

Agri-Innovation Takes Root in Africa: Empowering Small Businesses for a Sustainable Future

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In Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, a ground-breaking workshop marked a significant milestone in the Circular Food Systems in Africa (CFS) project's journey to revolutionize agriculture in Eastern and Southern Africa. From September 2-5, 2024, twenty one development practitioners from three districts in Zimbabwe (Bubi, Insiza and Hwange), along with participants from Mozambique, gathered for an intensive business development training session.

This CFS initiative aims to promote sustainable, climate-smart food systems by integrating irrigation, livestock, and dryland agricultural production. By supporting small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs), the CFS project seeks to create circular food systems that benefit household livelihoods and value chain performance. The workshop equipped trainers with advanced business management and operational skills, empowering them to build confidence and capacity in SMMEs. Participants developed comprehensive business plans, which will be cascaded to businesses linked to agriculture value chains, ensuring mentorship and support.



Jaspro, a pioneering business in sorghum value addition, was represented by its owners at the business development workshop. This enlightening experience equipped them with valuable insights on how to catapult their business to new heights. Through market research and product development, they discovered the secret to tailoring their sorghum flour to meet the evolving

needs of their target market. Moreover, they learned the art of circularizing their business, implementing strategies to minimize losses and maximize efficiency. Empowered with this knowledge, Jaspro is poised to revolutionize the sorghum industry, setting a shining example for others to follow.

The CFS project demonstrates that circular food systems can drive social and economic growth while reducing natural resource consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. By creating local employment opportunities, this initiative aims to reduce urbanization and promote inclusive development. With agricultural innovation platforms at its core, the project brings together diverse stakeholders to co-design and build inclusive SMMEs that optimise outputs, minimise losses, and promote value addition. Working in at least five localities across Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe, the CFS project is poised to impact the region's agricultural landscape.

The Circular Food Systems (CFS) project invites stakeholders across the food systems value chain to collaborate with us in empowering small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and promoting sustainable agricultural practices in Africa. By working together, we can harness the transformative power of circular food systems and create a more resilient, equitable, and prosperous future for African agriculture and communities