

and cooperative marketing services. For example, Durante provides training in fish pond construction; Ekimiks advises in the development of bankable business plans; Dizengoff donated a greenhouse to the Agripreneurs in Ibadan, Nigeria; and Hortcenter provided assistance in the cost-effective renovation of abandoned greenhouses and irrigation facilities in Kenya. As a result of these and other successes, the African Development Bank is developing a special program, ENABLE Youth, whereby affordable loans are made available to youth as they develop viable agribusiness plans. So much of the Youth Agripreneur's success is rooted in their larger acceptance by the African business community and this provides the basis for formalizing CSR within this innovative youth movement.

The Youth Agripreneurs recognize that CSR is a two-way process, and they are prepared to provide a wide range of services to businesses that recognize and support them. Agripreneurs have a strong presence across digital media and within the development community and always acknowledge those who assist them. Agripreneurs organize their own events, such as the recent and well-publicized African Youth Agripreneur Forum and invite their corporate sponsors to participate. Retailers that carry Agripreneur products are provided marketing support, including uniformed youth representatives who explain the merits of their goods and groups. Most recently, Agripreneur groups have been exploring co-branding of products that specifically match



One of the snacks produced by Youth Agripreneurs

the needs of their business partners. The Youth Agripreneur Movement actively seeks additional partners offering services through CSR agreements and guarantee that any business offered through them will be resources well directed. Parties interested in working with the IITA Youth Agripreneurs are encouraged to contact Ms. Evelyn Ohanwusi via email [E.Ohanwusi@cgiar.org](mailto:E.Ohanwusi@cgiar.org) or the nearest Youth Agripreneur Group.

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## Testimony

The destiny of African youth lies in their hands and many of them have started on the right path by choosing agriculture as a means of generating income and creating jobs. Indeed, the future millionaires and billionaires will come out of Africa's richest resource which is agriculture. They will lift millions of people out of poverty. That can only happen when we have young people getting into agriculture as a business.

Dr Akinwumi Adesina

President African Development Bank (AfDB)

# Opportunities for Corporate Social Responsibility toward Africa's Youth Agripreneur Movement





Vegetable seedling production



Catfish processing by Youth Agripreneurs



An Agripreneur and some crates of harvested tomatoes ready for sale

## Opportunities for Corporate Social Responsibility toward Africa's Youth Agripreneur Movement

The Youth Agripreneur Movement started in 2012 to redirect African youth toward self-employment through agribusiness. This strategy was developed in response to the alarming rate of unemployment among youth and their alienation from the mainstream economy. Even university graduates are often unable to find meaningful employment despite their skills and ambition, and it is these youth who are recruited as Agripreneurs.

The Youth Agripreneur Movement is based upon the strategic establishment of agribusiness incubations that provide experiential learning to interns operating pilot enterprises that transition into independent businesses. The Movement is now active in 12 African countries where



Youth Agripreneurs with the President of African Development Bank, Dr Akinwumi Adesina

youth-led agricultural production, food processing, and commodity marketing activities are underway.

The Movement was initiated by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture through developmental donor contributions. With this support, youth established enterprises built around cassava, maize, soybean, banana, vegetables, fish, and poultry as well as value addition through food processing. As skills are developed, their activities become increasingly self-sufficient, and provide employment opportunities for others. As a result of this success, the Movement became recognized as a powerful force for youth empowerment, and additional alliances were formed with the private sector in terms of mentorship, sponsorship, and expanded enterprise opportunities. This transition led to a powerful element of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) within Youth Agripreneur activities.

The list of corporate sponsors is rapidly growing. Alliances were forged with Nestlé, Durante, Fish Industries Skretting Fish Industries, Ekimiks (Nigeria), Chevron, Amiran (Kenya), Dizengoff (Nigeria), Hortcenter (Kenya), and others. Some have even commissioned their own Agripreneur groups (Nestlé and Chevron) but most provide essential advisory



Agripreneurs' branded food products at a regional food exhibition