



SUSTAIN – Strengthening Underlying Systems and TVETs for Agribusiness Innovation in Nigeria

Sydani Initiative for International Development

Country Nigeria
Sector Agribusiness
Duration 01.01.2026 - 31.12.2027



SUSTAIN aims to improve employability and employment in Nigeria’s agribusiness sector by linking training to real skills needs arising from investment.

Context

Nigeria's agribusiness sector contributes over 27% to GDP and employs about 37% of the workforce, with major public and private investments driving demand for skilled workers across agricultural value chains. However, 78% of agribusinesses struggle to find qualified candidates with skills essential for modern sector growth.

Current TVET programs remain focused on traditional techniques, with only 9 of 33 Colleges of Agriculture offering Higher National Diploma Agribusiness Management, and just 23% of youth viewing agriculture as a viable career path. SUSTAIN responds to this gap by aligning training with real labour market demand and creating structured pathways into decent employment.



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The project’s OP-VET approach

- **Defines training priorities according to concrete employment opportunities guided by a labour market analysis** of over 200 agribusiness companies, ensuring training responds to real skills gaps.
- **Deploys a structured collaboration framework** that enables private sector partners to actively contribute to curriculum validation, mentorship provision, and internship placements.
- **Develops flexible training formats**, including short courses, continuous professional development modules, and apprenticeships, providing rapid pathways into employment, complementing formal diplomas and addressing immediate industry needs.
- **Provides targeted technical assistance** to the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) to align curricula with industry standards, and Training of Trainers programs to strengthen the capacity of Colleges of Agriculture to deliver high-quality training.
- **Applies gender and youth-responsive approaches** to ensure equitable access to training and job opportunities, tackling structural barriers faced by underrepresented groups.

Key activities

- Conduct a labour market analysis to identify skills gaps and priority occupations.
- Update the Higher National Diploma Agribusiness curriculum and design continuous professional development modules with NBTE based on industry standards.
- Deliver continuous professional development modules through blended formats (physical/online) to build job-relevant skills.
- Train college faculty and establish industry collaboration frameworks.
- Facilitate apprenticeships, mentorships, and job placements for trained beneficiaries.

Partners



Sydani Initiative for International Development
Lead organisation



National Board for Technical Education (NBTE)



Nigeria Agribusiness Group (NABG)



SUN Business Network (SBN)



Nigeria Digital Chamber of Commerce (NDCC)

Why it matters

SUSTAIN equips young Nigerians with job-ready skills for the agribusiness sector, ensuring they can find decent work in agribusiness. This project creates clear career pathways from the Higher National Diploma to Continuous Professional Development, enabling trainees to progress into more advanced technical roles. By aligning training with employer needs and strengthening Colleges of Agriculture, the project connects beneficiaries to decent work, stimulates local economies, and builds a skilled workforce for sustainable agricultural transformation.

Expected impact

- 2000** people find decent employment in the agribusiness sector, among 4,000 trainees
- 200** agribusiness grants awarded, creating 3,000 self-employment opportunities across priority value chains
- 75%** youth (18 - 35) and 40% women participating in training and job placements



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