

Sahara Group urges global private sector collaboration to boost food security

Sahara Group has canvassed increased private sector collaboration towards optimising food value chains to address global undernourishment prevalence

LAGOS, NIGERIA, October 20, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Leading energy conglomerate, Sahara Group has canvassed increased private sector collaboration towards optimising food value chains to address global undernourishment prevalence which stands at 687.8 Million (8.9% of global population), according to the Food and Agricultural Organisation 2020 report on the state of food security and nutrition in the world.



Farmers, stakeholders at the Food Africa Launch in Kaduna

The FAO report also recorded the prevalence of severe food insecurity at 746.0 Million, which translates to 9.7% of global population. Further review of the report shows that sub-Saharan Africa alone has severe food insecurity prevalence of 227.5 Million, which is 21.3% of African population. The report cites undernourishment as a measure of the insufficiency of an

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*Pearl Uzokwe, Director,
Governance and
Sustainability, Sahara Group*

individual’s food consumption to provide the amount of dietary energy required to maintain a normal, active and healthy life, while food insecurity, refers to limited access to food, at the level of individuals or households, due to lack of money or other resources.

Pearl Uzokwe, Sahara Group’s Director of Governance and Sustainability said collaboration among regional and global businesses will increase investments in sustainable food and agricultural projects and create avenues for better engagement with governments and global development agencies.

She said the requirement for global healthy diet cost estimated at \$3.75/person/day and \$3.84/person/day makes achieving nutritious food for all a herculean task given that the cost of a healthy diet exceeds the international poverty line (established at USD 1.90 purchasing power parity (PPP) per person per day).

“The covid-19 pandemic has shown how much progress we can all make when businesses toe the path of collaboration. Addressing food security across the globe is a quest that requires urgent attention to ensure that no individual is left behind. Sahara Group is already witnessing how effective multi-stakeholder cooperation can be with the ongoing implementation of the Food Africa project,” she said.

According to Uzokwe, increased investment will help address low levels of productivity, high production risks, insufficient diversification towards more nutritious foods and lack of physical access to food markets.

She noted that collaboration will also facilitate the emergence of vibrant trade policies that will give traction to food production, improve food safety and quality standards. “We will ultimately move the world towards robust food value chains that will enhance food storage, road infrastructure, and food preservation capacity where heart breaking losses exist for highly perishable foods,” she added.

The Food Africa Project is a collaborative initiative between Sahara Group, United Nation-Sustainable Development Goals-Fund (SDG-F), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), International Trade Centre (ITC), Roca Brothers and the Kaduna State Government, directed at empowering the people and alleviating poverty through food security.

Since 2016, a total of 388 farmers and other players directly benefitted from capacity building trainings along Horticultural value chain, Business development and Cooperative management, value addition and market linkages. More opportunity was given to youth and women participation in the trainings conducted (74%). 247 farmers operating under 15 cooperatives/farmer groups profiled by FAO were supported with agricultural implement which improved their productivity and minimized post-harvest losses.

Through value chain market programmes, 78 lead farmers, market agents and food processors (44 women) improved their knowledge of value addition, food safety, market development and linkages and off-farm opportunities. Farmers’ access to improved agro-processing and value chain integration would be further enhanced through the establishment of the food processing facility by Sahara Foundation.

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