



Short Title: Stronger role of food processing in Agri-food needed

Food industry development in Africa requires substantial modernization in thinking and implementation of practises.

Global food industry is progressing in innovative and sustainable solutions. Meanwhile, projects in Africa are focusing on farming level solutions and exports of ingredients. Africa has a unique position to create completely new food industry; learn from the mistakes done with current systems, and to implement the best learnings and practices from existing technologies. Significant changes in thinking, actions and funding targets needs to be implemented for agri-food sector development.

Activities required for food industry and production development

Food industry, processing and innovation capacity will not improve with the current actions. Modern and updated activities would be crucial for improved food security, food safety, better nutrition, reduced food waste, locally manufactured product availability and increased biodiversity. It is not realistic to expect farming communities to process modern, high-tech food products, due to limited resources, skills, knowledge, and capacity. Food manufacturing and processing capacity needs to be improved significantly, and food industry actors from processing to academia needs to be exposed to modern, high-tech solutions to create new, suitable, and easy to use food products.

The main practical recommendation

There must be separate focus on the food industry development, with professional actors in manufacturing combined with research leading the change. This requires new thinking, actions and, even more crucially, funding to narrow the gap in the food processing capacity for Africa to process its own crops and plants for local consumption and export.

