can find the skills in South Africa, it is too expensive or it just doesn't exist."

Livestock Wealth has also started selling free-range beef from its partner farms to end-customers. "Food prices were going up. We saw a gap in the market to offer lower prices if we could get the consumer to commit to being a regular buyer of the beef. If you are part of the Farmer's Club, you get the product at a better price," Shezi explains.

"I am happy with the foundation we have laid. We have deep trust

in the marketplace and depth of knowledge in our field," he says.

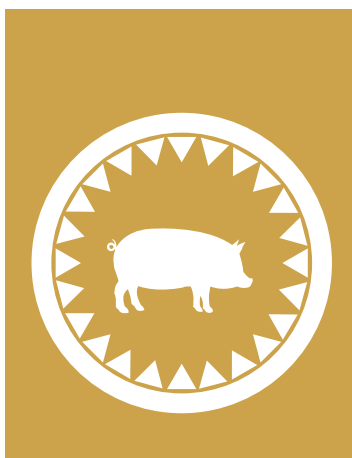
With the measures put in place to vet farmers and do physical farm visits to ensure the assets' security, Shezi is comfortable their track record will remain intact. He says there have been no instances where poor farming practices compromised the value of the assets Livestock Wealth manages. The company still manages two farms to have a base from where to operate and for research purposes. A new development to be launched before the end of the year is a technology solution to improve security and limit livestock theft.

"We have developed excellent proprietary tech to track

livestock. Just last week, we finished development on the tracking alarm system which every partner farmer who works with us will have to implement over time. It is a collar around the cow's neck that enables live tracking," Shezi says.

Considering market demand, the company has its sights set on an ambitious target of managing R10 billion (about \$608.3 million) in assets within the next five years.

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Lionnel: Selling pork changed my life

When he failed to continue with his education, Mimbang Fabrice Lionnel did not give up; instead he

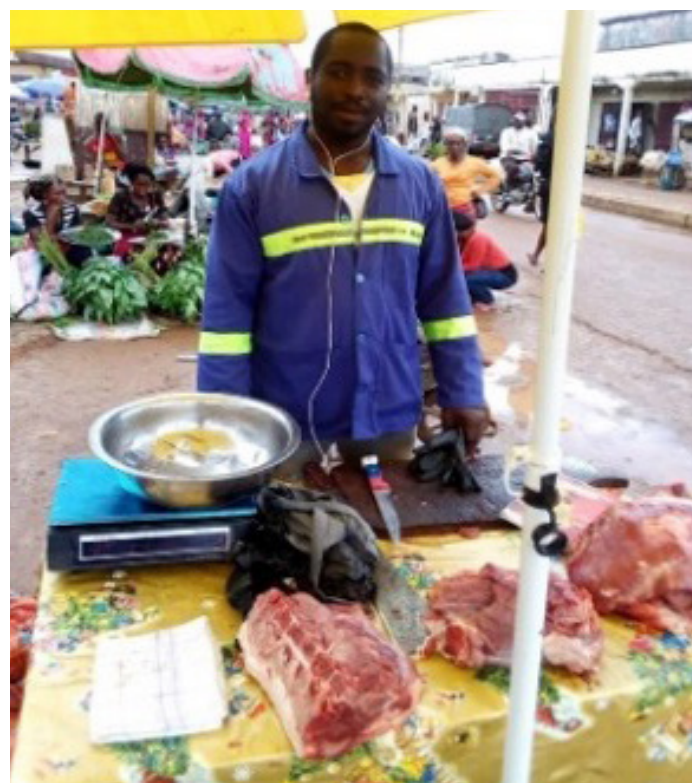
ventured into agricultural entrepreneurship.

His attempts to earn a living by working in different places, including a publishing house, consulting firm, events, and catering did not bear fruits as he was not happy at work.

"I was disappointed by the kind of leadership that was put in place, the value of the human being was relegated to the last lane. Tired of hard life as an employee, I opted to quit the job," says Lionnel.

The urge to make a change in society forced him to think for alternative income generation activities. Thus he opted to try his hand in selling pork.

"I wanted to have a voice. I wanted to build a project with self-respecting men and women as a



family and care for each other,” he says
That is how the 29-year-old Lionnel designed a project for the sale and processing of pork in his country. This concept saw him decline employment opportunity offered to him by the National Employment Fund to serve as marketing and commercial manager for a local company. With no finances to start his new venture, he presented his idea to a leader of one of the pork firms in his country.

“I had no penny to start my venture. I presented my vision of pork marketing to the leader of a leading farm, he listened to my idea and instructed his chief finance office to get me a tonne of pork,” says Lionnel.

Unfortunately, as fate will have it, he lost his first sales as value chains were not well incorporated in his business environment.

He negotiated for a loan of 70,000 CFA francs (USD128) from his mother to launch a pork sales counter at the city’s municipal market.

With this idea, he had to face prejudices and he had to trade his costumes against the butcher’s garment.

“I took courage with both hands and started selling pork at the municipal market, accompanied by my little brother and my adopted son. In addition, we created a transformation unit, with the help of a few young people. We made smoked pork, sausage,

ham, sausages and pork skewers on order,” he notes.

The Economics and Social Sciences graduate says he is yet to get enough capital for his business. Thus he struggles to have access to financing that would allow them to develop the business.

A member of AYL-FAIN, Lionnel says, he realizes a turnover of 1,500,000 CFA francs (USD2,758) every 15 days and his vision is to contribute to the reduction of the illegal slaughter of pigs by creating a rural slaughterhouse.

AYL-FAIN, a youth network under AU-IBAR, offers youths in the continent opportunity to showcase their abilities in agribusiness.

The network also serves as an incubation for the youth to mould their ideas and access the market for their products.

“We want to sell our meat in a healthy environment, we aspire to create a butchery standards. But more than anything else, we struggle to fulfill our deepest conviction,” he says.

“We dream of a world where the agricultural entrepreneur will be considered as a hero and not a zero!” he concludes.





Climate Change: Championing youth involvement in Climate Smart Agriculture



Mr. Divine Ntiokam is the Founder of the Climate Smart Agriculture Youth Network (CSAYN GLOBAL) and Vice President for African Youth in Livestock, Fisheries and Aquaculture Incubation Network (AYL-FAIN). He is also the United Nations (UN) Food Systems Summit 2021 Champion, Chair for the Environment Working Group within Action Track 5 and Core Member for the Strategy Group on Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems at the Africa Europe Foundation.

The CSAYN GLOBAL is a group of volunteers based in over 70 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, USA and Europe - linked across the world via an online platform to share findings and seek advice for their practical projects – that have a strong interest in Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) and the environment.

The following are excerpts from Divine’s interview with **AYL-FAIN Newsletter** on the role of

the youth in climate change adaptation and the importance of animal resource sector in ensuring secure food systems.

What sparked the idea for the CSAYN GLOBAL?

The idea came during a session of the Global Alliance of Climate Smart Agriculture Strategic Committee that I participate in. During the first meeting, I realized the youth were not integrated in the programme and requested

to be allowed to set up the youth constituency for the alliance. So in 2014, the youth network was founded and we started in Cameroon, Togo, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Nigeria; in 2014 and at the moment we are in about 70 countries across the world.

Which strategies are you employing to encourage youth to participate CSA?

We raise youth's awareness about CSA to make conscious of the existing challenges related to agriculture and climate change. This gives them the necessary information needed to mitigate these threats and contribute to the adoption of smart practices and the enhancement of agricultural livelihoods. We realized that success stories are important in encouraging the youth to participate in agriculture so we map out young people who are successful in CSA and use them as role models to influence their peers in the respective countries.

What's your view on youth participation in Agriculture in Africa?

The mindset has really changed as far as young people view agriculture. Many young people are interested in getting into agriculture because they have realized it has a lot of potential for wealth creation especially when you add value to it. Climate change, for example has opened new avenues for income generation in agroforestry as it gives people opportunity to plant trees which are sold once mature. This brings about employment creation, sustainable livelihoods and economic sustainability.

How can young people be involved in CSAYN GLOBAL?

We have made sure that CSAYN GLOBAL is institutionalized in the countries where we have footprints. We have done this through either registering the national chapters of the network or getting organizations within the countries to host us. We have well established structures at the national level and young people interested in being part of the network can contact us and we will connect them to regional coordinators in their countries. We equally invite or advise them to join our Telegram group or platform: <https://t.me/joinchat/aibBjbdvan80NWE0>

What are some of the activities that young people can engage in to be part of the climate change adaptation process?

I encourage tree planting especially food trees which will give them a lot of opportunities. The more trees you grow the more carbon credits you are creating in the community. In areas where there are droughts they can start community gardens and plant drought resistant crops. They can also mobilise themselves into groups to share experiences and learn from each other. I also encourage the youth to join climate change negotiations to be part of the decision making processes.

How secure are food systems in Africa in light of climate change?

When we talk of food system we mean the entire value chain or process from the farm to fork as well as supermarkets. The national implementation plans are what determines how secure the food system is and these are determined by policy frameworks of each country so it is not easy to generalize. But the fact is that there Africa has a lot of potential with 65 percent arable land which if used sustainably by practicing climate smart agriculture approaches like planting cover crops and drip irrigation will be able to yield more for ever.

What changes would you like to be effected by various governments to enhance food security?

The governments should implement the Malabo Declaration that states that 10pc of resources must be invested in the agricultural sector. If we can have the political will to implement this then Africa will be the continent of the future, with secure food and nutrition systems. The Africa Group of Negotiators (AGN) should also integrate young people in the whole process, beginning at the country level. The role of the youth in contributing towards a sustainable world is very important. Youth play an important part in shaping the environmental sustainability, social and economic development, and building the solid foundation of the world's future and unless they are brought on board we will not achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and food security in Africa.

Which are key priority areas for investments that can ensure secure food systems?

In agriculture, the entire value chain of the animal resource sector should be prioritized because it gives us a lot of opportunities to leverage on. If the animal resource sector is not secured and the

livestock well taken care of then everything will go wrong. That is why I support the initiative by AU-IBAR on Sustainable Development of Livestock for Livelihoods (Live2Africa). It provides the catalyst needed to ensure that the livestock sector becomes one of the most important contributors to the African common market through the development of Regional Livestock Value Chains (RLVCs).

You were recently nominated as a Champion for the UN Food Systems Summit, as the Vice President of AYL-FAIN, how will you use this new role to rally African youths towards for a greater involvement in livestock resource development?

I want to rally them to engage in independent food systems dialogue at the country level by signing up. We have also created a WhatsApp group for increased engagement in food dialogue ahead of the July Pre Summit, September Summit and Post Summit in 2022.

You participated in the pre-event conference for the upcoming

Climate Smart Agriculture Summit. What are the key outcomes which you would like to share with African youth?

They need to believe in themselves, be creative, innovative and smart, be entrepreneurs and engage in the food systems dialogues in their respective countries for their voices to be heard. There is a huge component of the dialogues which has been created for young people to engage and exchange ideas on how to mitigate and exploit opportunities presented by climate change.

What is the key objective of the UN Food Systems Summit in September and how will it benefit African youth involved in livestock resource development?

The summit is a People's Summit, where everyone's voice will count. We want people from different walks of life and experiences to share ideas and knowledge on how they can build and transform food systems.

One of the key objectives the summit is to develop a measurable action plan that will speed up and enhance the

mechanisms for achieving the SDGs. It will raise awareness and elevate public discussions on how to reform and transform food systems. The summit will also develop principles to guide governments and other stakeholders that are looking to leverage their food systems by setting out an optimistic vision in which the systems play an important role in ensuring a more sustainable world.

Any last word of advice to the youth?

Let young people believe in themselves and in the continent. The youth should look at the huge potential that Africa has and seize the opportunity to invest in agriculture. They need to understand that for every challenge there is also an opportunity and stop blaming their governments for not doing what they can't do. Youths should ask themselves what they can do to make Africa a sustainable place to live in than risking their lives crossing the Mediterranean Sea to look for opportunities elsewhere.







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