



Professionalising and formalising Nigeria's cashew industry

Project implemented from: Jan. 2022 to Sept. 2023
Sector: Agriculture
Agency: GIZ



Opportunity

In Nigeria, where the agricultural sector constitutes 48% of employment and contributes 25% to the national GDP, substantial **investments** - both foreign and domestic - are shaping the economic landscape. The cashew industry plays a crucial role in driving **economic growth** and generating **job opportunities**, especially for marginalised youth and women in rural areas.

However, despite its potential, the economic value that the sector holds is not fully realised due to limitations in skills development. Current skills development initiatives have inadequately addressed the production and processing segments, leading to issues such as low yields, poor quality, and underutilised processing capacities.

To comprehensively address these challenges and align with the European Union's focus on **supply chains** and the priorities of the Nigerian government, VET Toolbox conducted a thorough mapping of relevant private sector actors. It also established a **public-private dialogue** (PPD) platform encompassing various cashew processing companies, including Julius Berger Nigeria PLC - a well-established local private company with connections to both national and international entities.

This partnership aims to bridge existing skill gaps along the cashew industry's value chain, unlocking **local employment opportunities**, stimulating industry growth, and facilitating further investments.



Achievements

VET Toolbox is leading collaborative efforts with both public and private partners in Nigeria's cashew industry, aiming to professionalise and formalise jobs within the agricultural sector.

- Developing **two training programmes** focusing on technical and business skills for cashew farming/production and cashew processing, conducted in-house at farms and company premises.
- Ensuring the broad outreach of these training programmes through the **training of trainers** at farms and companies. This results in an increased absorption of trainees, fostering skill development at grassroots levels.
- Supporting the establishment and inauguration of the **Cashew Processors and Packagers Association of Nigeria (CAPPAN)**, which is now self-sustaining, meeting regularly, and running independently.

Key results



333 people trained

319 graduates employed

Employment rate of **96%**



Private partners

The project supported the foundation of the **Cashew Processors and Packagers Association of Nigeria (CAPPAN)**, which includes several cashew processing companies including:

- **Julius Berger Nigeria PLC** (part of the German group Julius Berger) is a prominent private-sector player in Nigeria. It is currently one of the largest players in the cashew sector in the country and works at improving the quality of its products by upskilling cashew farmers and workers in cashew processing. They were involved in curriculum development and PPDs and offered capacity development and in-house training at their premises.
- **VERTEX** is a cashew processing company active in Nigeria. They were involved in the Training of Trainers and trainees and currently chair the CAPPAN PPD structure.

Public partners

- The **Lagos State Technical & Vocational Education Board (LASTVEB)** and the **National Board for Technical Education (NBTE)** are government institutions authorised to certify training and curricula on a state (LASTVEB) and national (NBTE) level.
- The **Ministry of Agriculture (Cashew desk)** was part of the PPD and took part in the training. They are working on a policy for the cashew sector in Nigeria.





Key success factors

- The **private sector** takes the **lead** in skills development in this sector while engaging in PPD and supporting curriculum development. Farms and companies are joining forces for the provision of in-house training that takes place at Julius Berger Nigeria PLC and other involved cashew processing companies.
- The upskilling of the cashew farmers and processing workers allows for a direct increase in **quality, efficiency** and **profit** for the **private sector**.
- In-house cashew processing training equips trainees with a **versatile skill set** along the **cashew chain** and familiarises them with highly specialised machinery. In addition, the cascading training model that broadly reaches out and capacitates farmers and cashew processors, ensures the effective transfer of practical knowledge and promises sustainable **employment** of trained staff.



Upscaling and sustainability

- There is potential to **upscale** the cashew processing curriculum to a state-level or even national-level curriculum with the support of LASTVEB and NBTE. The momentum created by the project and established **partnerships** with Julius Berger Nigeria PLC will further support the continuation of this training.
- Training and capacity development will continue to be supported by the project **Skills for Youth Employment (SKYE)**, which is funded by German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by GIZ.
- The established PPD platform **CAPPAN** is currently functioning autonomously under the private sector leadership of VERTEX and promises continued efforts on skills development resulting in **quality employment**.
- The cashew sector requires more **policy support** from the Nigerian government to be internationally competitive and to guarantee the future of this sector in general.



Policy recommendations

- Promoting **dialogue, business linkages** and sector development.
- Establishing an **accredited competency-based training curriculum** for the cashew sector in Nigeria.

Read more about the project's:
[Policy recommendations](#) | [Lessons learned](#)



VET Toolbox is a programme developing opportunity-driven skills development initiatives aligned with investments' needs, supporting the private sector with local job creation. For additional information, please visit www.vettoolbox.eu.

A partnership project

Co-funded by
the European Union

