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AGRICULTURE SECTOR ROUNDTABLE 2021

Harnessing Technology and Innovation to Close
the Talent Gap in the Nigerian Agriculture Sector

Thursday, October 14, 2021
10am

Register Here





The Roundtable identified 5 key themes to drive our objective of “Harnessing Technology and Innovation to Close the Talent Gap in the Nigerian Agriculture Sector”

Breakout Session 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Technology as a magnet for young people in agriculture· Moderated by: Christopher Abiodun
Breakout Session 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· The nexus of agriculture as a science and business: The need to build new skills· Moderated by: Professor Aisha Abdulkadir
Breakout Session 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Unlocking opportunities for women in Nigerian agriculture· Moderated by: Jummai Bappah
Breakdown Session 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· The drive for effective agricultural policies· Moderated by: Dr Angel Adelaja-Kuye
Breakdown Session 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Attracting and catalyzing new talent through innovative financing in agriculture· Moderated by: Ayodeji Arikawe



Technology as a magnet for young people in agriculture

Key Insights	Highlights
What innovative ideas could change the landscape in the area covered by this group?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Urbanization in agriculture in an interesting phenomena to pursue, for example urbanization of agric in Kigali is impressive, clutter of businesses being run efficiently using technology like drones .
What urgent actions are required to bring the ideas to life in an inclusive way while also ensuring impact at scale?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Technology should be well utilized with the focus on scale. However, the question is, what have we used technology for in the past (talking about mobile phones)? Besides high level tech tool, basic digital literacy should be in the forefront. Leaders should drive home the value of using already available technology like mobile phone, after which one can introduce newer technology.
Who can make this happen? What are the roles of the various stakeholders – the private sector, public sector, the development community, and individuals?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Capacity building should be encouraged in this sector, for example women can be encourage to learn how to use tools like tractors and other large scale machinery- Leaders in this sector should map out opportunities that youths can tap into, there are so many hidden opportunities ranging from manufacturing to ecommerce to research and tech.- Use of ICT in a broder capacity - array of possibilities in terms of customers diversification.- Various stakeholders can provide loans, grants and scaling opportunities for tech start-ups, Private sector and development partners can create educational content and training activities for farmers toward increasing technological adoption in rural areas
What are the common areas of convergence or divergence expressed during the discussion?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Marketing in agriculture is important - communicating the value that can be actualized from Agriculture to the young people.



Technology as a magnet for young people in agriculture

Summary

1. Urbanization in Agriculture should be encouraged among youths e.g using technology like drones; Technology should be well utilised with a focus on scale, for example already available technology like mobile phones should be used. Thereafter, new technology can be introduced.
2. Capacity building should be encouraged within the sector i.e. women can be encouraged to use large scale machinery, Agricultural marketing should be encouraged amongst youths.
3. Opportunities in sectors such as manufacturing, e-commerce, tech and research should be created by leaders for youths within the sector and Access to resources i.e. loans, grants and scaling opportunities should be provided for tech start-ups.



The nexus of agriculture as a science and business: The need to build new skills

Key Insights	Highlights
<p>What innovative ideas could change the landscape in the area covered by this group?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There should be innovative ways to accelerate food production especially through Urban Agriculture and the adoption of Digital Technologies (e.g smart farms). - There should be an adoption of improved production practices through Capacity building/training, Credit and loan Institutions (start-up expansion capital with minimal interest rates), Improved cash flow policies, Subsidies of farm inputs, and Efficient Market Structures. - There is a need to increase food production through diversification. - There is a need for value addition in order to make Agriculture sustainable and increase competitiveness in Nigeria, in both local and foreign markets. There is need for a Curriculum Change as well as Research to build more skill.
<p>What urgent actions are required to bring the ideas to life in an inclusive way while also ensuring impact at scale?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Youth should be actively engaged in this sector to sensitise youths on the attractiveness of the sector. To attract them, there should be incentivisation and gender inclusiveness. - Educational Curricula should be tailored to agricultural production and business, especially in the tertiary institutions. There should be an emphasis on Agribusiness rather than the more theoretical Agricultural Economics. - Students from the primary level should be taught to see Agriculture as a way of doing things, and not as primitive. - Creative and Innovative research should be carried out, as well as knowledge and training on best production strategies that utilizes sustainably, available resources, in order to close the skill gap. - Lands should be fragmented and allocated to young farmers/agripreneurs who are interested in Agribusiness.



The nexus of agriculture as a science and business: The need to build new skills

Key Insights	Highlights
<p>Who can make this happen? What are the roles of the various stakeholders – the private sector, public sector, the development community, and individuals?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There should be the adoption of a multistakeholder approach to enable smallholder farmers and agripreneurs get access to farms. - Government has a role to play especially in the enactment of favourable Agric policies. - To make agriculture sustainable and competitive in both the local and International market, farmers/agripreneurs should work on value addition. The Government and Private Sector also have a role to play here in communicating these to farmers/individuals involved in agribusiness, through sensitization.
<p>What are the common areas of convergence or divergence expressed during the discussion?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a strong link between Agriculture as a Science and Agriculture as a Business. - Convergence: Agriculture has evolved. It is advanced and a big business. - Divergence: Land tenure systems as a complex social issue and dynamic with demography & Efficacy of Farm Practical Year to teach agribusiness, and the skills necessary for agripreneurs.
<p>Other Insights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are a lot of land claims in Nigeria as we see a lot of different social systems in Nigeria when compared to the United States. - We should have access to private farms so as to improve productivity. - Agriculture students/professionals in the tertiary institutions should be exposed to practical sessions/trainings/workshops on modern Agriculture techniques and technologies before they graduate, - Agribusiness should be made a course in our Tertiary institutions to either replace or support the already existing agricultural economics.



The nexus of agriculture as a science and business: The need to build new skills

Summary

1. Adoption of digital technology in food production will accelerate the Nigerian Agriculture sector and will provide job placement opportunities for young people across the country, this in turn will require young people to build necessary skills in computer science and engineering which will prepare them to thrive in this sector.
2. Education and upskilling of youths specifically in Agriculture should begin at the grassroots as far back as primary schools, where students are taught to embrace agriculture as an important job in the society rather than a primitive occupation. Education in Agriculture is broad from Agric-science to Agric-economics to Agric - Business and these should be communicated clearly so as to attract young people into the sector.
3. Government plays an important role in enacting favourable policies, one of the obvious areas where there's a need for a revamp is in the agriculture curriculum across all educational institutions.



Unlocking opportunities for women in Nigerian agriculture

Key Insights	Highlights
What innovative ideas could change the landscape in the area covered by this group?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- A large part of women in agriculture are in rural communities, therefore improving access to information is important.- Beyond creating women programs/initiatives, intentional work needs to be done to bring these opportunities to women's doorsteps to subdue obstacles that may limit their participation.- We should adopt Non-traditional mentorship where women intentionally provide support and opportunities to other women- Engagement with women to properly understand the issues, and have them put forth the pain points, while solutions are then developed to address them, as against developing solutions based on assumptions
What urgent actions are required to bring the ideas to life in an inclusive way while also ensuring impact at scale?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- We need to leverage networks (community of support) for instance,(WOFAN). This is important to identify women's specific needs and ensure that women are visible to uptake solutions or interventions meant for them.- Data reports need to show areas where women are doing well, where there are gaps and the skills required to fill the gaps. We need to provide digital, soft and technical skills training to empower women to take advantage of opportunities in the sector.



Unlocking opportunities for women in Nigerian agriculture

Key Insights	Highlights
Who can make this happen? What are the roles of the various stakeholders – the private sector, public sector, the development community, and individuals?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Rural/community groups of women and private sector represent a large opportunity for collaboration. The women groups present the need while the private sector can work around providing solutions to the needs in a way that is also a win for the private sector.- Collaborations among all stakeholders is necessary for greater impact. Public sector will need to set favourable policy frameworks to allow other stakeholders effectively play their roles.
What are the common areas of convergence or divergence expressed during the discussion?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Access to information is very crucial but the women who are to benefit from this platform are on the farms with limited access to information and this limits women from tapping into opportunities.



Unlocking opportunities for women in Nigerian agriculture

Summary

1. We have a significant number of women participation in the Agricultural food chain but unfortunately, a number of them are in the rural communities and do not have access to the right education and opportunities which can help boost their income and business, therefore beyond creating women targeted programs/initiatives, intentional work needs to be done to bring these opportunities to women's doorsteps to subdue obstacles that may limit their participation.
2. A Non-traditional mentorship program should be developed to encourage and inspire women in the Agriculture sector, where women leaders are actively encouraging other women. Leveraging support communities like WOFAN, the Women Farmers Advancement Network could potentially help ensure that women are visible to uptake solutions and interventions meant for them.
3. Similar to the Jobberman Agriculture sector skills gap report, additional research should be done to show areas where women are doing well, where there are gaps and the skills required to fill the gaps. We need to provide digital, soft and technical skills training to empower women to take advantage of opportunities in the sector.



The drive for effective agricultural policies

Key Insights	Highlights
What innovative ideas could change the landscape in the area covered by this group?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- There is a need for Policy formulation that captures and reflects the collective needs of key stakeholders, especially women and youth in the agricultural value chain. Furthermore, we need to ensure that policies are being reviewed frequently and are published to the public highlighting trends,- Young people need to start understanding Agriculture in its entirety.- Women inclusion is key to ensure impact is made on policy implementation.
What urgent actions are required to bring the ideas to life in an inclusive way while also ensuring impact at scale?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Government needs to ensure adequate budgetary allocations to the agricultural sector, while educators need to encourage agripreneurs on the need for active participation in policy reforms. More importantly also is monitoring initiative and policies to ensure their efficient implementations.- Formulation of pressure groups and advocacy groups to help follow up on policies created. In turn, they will also educate other stakeholders on the policies that are created.- Digitizing and automation is key for ease of process from the budgeting process, to implementation to the M&E processes.- Entrepreneurs would be trained in technical skills as well as soft skills.- Program design and implementation should be designed and developed to be attractive to the youth because young people evolve and respond when programs are being developed also tailored to their needs.- Policies in agriculture have to be more resilient to cater to the teeming youth population- Policy implementation must be inclusive and designed (and deployed) to be taken to the grassroots.



The drive for effective agricultural policies

Key Insights	Highlights
<p>Who can make this happen? What are the roles of the various stakeholders – the private sector, public sector, the development community, and individuals?</p>	<p>Individuals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Everyone at different levels should make sure all hands are on deck to make this happen. <p>Public Sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Agricultural Associations who will lobby at the states and federal levels for proper budgetary allocations and implementation of these budgetary allocations in their sector.- It's important to carry along the youth to ensure they are involved from end-end- Stakeholders need to be involved in driving the policy- Policies that are attractive and encouraging to the youth must be formulated and duly implemented <p>Private sector should form a synergy that allows them to run programs together or interrelated programs rather than running programs in silos;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Youth should be trained on agricultural programs from secondary school level.- Youth should also be engaged in policy formulation and ensure sensitization across board.
<p>Other Insights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Apart from the CBN and ministries, there are other agencies run by the government and nongovernmental organizations, who are actively involved in the sector. Agripreneurs should engage with these agencies and do well to share and amplify the work the agencies do with their colleagues who might need opportunities.



The drive for effective agricultural policies

Summary

1. To effectively drive effective agricultural policies, there's a need to involve stakeholders in the private and public sectors, the Government should ensure adequate budgetary allocations to the agricultural sector, while educators need to encourage agripreneurs on the need for active participation in policy reforms. There's a need to encourage Agricultural Associations who will lobby at the states and federal levels for proper budgetary allocation which will in turn cater to the needs of sector.
2. Efficient policy implementation is as important as policy reforms, policy implementation must be inclusive designed and should be deployed to grassroots as a lot of people in the Agriculture value chain are in the rural communities. Digitizing and automation is key for ease of process from the budgeting and implementation to the Monitoring and evaluation processes.
3. Agricultural policies and program should be designed and implemented to attract the growing youth population as well as women.



Attracting and catalyzing new talent through innovative financing in agriculture

Key Insights	Highlights
What innovative ideas could change the landscape in the area covered by this group?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Get private or public sectors to sponsor a hackathon in their value chain and support young people to be comfortable in their natural habitat.- Create an ecosystem that allows young people create- Consciously communicate to young people that there are different value chains and focus areas in agriculture besides farming.
What urgent actions are required to bring the ideas to life in an inclusive way while also ensuring impact at scale?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- A lead-by-example approach: Promote other young people running profitable and successful businesses in the agri space as role models.- Create an environment that young people will want to be part of- Engage young people in the universities, NYSC camp, etc. to create awareness about the abundant opportunities in agriculture, including financing
Who can make this happen? What are the roles of the various stakeholders – the private sector, public sector, the development community, and individuals?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Tech platforms providing financial support for farmers and other agribusinesses.- Collaboration amongst top employers in the sector as well as all stakeholders in the sector.



Attracting and catalyzing new talent through innovative financing in agriculture

Summary

1. There is a need to create an ecosystem that encourages young people to create and develop new ideas, for example stakeholders in the private or public sectors can sponsor a hackathon in their value chain and support young people to be comfortable in their natural habitat.
2. Collaboration amongst top employers in the sector should be encouraged, where thriving technological platforms provide financial support for farmers and other agribusinesses..



Contact Us

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