



**GENERATION
AFRICA**

GENERATION AFRICA
FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

IMPACT STORIES



AGRA
Sustainably Growing
Africa's Food Systems



ABOUT GENERATION AFRICA

Generation Africa is the partnership initiative with a vision to strengthen the ecosystem for youth entrepreneurs in the agri-food sector across the continent. Founded in 2019, the Generation Africa movement seeks to inspire the next generation of African entrepreneurs by

1. Connecting them to the resources they need to move their agri-food businesses successfully from idea to scale;
2. Providing diverse forms of support to enable these small, medium and micro agri-food enterprises to sustain strong growth;
3. Working to increase capital investment into young ventures in this sector;
4. Highlighting the opportunities of job creation throughout the agri-food value chain; and
5. Inspiring the increased adoption of exciting innovations and breakthrough agri-food technologies.



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Agnes Kalibata

President, AGRA,
and Generation Africa Ambassador

“As we all know, agriculture is the backbone of many developing economies, and we must invest in the youth to ensure the expansion and sustainability of this critical sector. The future of agriculture lies in the hands of the youth, and we must equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in this sector.”

Foreword

AGRA

It is my great pleasure to introduce this publication on the impact stories brought together through the Generation Africa Fellowship Program. As we all know, agriculture is the backbone of many developing economies, and we must invest in the youth to ensure the expansion and sustainability of this critical sector. The future of agriculture lies in the hands of the youth, and we must equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in this sector.

These stories present an overview of how fellowship programs can impact the lives of young people in agriculture and agribusiness. The stories highlight the benefits of fellowships, including skill-building, knowledge transfer, and networking opportunities. They have also explored the challenges and potential solutions for designing and implementing effective youth-led enterprises.

The publication showcases several success stories of the fellows across Africa, providing a glimpse into the transformative impact they can have on the continent, especially the communities they serve. From increasing food security and promoting sustainable farming practices to fostering entrepreneurship and

innovation, these youth have demonstrated their ability to create lasting change in agriculture and food systems.

I want to extend my warmest congratulations to each and every one of the youths on successfully completing the Generation Africa Fellowship. Your interest, dedication, hard work, and perseverance have paid off, and your success is truly remarkable. I am immensely proud of your achievements. Your passion and commitment to driving positive change in agriculture and food systems across the continent is inspiring and is an example for others to follow. You are now part of a growing community of young African agripreneurs leading the way in transforming the sector. I am confident that you will go on to achieve great things and make a positive difference in the lives of farmers and communities across the continent.

I commend Generation Africa for its commitment to promoting youth engagement in agriculture through fellowships. The youth insights and experiences will undoubtedly inspire others to join the agripreneurship space while attracting similar initiatives to create more opportunities for young people in agriculture and agri-business.

AGRA will continue to pursue economic inclusion for the youth through its agriculture and food system transformation agenda while considering the challenges specific to the youth, especially young women. Working with different partners and stakeholders, we will lead the inclusion of the youth and assure their participation and engagement.

Once again, congratulations on your success. I wish you all the best as you embark on the next phase of your journey.





Svein Tore Holsether

CEO, Yara International and co-Founder and Ambassador, Generation Africa

“In 2022, Yara launched Leadership Academies (YLA) in India and Kenya. This is a 12-week, MBA-style program and aims to help MSME (micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprise) business owners – especially women and youth – take their businesses to that next level by developing their strategy and leadership skills.”

Foreword

Yara International

One of the most inspiring things I do is to meet young farmers in Africa. In my view, the importance of agriculture in Africa has increased significantly in the past year. It is also clear that the agricultural sector will be the main engine for growth. And it is equally clear that the youth – young agripreneurs – hold the key to unlock the potential of this great continent.

Back in 2015, I discussed with my friend Strive Masiyiwa how we could make agriculture more attractive for young people. The result of this conversation was the GoGetta Agripreneur Prize Competition, where candidates compete for the best idea in the agricultural sector. In a few years, this has not only grown to be the most important competition in its field, but also a community for sharing of knowledge and technology.

In 2022, Yara launched Leadership Academies (YLA) in India and Kenya. This is a 12-week, MBA-style program and aims to help MSME (micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprise) business owners – especially women and youth – take their businesses to that next level by developing their strategy and leadership skills. From our first 1,000 participants, Yara aims to expand the program in Africa and Asia to thousands more in the years

ahead. The goal of YLA is not only to contribute to increased food production and resilience, but also to help foster broader food/ag economic development locally and regionally.

During the past year, I have been fortunate enough to meet several of our GoGettaz prize finalists, winners and YLA participants in person. I've also had Twitter live events with hundreds of tech-savvy farmers. And one thing strikes me from every one of these meetings: The dedication they all have for turning farming

into real business opportunities to benefit their regions, their nations, and this amazing continent!

In this book, you'll find individual stories about farmers who are making a difference. One by one, they may not change the world, but imagine when we aggregate and multiply these stories across the whole continent - then we're talking massive contributions, massive value-creation, and massive impact.





Jens Hartmann

Head of EMEA at Bayer Crop Science
and Generation Africa Ambassador

“At Bayer, we’re investing ahead of the curve. For the future of our planet and for young people, who will play pivotal roles in transforming food systems. That’s why we’re developing solutions in seeds and traits, crop protection, digital services and improving access to innovation and technologies that matter...”

Foreword

BAYER Crop Science

With over 50% of Africa’s population under 20 years old, the continent can benefit from unprecedented socio-economic potential that could unlock a truly sustainable food system – for the planet and the people. Creating a fair, sustainable, and future-proof food and agricultural ecosystem requires that young agripreneurs have access to the knowledge, networks, tools and innovations that will unleash their transformative powers and that will provide their communities with decent livelihoods and nutritious food.

What better way of doing this than to help start a business in agriculture? The numbers reveal huge potential for growth: with 60% of the world’s available arable land located in Africa and an agriculture sector that secures the livelihoods of 70% of the population, Africa’s agribusiness potential is unmatched worldwide. In fact, IFAD has found that in Sub-Saharan Africa, economic growth from agriculture is 11 times more effective at reducing extreme poverty than any other sector. All of this makes agriculture and agribusiness an exciting area of potential and growth for the next generation.

At Bayer, we're investing ahead of the curve. For the future of our planet and for young people, who will play pivotal roles in transforming food systems. That's why we're developing solutions in seeds and traits, crop protection, digital services and improving access to innovation and technologies that matter - for better yield, less freshwater needs, and stronger resilience of agricultural production in the face of climate change and environmental challenges. By 2050, 10bn people will be living on Earth and we will need 50% more food, feed, and fuel. Sustainability must be deeply engrained in food ecosystems to achieve the United Nations

Sustainable Development Goals - and achieving the goals starts locally, with solutions adapted and responding to the diverse realities on the ground.

Young agripreneurs of Africa, your energy, passion and commitment are crucial to building future-proof opportunities! And by investing in the inspiring young changemakers of the Generation Africa Fellowship Program, we know we are on the right track.

Young agripreneurs of Africa, thank you for your commitment, and for continuing to inspire our shared vision.





Dickson Naftali

Head of Generation Africa

“The impact of the Generation Africa Fellowship Program goes beyond the individual entrepreneurs. It has created a ripple effect that has influenced the wider entrepreneurial ecosystem in Africa.”

Message from Generation Africa Secretariat

The Generation Africa Fellowship Program has had a significant impact on the African continent by empowering and supporting the next generation of agri-entrepreneurs. Through this program, we have witnessed the power of innovation, creativity, and collaboration in creating sustainable businesses that address some of the continent’s most pressing challenges. It has provided a platform for young entrepreneurs to gain valuable skills, knowledge, and resources that have enabled them to develop and scale their businesses. We have seen remarkable success stories from the program’s alumni, who have gone on to create jobs, drive economic growth, and contribute to their communities’ development.

The impact of the Generation Africa Fellowship Program goes beyond the individual entrepreneurs. It has created a ripple effect that has influenced the wider entrepreneurial ecosystem in Africa. The program has demonstrated the potential of youth-led businesses to contribute to the continent’s economic growth and development.



It is important to note that the Generation Africa Fellowship Program was made possible by the partnership of Bayer as well as other strategic partners. Their support has been crucial in helping us provide young African entrepreneurs with the resources they need to drive innovation and transform agriculture and food systems in their communities. We appreciate their commitment to creating a more sustainable future for Africa, and we look forward to continuing our partnership with them and other organizations who share our vision.

As the head of Generation Africa, I am proud of the work that we have done. The impact book serves as a testament to the power of collaboration and the potential of Africa's youth. It is our hope that the stories of the fellows will inspire and motivate others to pursue careers in agriculture and contribute to the sustainable development of Africa.

As we look to the future, we remain committed to supporting young people who are driving innovation in the agricultural sector. We believe that by providing them with the tools and resources they need to succeed, we can create a more prosperous and sustainable future for Africa.



AGRA
Sustainably Growing
Africa's Food Systems



Generation Africa Fellowship Program

1. Overview

Generation Africa Fellowship Program

(GAFP): was launched in 2022 in partnership with BAYER AG with an aim of investing in the growth of high potential youth SMEs through incubation/coaching and investment. GAFP is specifically designed for high potential SMEs, drawn from the GoGetta and Pitch AgriHack competitions and is a tailored practical course for 3-6 months, incorporating exciting bespoke mentoring and coaching that is personalized to individual needs and involves both business and personal development. Generation Africa is investing both in country programs and in the growth of high potential youth SMEs, by supporting their journey through incubation, coaching and investment through GAFP.

Subsequently, the aim of GAFP is therefore to work with these young high potential SMEs to enable sustained growth in their agripreneurship journey while equipping them with tangible skills and knowledge to strengthen their businesses and empower them to create employment for young people.

The end goal is to have resilient businesses that can employ more youth.

2. Highlight of GAFP 2022

Below are key highlights of the GAFP 2022 program following its inauguration:

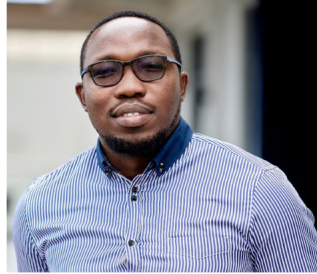
- 11 fellows successfully graduated from the program in December 2022

- Mentees went through one-on-one coaching sessions over a period of 6 months that enabled them to build up on their knowledge and skills for market readiness and investment. Areas of coaching covered included:
 - **Access to funding and financial management:** Mentees were supported to develop a dual strategy of increasing internal revenue streams while improving financial management systems to attract investors and accelerators.
 - **Market linkage:** Mentees developed social media marketing strategy for customer attraction and retention.
 - **Understanding value chains:** Mentees mapped value chain actors to identify the potential entry points and partners.
 - **Leadership and governance:** Agripreneurs sought and received approvals of their Boards of Directors (BoDs) to implement innovative ideas co-developed during the coaching program.
 - **Policy and regulations:** Agripreneurs sought and received information on opportunities on market expansion and cross-border trade.
- Peer to peer learning sessions that allowed mentees to learn from each other and share lessons and experiences
- The cohort were also provided with opportunities to draw best practices from established players in the industry through field visits.



**Generation Africa
Fellowship Program
(GAFFP)**

Impact stories
from the 2022 cohort
Generation Africa
agripreneurs
in partnership with
Bayer AG.



Baraka Jeremiah
Co-Founder & CEO
Kilimo Fresh Foods Africa
Tanzania



Diana Orembe
CEO and Founder
NovFeed
Tanzania



Emem Essien
Co-Founder
Crop2Cash
Nigeria



Fily Keita
Founder
Agrowomen
Mali



Gabriel Eze
Co-Founder
Rural Farmers Hub
Nigeria



Jeffrey Appiagyei
Co-Founder
Sayetech
Ghana



Jolenta Joseph
Managing Director
and Founder, Sanavita
Tanzania



**Nana Yaw Antwi-
Boasiako**
Founder
Prosect Feed
Ghana



Nomaliso Musasiwa
Managing Director and
Founder
Fresh in a Box
Zimbabwe



**Alexandre
Nshimiyimana**
CEO and Founder
Sanit Wing
Rwanda



Ore Alemede
Co-founder & CEO
Grow Agric
Kenya

1 Kilimo Fresh Foods Africa

“My interest in farming started while I was still at the university pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration, Entrepreneurship Development. Our University was located in the rural part of Tanzania and the only things you could see when you stepped out of the university were farms. Being an entrepreneur at heart, this sparked an interest and got me curious about how I could add value to the agricultural value chain,” Baraka Jeremiah, Co-Founder & CEO of Kilimo Fresh Foods Africa speaking on how his entrepreneurship journey began.



Baraka Jeremiah
Co-Founder & CEO
Kilimo Fresh Foods Africa
Tanzania

Through the Generation Africa Fellowship Program (GAFFP), I was coached on go-to-market strategies which led to an increase in our profits from USD 25,000 to USD 100,000 every month. So far, Kilimo Fresh has created job opportunities for 25 people.



Baraka refers to himself as a farmer and an entrepreneur. I started out as a farmer immediately after university then I farmed for over four years. My co-founder and I would grow tomatoes, capsicums and watermelons which we would sell to consumers through middlemen. We used this business model for four years and realized that we were losing a lot of produce due to lack of proper storage facilities and transport. We also did not have direct access to the market. This led to food wastage; we were losing more than half of what we were producing. We decided to stop farming and conduct some research.

It is during this period that I got the opportunity to attend different agriculture boot camps across Africa, from Nigeria, Ghana, to Namibia, Botswana and finally South Africa. During these boot camps, I got knowledge and insights on how I could add value to the agricultural sector.

When I returned to Tanzania in December 2017, I shared the lessons from these boot camps with my cofounder and we agreed to embark on market research.

In a bid to understand the market needs, we contacted more than 200 hotels and restaurants, supermarkets and public markets in Dar es Salaam. This is when Kilimo Fresh



Foods Africa was born. We started with a pilot in March 2018 and we were buying from the farmers and then selling to hotels and restaurants. When we started out, we had only 3 restaurants as clients. We did this for over 8 months and by the end of 2018, we were sure that the market existed and so we decided to formally register the company in January 2019.

Kilimo Fresh Foods Africa is founded on the idea that food can be taken to market with minimal to zero waste. We started out with smallholder farmers from whom we would buy fresh produce and then transport it to Dar es Salaam where we had a small warehouse for sorting, packing and consolidation. We would then use the boda boda riders (motorbike riders) on the street to distribute the produce.

The Generation Africa Fellowship Program (GAFP)





Through GAFP, I met John Njane, one of the program's coaches. During this time, Kilimo Fresh Foods was in the process of expanding to new markets, therefore, John and I agreed to place it as the company's need. John went ahead to guide me on several business aspects such as organizational structure and a go-to-market strategy for this new market segment. Initially, Kilimo Fresh Foods would sell to B2B customers; we buy fresh produce from the farmers and sell this produce to other businesses; hotels, restaurants, supermarkets etc.



John's counsel opened my eyes to another sustainable and high-potential market segment; street food and vegetable vendors. Before exploring this new market, we would gain a monthly revenue of between USD 25,000 and USD 30,000. After the market expansion, we realized revenue of up to USD 100,000 every month. So far, Kilimo Fresh Foods has created job opportunities for 25 people and sold only 8% of its equity.

What next for Kilimo Fresh Foods?

Kilimo Fresh Foods is looking to expand further through fundraising. Recently, I represented the company during the Generation Africa peer learning webinar. The speaker, Emem Essien, also an agripreneur, shared with us many insights on fundraising and digital marketing. We are also keen to add at least 6 distribution trucks to our operations in Dar es Salaam, and 4 big trucks (20 tonnes) for bulk sourcing from the farms.

-  kilimofresh.co.tz
-  [kilimo-fresh-foods-africa-ltd/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/kilimo-fresh-foods-africa-ltd/)
-  [kilimo_fresh](https://twitter.com/kilimo_fresh)
-  [KilimoFreshFoods/](https://www.facebook.com/KilimoFreshFoods/)



2 NovFeed: Using BioTechnology to Support the Fish Farming Industry in Tanzania

Diana Orembe

CEO and Founder, NovFeed
Tanzania

Through the Generation Africa Fellowship Program(GAFP), I have been mentored to finetune my pitching and presentation skills. Today, my business is investor ready. With guidance from my GAFP mentor, I recently pitched for the Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) \$10,000 grant which I was successfully awarded.

According to statistics from the Food and Agriculture Organization(FAO), aquaculture in Tanzania has a vast but as yet untapped potential. The industry is dominated by freshwater fish farming in which small-scale farmers practice both extensive and semi-intensive fish farming. It is largely a subsistence activity in Tanzania, practiced by lower-income households in the coastal and inland areas. Small fish ponds of an average size of 10 m x 15 m are integrated with other agricultural activities such as gardening and animal and bird production on small pieces of land. Tanzania is currently estimated to have a total of 14,100 freshwater fishponds scattered across the mainland. The aquaculture sector is seen as a sector capable of addressing two key development priorities of the Tanzanian government; food insecurity and employment.

The beginnings

Taking us through her entrepreneurship journey is Diana Orembe, CEO and Founder, NovFeed, took us back to 2018 when it all began. “My entrepreneurship journey started in 2018 after I learnt about how the aquaculture industry has the capacity to feed the growing global population. The only issue is that the industry still has a lot of problems that need to be solved. When I was doing my research before stepping into the business, I visited the farmers to learn about the issues they are facing, as in the challenges as well as the good things. My focus was mainly on the challenges

because that was what I wanted to understand more deeply in order to come up with solutions. Most of the farmers in the Dar-es-Salaam region had similar problems; access to fingerlings, control of water quality in their ponds and the high cost of feed,” Diana noted.

Farmers invest in their ponds hoping to make good returns but they end up generating little or no income at all. I was very keen on the feed problem which I learnt from my uncle who was a fish farmer when I was young. I wanted to understand why fish feed is still a problem more than 10 years later. From my research, I realized that the current feeds available in Tanzania, East



and South Africa in general are mostly imported from other countries such as the Netherlands, Vietnam and China. The bigger percentage is imported but both the imported and local fish feeds are made from soybeans and fish meal as the main protein ingredient.

These two ingredients are very expensive and account for over 70% of the total feed production costs which in turn makes the feeds costly. Sometimes the feed is not available; some farmers have to travel thousands of kilometers to access feed, for instance Mwanza, which is 1000 kilometers away from Dar-es-Salaam. On completion of my university studies, I decided to apply my knowledge as a tool to tackle these problems and that is how my entrepreneurship journey began.

Now, the research begins

I went into the lab in search for an alternative source of fish meal in the fish feed so that I can support this fast developing industry because even if fish meal is used as the main protein ingredient in fish feed, it doesn't make economical sense because we are destroying our oceans by overfishing and also putting the growing global population in danger of food insecurity in the near future. This has been the reason why I am so passionate about coming up with an alternative source of protein for use in fish feed.

My colleagues and I tested a number of sources that might be the best substitute for fish meal. Currently, the main available substitute is soybeans which are not environmentally friendly. Therefore, we came up with a bacteria based protein as the best substitute.

NovFeed Today

NovFeed is a biotech company that uses natural microbes and industrial biotech that turns organic waste into a highly concentrated protein product with a focus on making nutritious, customizable inputs for the food system, thus enabling meat and aquaculture sectors to get alternative sources of protein ingredients for fish feed. Our key product is Novfeed protein fish feed from which we obtain Novliquid, which is a byproduct of the process. We are currently researching to see if this liquid has the potential to become a bio fertilizer. NovFeed has employed 8 people in Tanzania along with several international and local advisors. We are working with 2 volunteers with whom we aim to work in future.






What I learnt from GAFP

I was one of the GoGettaZ impact award winners where we got funding support which helped in the development of NovFeed. We later joined the Generation Africa Fellowship Program(GAFP) where we were also equipped with skills on how to better run our companies and how to manage the funding. How to build



What Next After GAFP?

We plan to keep on working on continued product development to ensure our business grows, our sales revenues grow and our employees grow. This will help us reach more farmers so that we can create more impact along our production value chain. This means that farmers will get relief in terms of the cost of feed; if farmers can get better quality, affordable and sustainable fish feed, they will be able to better sustain their business ventures.

-  novfeed.com
-  [novfeed_tz](https://www.instagram.com/novfeed_tz)
-  [novfeed-tz-ab97841a9](https://www.linkedin.com/company/novfeed-tz-ab97841a9)
-  [Novfeed_tz](https://twitter.com/Novfeed_tz)
-  [novalfishfeedingredients](https://www.facebook.com/NOVAfishfeedingredients)

a sustainable business for the future which can attract more funding or increase revenues through sales and profits. And this is where the mentorship came in. I have benefited a lot from being supported by my mentor, Mr. John Njane, from Strathmore Research and Consultancy Centre in different areas: from reviewing our business plan and streamlining our financial structures to attract more investments.

Through the Generation Africa Fellowship Program(GAFP), I have been mentored to finetune my pitching and presentation skills. Today, my business is investor ready. With guidance from my GAFP mentor, I recently pitched for the Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) \$10,000 grant which I was successfully fully awarded.





Emem Essien

Co-Founder, Crop2Cash
Nigeria

With the help of my mentor from Generation Africa Fellowship Program(GAFP), We incorporated the Hub and Spoke model into our company's strategy and focused on creating the right content on our social media channels This has helped us expand our reach, increase engagement and manage customer expectations.

3 Crop2Cash: Solving Farmers' Biggest Headache

Access to Finance is one of the biggest challenges smallholder farmers in Africa have. Banks and financial institutions shy away from financing farmers as they consider them as high risk. This means farmers can not increase their production capacity or grow their business ventures. Emem Essien and his Co-Founders at Crop2Cash are solving this problem in Nigeria by connecting smallholder farmers to structured financial solutions.

“Our core business is to connect farmers to structured financing solutions to help them grow their capacity,” Emem notes. Crop2Cash is a digital solutions provider that aims to get farmers credible credit solutions for their businesses. We developed a USSD service where farmers dial a code and they can get their credit status verified. Once approved, they get access to financing from our partner banks and financial institutions. The platform is available not only in English but also in Hausa. By the end of 2022, it will also be available in Yoruba.

Our goal is to easily share the transaction data of farmers on our platform with our banking partners and directly connect them to farmers. On top of this service, we also have a digital marketplace, where farmers can get inputs such as agrochemicals, fertilizers, mechanization and



other farming inputs along the agriculture value chain. We have strategic partners in the agricultural value chain which allows us to give farmers access to these inputs.

Since 2018, Crop2Cash has raised close to 2 million USD in grant funding. In terms of equity funding, we have been able to raise about USD 800 000 USD. As of our last fundraising, the company is valued at 6 million USD. We are in the process of another round of funding, so by the end of that round, we will be projected to be valued at a total of 25 million USD in the last four years.

To date, we have attracted about 400,000 users on our platform across 15 Nigerian states, mostly in Northern Nigeria. We have more than 900 active agents in the field onboarding the farmers and, on top of that, we have more than

30 employees on our payroll.

Over the past four years, we have attracted the attention of development finance corporations such as USAID, German Development Corporation, and JICA and they have also been giving us access to farmers within their communities from the projects or programs they are conducting.

In July 2022, we added a partnership with USAID to offer agricultural extension services under Feed the Future. The goal is to work in five states and along five commodity value chains which cut across crop production, aquaculture etc. Our role is to create access to financing for the selected farmers within the next five years. We have onboarded about 5 million farmers to get access to finance for 1 million farmers.

The Generation Africa Fellowship Programme

When I first met my mentor, Dr. Hannington Odame, we started by analyzing where Crop2Cash is a business; from the challenges to the solutions we could come up with. My conversations with my mentor were more of an exchange of ideas because we both proposed the best solutions to address the challenges. It all boiled down to this phase of growing rapidly, managing customers' expectations and customer retention. We agreed that we needed to shape our brand story based on our client feedback.

With his help, we settled on a model that focused on improving our social media presence and so we decided to onboard our social media manager, Heritage Osofowora, as part of the mentorship sessions. We incorporated the Hub and Spoke model into our company's strategy and focused on creating the right content on our social media channels. This has helped us expand our reach, increase engagement and manage customer expectations.





What Next?

We are looking to become a household name in Nigeria. We have been able to close quite a number of partnership deals this year. We are currently speaking to Airtel since we are doing all these things on GSM and, Airtel is moving to other African countries with similar market dynamics. We are looking to grow beyond Nigeria and expand into other African markets.

When we launched the USSD marketplace for farmers late last year, we closed 2021 with less than 10,000 farmers. For this year, we were looking to grow the number of farmers on our platform from 10,000 to 50,000 farmers. By June 2022, we had hit our target. We are now working towards getting our client base to 500,000 farmers.

We have been working with thousands of farmers based on introductions from development organizations, however, we do not have control of these customers. The potential is there; we have more than 400,000 smallholder farmers in the country, and we are looking to grow our market share and expand our product reach across Nigeria.

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-  crop2cash.com.ng
-  [crop2cash](#)
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4 Agrowomen: Redefining Agriculture for Women in Mali

Mali is ranked as the 4th West African country globally in sesame production and the 2nd in growth and production in West Africa. However, up to 95% of Malian Sesame is exported and only about 5% locally-consumed. There is a real need to promote local processing and value addition of sesame, oil seeds and other local cereals.

Fily Keita, 28, is from Mali and is the founder of Agrowomen, a company whose core business is to process sesame seeds, make sesame snacks, and oil, and sell the rice Malodouma (tasteful rice). “We sell our products through e-commerce, supermarkets, food stores, social media and websites. In terms of access to markets, we work with women farmers’ cooperatives to connect them to national and international markets,” Fily adds.



Fily Keita
Founder, Agrowomen
Mali

“I could see many of the challenges women in agriculture from my village faced when growing and selling sesame. I wanted to help change that. I decided to contribute to women’s economic empowerment and food security by adding value to this magical product and that is how Agrowomen was born.”



As a daughter to a policeman who had invested in agriculture in the village, Fily got to see firsthand the challenges that women in agriculture faced. Many of these were growing and selling sesame seeds. She wanted to help change that. "Agrowomen was born from my urge to contribute to women's empowerment. I decided to contribute to women's economic empowerment and food security by adding value to this magical product," she says.

Why women's economic empowerment?

More than 70% of Malian women are active in the agriculture sector however they make very little profit from their farming activities. Only about 5% of women in Mali own land in the rural areas, as such, it is important that we empower them economically in other ways. This is where Agrowomen comes in with our processed and value-added products.

The Mentorship sessions, facilitated by Generation Africa Fellowship Program(GAFP) have been life-changing; they helped me better define my business and be clearer on the goals I had set.

This gave me a unique opportunity to strengthen my business skills and increased the visibility of my business.






Generation Africa Fellowship Program

The Generation Africa Fellowship Program gave me a unique opportunity to strengthen my business skills. It also helped me have a clear goal and what I needed to do for my business. The GoGettaz competition was life-changing; it helped me buy some raw materials and expand my business. Further, it increased the visibility of my business.

The Mentorship sessions, facilitated by Strathmore Research and Consultancy Centre (SRCC), have been life-changing; they helped me better define my business and be clearer on the goals I had set for my business. My mentor helped me shift my mindset and get a better focus for my business and the goals I wanted to achieve.

What Next for Agrowomen?

My dream is to be able to expand Agrowomen beyond Mali and beyond Africa, to have a greater impact, by partnering with women cooperatives, trade fairs and exhibitions. I want to create more jobs for women and youth along with capacity development for them. I am also looking to grow our processing capacity. Agrowomen is the future of Mali; the future of Africa.

.....
 agrowomen.com
 [agrowomen](https://www.instagram.com/agrowomen)



5 Rural Farmers Hub: Using Precision Farming to Increase Farmers' Productivity

Gabriel Eze

Co-Founder
Rural Farmers Hub
Nigeria

Through the Generation Africa Fellowship Program (GAFFP), I learnt a lot from the mentors whose experience and knowledge opened our eyes to several aspects around financial modelling and agribusiness. My team has also benefited from GAFFP; our accountant was engaged in capacity building on financial management and record keeping.

Over the past four years, our farmers' crop yield has grown at an average rate of 35%. Within the same period, productivity improved by half a tonne from the continental average.

Around 88% of Nigeria's farmers (roughly 40 million) engage in agriculture mainly at a subsistence level with a majority of that population living in the rural areas. Despite its contribution to the economy, Nigeria's agricultural sector faces many challenges such as outdated land tenure systems, low levels of irrigation farming, climate change and land degradation. Other challenges include high production costs, inefficient distribution of inputs, limited financing, high post-harvest losses and poor access to markets.

A limited adoption of monitoring technologies means farmers walk through several hectares, multiple times weekly, looking for crops that are stressed or diseased. This is not an easy thing to do and discourages a lot of young people from this vital economic activity. When such a fault is identified, the farmer relies on expert's advice or government extension workers to show up at the village. As a result, millions of farmers are unable to access

quality advice as well as the latest, authentic information on best farming practices. This leads to their inability to improve yield, manage pest attacks, stubborn weeds, climate change, and access premium markets for their harvest.

At Rural Farmers Hub, we use innovative information technology (IT) to empower smallholder farmers to attain sustainable economic development. We help farmers to make better farming decisions via satellite remote sensing delivered via SMS, mobile app, or in-person. Our proprietary technology leverages modern scientific methodology and makes them backwards-compatible with ordinary mobile phones. Today, we have a team of 16 employees made up of agronomists, soil scientists, software engineers, designers, mobile developers and over 300 extension workers spread across the country.

Founding the Rural Farmers Hub

“I come from a software engineering background and my co-founder is from the development space. As we were talking about some of the problems he has experienced in that space, especially market linkages, we were sharing ideas on how to solve these problems. How do we help farmers access inputs? How do we help improve farmers' livelihoods? This was not the first time we were discussing such issues, we had started a forum in university days and this was part of a continuation of





that discussion. We then decided to form a company that could solve these needs for smallholder farmers seeing that not much had changed in more than a decade, in fact, things had deteriorated. And this is when we founded Rural Farmers Hub in 2018,” Gabriel Eze, co-Founder of Rural Farmers Hub speaking about his entrepreneurship journey.

Rural Farmers Hub was meant to be a marketing platform connecting private sector manufacturers to farmers. Along the way, we found out something else, the bigger (and harder) challenge was not just linking these two parties but rather the fact that farmers were producing less food per unit. There was a productivity problem. In 2020 for example,

the productivity for grains in Africa as a whole ranged between 1.2- 1.6 tonnes per hectare while in Asia, this number is doubled to about 3.2 tonnes per hectare. In Europe as of the same year, it was about 4.0 tonnes per hectare.

So essentially if you double Africa’s productivity, it’s still less than that of Asia and Europe, in fact, it is less than the global average. Farmers are not producing as much food per hectare as their counterparts in other parts of the world. Therefore, we moved from a market linkage business model to a precision farming business model because the latter can boost farmers productivity and propel them towards access to finance and improved seed varieties.

Precision farming

Precision farming includes the targeting of these inputs, leading to optimal results e.g. When planting seeds, most farmers just broadcast the seeds (spreading the seeds across the farm). Broadcasting method is limiting as it only works on farms which are already fertile. For infertile farms, these seeds will struggle for limited resources. Rather than do this randomized planting method, the farmer could switch to variable application whereby they can vary the spacing and seed density for different sections of the farm. For places that are very productive, they can increase the seed density and reduce the spacing. This is just but one of the more than a dozen methods of precision farming that farmers can adopt to increase their productivity.

We have challenged our farmers to apply precision farming and so far, over the past four years, they have recorded an average 35% increase in productivity yields. A half tonne improvement from the continental average over the last two years. From 1.2 tonnes per hectare when we started out, now we are recording close to 2.5 tonnes per hectare and for some locations, close to 7 tonnes per hectare.

We have worked with 25,000 farmers, mostly grain farmers growing maize, sorghum, sesame rice and soya beans. We also recently began working with tomato, pepper and groundnuts farmers. Our approach from day one has been market driven which is why we work with crops that are in demand.

Key Learnings from GAFFP

Through the Generation Africa Fellowship Program (GAFFP), I learnt a lot from Christine Owande and Haggai Leonard, financial and agribusiness experts respectively. Their experience and knowledge opened our eyes to several aspects around financial modelling, especially the fact that investors not only want to hear your impact story but also your financial story.

My team also benefited from GAFFP; our accountant was engaged in capacity building on financial management and record keeping.

With Leonard on the other hand, we focused on expanding into other African countries. Despite our rapid growth over the past 4 years, everything happens within a very narrow window of three-four months and the only way we can close out the other eight months was to expand to other African markets that have overlapping seasons. He advised us to be very deliberate with our expansion plans in either parts of the continent. Our major planting season is between May and September. At the same time, the cropping season in Central Africa begins just after Nigeria's cropping season is ending. As that one is ending, the one in East Africa is beginning and so on. We have a spreadsheet that helps to identify when the seasons begin in which region and how to penetrate those regions as well as the crops that are grown within those windows. This was the first part of the project and we have successfully completed this.



We have already laid the foundation and have begun the implementation phase with discussions with local partners in Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Burkina Faso already ongoing. The foundational learning/ advice given by Leonard has given us the push we needed to start working on this. We hope that by same time in 2023, we will begin receiving positive results from the new markets.

What Next for Rural Farmers Hub?

We have already laid the foundation and have begun the implementation phase with discussions with local partners in Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Burkina Faso already ongoing. We

are in talks with the national body for oil palm producers in Nigeria and the national body for cocoa farmers in Nigeria along with other foreign partners as we plan to expand our service to cover other crops such as cocoa, groundnuts and oil palm trees. In 2023, we shall also delve into tree crops like palm oil and cocoa. Currently, we have several branches in 12 states of Northern Nigeria. We wish to expand to Southern Nigeria where root tubers and vegetables are predominant.

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6 SayeTech: Transforming Agriculture in Africa Through Mechanization

Growing up in my grandparents' home influenced my decision to become an entrepreneur. My entrepreneurial journey for Sayetech began when I volunteered in a rural community without electricity as a missionary for an interdenominational church. Even though I had trained as an engineer, after my undergraduate studies in Ghana, I decided to give back to the community as a teacher and to do this I decided to volunteer as a missionary. While doing that, I was teaching a lot of children, most of whom had nowhere to sit and others had no shoes. I remember a time when I went to class during harvest time and there were only two children in class and the two others who were walking in said that they were coming to call the remaining two to go to the farms to work. That really disheartened me because I saw that though I was trying to bring some transformation to the children in the community through teaching.



Jeffrey Appiagyei
Co-Founder, Sayetech
Ghana

We are not just trying to keep the children in school, it cuts across their families and their parents' livelihoods. It's not just about the children, it's also about their parents; the farmers, it's about helping them reduce their post harvest losses. It's also about the economic productivity lost because of lack of equipment, and the fact that industrialization in Africa is still lagging behind.





This really hit me hard and I knew that we could make machines locally to help in farms and keep the children in school. While in university, I had worked on over five projects, all of them were non-academic but I built pro-types then collaborated with like-minded teams and local artisans to build machinery. “For me, starting Sayetech was about keeping the children in school. So that very day, I took a motorbike to a community with electricity, charged my phone and called a university friend, now my co-founder and asked what he thought about building machines and explained the situation on the ground. He agreed to do it and Sayetech was born,” Jeffrey reminisces his motivation behind starting Sayetech.

Initially we also wanted to design the machines and equipment and give them to local artisans to manufacture them for us but this idea did not work. We were also fortunate to have met some of the organizers of the previous competitions that I had been part of. They were interested in becoming our first customer and to provide design services and that was also with USAID so we decided to start a company that would design machines and manufacture them, we were privileged to have USAID as our first customer for the design service.

When we started out in late 2018 we just had an idea and a customer (USAID) who paid for our registration. In 2019, we were privileged to be

awarded by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers for our flagship of the motorcar pressure which was also highly sponsored by USAID. They advised us to manufacture the equipment instead of just being on the design side because one of the problems we had started to encounter is that most of the artisans were not manufacturing them well to maintain the standards. That is how we came into the manufacturing space. They gave us a grant to proceed with it and we were able to start to rent out a space and build our manufacturing plant.

Today at Sayetech

Today we have equipment of more than 10 units, we also have a mobile app that allows us to track the machines. We are consistently building machines and we are currently working on one of the products that is going to transform the cocoa industry in Ghana in terms of mechanization. We are not just trying to keep the children in school, it cuts across. It's not just about the children, it's also about their parents; the farmers, it's about helping them reduce their post harvest losses. It's also about the economic productivity lost because of lack of equipment, and the fact that industrialization in Africa is still lagging behind.

Sayetech aims to provide smart agricultural solutions for smallholder farmers in Africa to ensure we create sustainable African youth enterprises. We are trying to industrialize Africa starting with Ghana and in the context of



reducing food losses. Within the manufacturing space, we are also able to design and produce other equipment for different spaces as we grow to make sure that we have more refined products and eventually grow the continent economically through industrialization. The Sayetech team comprises 14 full time staff members; five are members of the management team.

About the Generation Africa Fellowship Program

The Generation Africa Fellowship Africa Program has been very helpful for us and this is because we are planning to expand our operations to Kenya. My mentor was crucial in helping us verify our registration document and recommend changes as well as initiate the process to make sure we document the file registrations properly within Kenya. There is also the network of people we have met in cyberspaces doing different things and that has been very encouraging to see other young

The Generation Africa Fellowship Africa Program has been very helpful because we are planning to expand our operations to Kenya. My mentor was crucial in helping us verify our registration document and recommend changes as well as initiate the process to make sure we document the file registrations properly within Kenya.

people from across the continent doing great things.

On top of that, my mentor Mr. Joel Asiago, understood the Kenyan agricultural flows and dynamics and had knowledge in the agricultural supply chain; interacting with him gave us in depth knowledge of the Kenyan agricultural industry. This is withstanding the fact that myself and a couple of our team members have previously been to Kenya more than three times to conduct market research. What we learnt from him was more extensive than what we could have collected. Ideally, being part of the Generation Africa Fellowship Programme has given us a lot of exposure and it has been very fulfilling for us to be recognized that we are doing something impactful in the continent. Also, it is clear that GAFP helped us avoid some possible mistakes that we may have made during the expansion to Kenya.

What Next for Sayetech?

We are looking to scale across the continent to be able to serve the East and West African markets with smart small equipment that will help farmers in agribusiness produce more and reduce their losses.

In the future, we will also focus on more partnerships to make equipment available for young people to encourage agribusiness entrepreneurship among the youth and women. We continue to grow, we continue to learn and we continue to unlearn some things too in the journey to becoming one of the most successful businesses in Africa.

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7 Sanavita: Tackling Malnutrition in Tanzania

Sanavita is working towards producing biofortified crops with Vitamin A, Zinc and Iron to reduce Vitamin A deficiency and anaemia among children and women in Tanzania. According to UNICEF, iron deficiency in the country stands at 58% in children under the age of 5; and at 45% for women aged 15 – 49 years. Vitamin A deficiency in children aged between 6 to 59 months stands at 33%.

Addressing Malnutrition

“At Sanavita, we aim to address malnutrition through agribusiness engagements involving smallholder farmers in Tanzania. We focus on staple crops in a bid to tackle malnutrition in the rural areas of Tanzania. We are dedicated to producing biofortified crops and are currently producing three types; sweet potatoes, vitamin A maize and high iron and zinc beans,” Jolenta Joseph, Managing Director and Founder of Sanavita, notes.

Malnutrition and nutrient deficiencies are rampant in Sub-Saharan Africa with the region having the highest prevalence of vitamin A deficiency in the world. Iodine, vitamin B12 and Zinc deficiencies are also rampant but can be prevented through the fortification of food. Tanzania for example suffers from a high rate of malnutrition (stunting 32%), whereby micronutrient deficiency is rampant and causes high infant mortality rates and maternal deaths.



Jolenta Joseph
Managing Director
and Founder,
Sanavita
Tanzania



“Apart from adding value to the agricultural produce, we also run nutrition awareness campaigns, nutrition education and promoting production, processing as well as value addition of Orange fleshed sweet potatoes(OFSP), ProVitamin A Maize and High Iron and Zinc beans. We have also been training the smallholder farmers on good agricultural practices along with how they can reduce post-harvest losses and increase their profit margins.

Reaching customers

We reach our customers through local markets, supermarkets and local shops. Currently, we have been using Instagram and Facebook and local media to create awareness about our products. We have also partnered with local government authorities such as the district health department and Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre to visit local clinics where we can share information about our products and their health benefits.

We are also looking to get into the export market and to sell to the European market. Expanding to the European market is quite a

challenge because you have to educate them and explain why they should go for the Pro-Vitamin A maize and not the white maize, and why the OFSP and not sweet potatoes.

The genesis of Sanavita

I started in 2018, during a time when farmers were struggling with getting access to markets for their products. I started by buying fresh produce from the farmers and selling it to the market, and this was just to help the farmers access the available market. After some time, I saw the potential in dried sweet potatoes and flour. After incubation, I started drying the sweet potatoes and within no time I was packaging my products and that is how Sanavita began. I officially registered the company in March 2019 and started developing different products. I started out with sweet potato flour and then moved to wheat and wheat products. We are currently milling porridge flour from sweet potatoes, pumpkin seeds and rice. The other one is from proVitamin A maize and cassava which is for the thick porridge (ugali).

“After my first conversation with my mentor, I identified fundraising and marketing as the key needs for Sanavita. With his guidance, I developed a communication and marketing strategy which on implementation, saw an increase in the number of people visiting our website and our social media platforms.”



Growth at Sanativa

Over the years, the number of farmers we are working with has increased; we started with just one farmer. Today we are working with 1,000 smallholder farmers. We also keep recruiting new farmers based on what we are producing. Since 2019, our revenue has increased and we are ready to move out of the incubation centre where we have been producing our flour. We are currently fundraising so that we can get a solar dryer and processing machinery. So far, we have mobilized enough and managed to have all the key machines we need; the only thing missing is a building and a solar dryer. Together with partners such as AGRA, GAIN and TechnoServe, we are working towards fundraising or access to finance to establish our production site.

The Generation Africa Fellowship Program(GAFP)

This program was timely and has been very helpful. The coaching has especially been impactful. After my first conversation with my

mentor, Mr. Haggai Leonard, I identified the key needs for Sanavita; fundraising and marketing. With his guidance, we began by developing a social media communication and marketing strategy which on implementation, saw an increase in the number of people visiting our website and our social media platforms. Before implementing this strategy, we had 500 followers on Instagram and now we are at 800 followers and still growing; all this in a span of less than 2 months.

GAFP has challenged me to review our market reports and refine our business plan as well as our business pitch. I am confident that after the completion of the Program, we will be able to attract funding and have a robust online presence hence growth in our market share.

What Next for Sanavita?

We are keen on expanding Sanavita's operations to the whole country and consequently tapping into the export market. This is why we are doing our best to ensure we set up the production plant. We are also looking to recruit and train more farmers as well as create more employment opportunities for young people in Tanzania.

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Nana Yaw Antwi-Boasiako

Founder
Prosect Feed
Ghana

“One of our biggest headaches was creating a proper financial structure. This was because it went beyond our expertise. However, we are now at a good place, we gained technical expertise and knowledge through the Generation Africa Fellowship Program, which has made us investor ready.”

8 ProSect Feed: Giving Ghana’s Smallholder Livestock Farmers a Competitive Edge

Feed protein for farm animals such as pigs and poultry heavily depends on soil-based grains and ocean-derived fish meal. Overreliance on and the declining availability of these two ingredients in the feed mix have caused price hikes for animal feeds by up to 70%. This means that local smallholder farmers can not sustainably feed their animals and many are struggling with others being pushed out of business.

Our core business at ProSect Feed is to produce insect-based animal feeds for poultry, fish and pigs. Our protein feeds have up to 58% crude protein nutrients and are cheaper than what is available in the Ghanaian market. Our business is founded on the belief that we can subsidize animal feed costs for farmers with nutritious and more affordable feed. We work with smallholder farmers in Ghana to provide them with nutritious and cost-efficient alternative sources of animal feed thereby decreasing their production cost and yet not compromising on quality.



Our insect-based protein feed provides a cheaper, locally produced option which is high in crude protein. This allows smallholder farmers to make higher profits and gives them a competitive advantage. Ghana spends over \$200 million annually importing poultry products that are also produced locally. Due to Economies of scale, the high production cost of local produce and the low cost of imports make importing the foreign produce more preferable. Imagine what it could mean for the local farmers, the poultry industry and even the economy if even a quarter of that amount spent could be captured by the local producers instead?

Genesis of ProSect Feed

“ProSect Feed was founded in 2019 when my cofounders and I met during the Kosmos Innovation Center Agritech challenge competition. We agreed to jointly start a business; a logistics platform selling fresh meat online. We embarked on market research to learn more about this new field. Along the way, the ProSect Feed journey began,” says Nana Yaw, Co-Founder, ProSect Feed. From the research, we found that animal feed was costly and accounted for about 80% of the farmers production costs. We figured that a price reduction of feeds would lead to low buying price for meat, giving our business a competitive advantage. Therefore, we looked for cheaper feed alternatives and realized





that insects are the future of animal feed. They provide a sustainable source of protein nutrients for animals. Depending on the insect, the lifecycle can be very short, meaning you can produce a lot in a short period.

The past 2-3 years have been very tough economically due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ukraine-Russia war. For farmers, the

situation has been no different, if not even harder, the skyrocketing prices have pushed them to the edge and many are struggling to survive. Therefore, we engaged them in capacity-building on financial management, marketing, health and safety and animal feed nutrition. We trained them on how to commercialize farming, to view it as a business

rather than just a way of farming. During this training, we launched the waste-for-cash program through which farmers generate more income from us through sale of farm waste. This program has mostly benefitted women farmers who are breadwinners in their families.

The Generation Africa Fellowship Program

We joined the Generation Africa Fellowship Program months after the GoGetta challenge. Through this program, I interacted with industry expert who opened my eyes to the real challenges of ProSect Feed; funding. From the conversations with the mentor, we realized that we needed a financial policy that would help us structure the business properly and guarantee us investor confidence. A lot of work went into developing our company's financial policy which we have begun implementing. Our mentor, Mr John Njane was patient with us, because ProSect Feed is unique; he listened to our needs.

We have also began constructing the company's commercial production site and kick started production. Our current facility can produce close to 10-14 tonnes of organic fertilizer every month as well as 2-3 tonnes of poultry and fish protein feed. We have also employed 6 full-time staff and rely on technical backstops from some of our experts, so that makes 10 employees.



What Next for ProSect Feed?

Our vision is to become one of the largest animal feed manufacturers and organic fertilizer producers in West Africa in the next 5-10 years. The sharp increase in animal feed costs and the challenges regarding organic fertilizer availability in Africa give us a strong business case and exhibit how our products fit the growing market needs. We believe strongly in our products and their impact on industry, farmers, families, environment and the socio-economic situation in our country. We are looking to form strategic partnerships with organizations and individuals and to tap into more fundraising opportunities to upscale more to service our markets.

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- www.prosectfeed.com
 - [rana-yaw-antwi-boasiako-0a9125144](https://www.linkedin.com/company/rana-yaw-antwi-boasiako-0a9125144)
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Nomaliso Musasiwa

Managing Director and Founder,
Fresh in a Box
Zimbabwe

“The Mentorship sessions, facilitated by Generation Africa Fellowship Program (GAFF) helped me design a business model for my business and be clearer on the goals I had set. This enabled me to choose which part of the broader business of Fresh in a Box had become an aggregation, a logistics company, and an e-commerce platform.”

9 Fresh in a Box: Creating Market Access for Smallholder Farmers in Zimbabwe

I am an internet entrepreneur, and concurrently with Fresh in a Box, I run two other startups; Let's Farm Africa and Deets Card. All three of these are intertwined to help farmers produce great yields and be equally bankable as well as access finance in a world where food security is such a big conversation but nobody is willing to finance the producer of the food.

Fresh in a Box is an e-commerce platform that aggregates vegetables and fruits from smallholder farmers and delivers them to people's homes every day. At Fresh in a Box, we use our technology solutions to solve everyday problems. The smallholder farmers whom we work with have as little as 100 square meters to over 2 hectares of land.





When we started farming, we had some groups we were selling to but they were not treating us right. My husband took to Twitter and posted that we had tomatoes; “I’ve got these tomatoes; if you want tomatoes, I can bring them to you and you can give me whatever you want to give me in return.” From that tweet, we subsequently had 15 other smallholder farmers who had different things like lettuce, broccoli, and baby marrows as big as courgettes. We then put all those vegetables in a box, we called it Fresh in a Box and delivered it to people’s homes. The adoption was organic and driven by word of mouth.

We knew how to utilize social media, but we needed to see how to make this process less painful for us. Earlier, we had already been selling hoodies online, so we said, why not sell the

vegetables online? This is why I say we are tech entrepreneurs at the beginning of it all. We use technology to solve whatever problems that we are looking at: be it the produce case of Fresh in a Box or trying to raise financing for smallholder farmers with Let’s Farm Africa, or with Deets Card; a digital NFC-powered card which enables one to exchange their business contacts without having to produce thousands of small business cards. how to exchange your business contacts without having to produce tens and thousands of small cards that you are not even sure if people you hand them to are going to keep them safe into one small digital card that is NFC powered- this is called the Deets Card.

Agriculture plays a very critical role in Zimbabwe, contributing up to 17% to the country’s Gross

Domestic Product (GDP). Agriculture provides employment and income for 60-70 % of the population, supplies 60% of the raw materials required by the industrial sector and contributes 40% of total export earnings. One of the major challenges that farmers face continent-wide is the lack of access to markets.

I have a great relationship and understanding with my mentor. We have a common ground; an interest in the politics of our nations and their similarities. When looking at our business and how it is structured, the conversation tends to always remain as generic as possible because my mentor doesn't have a deep context of Southern Africa, let alone of my country. Our conversations remain as broad as possible, sending me back to try and investigate the line of thinking.

Key Takeaways from the Generation Africa Fellowship Programme

Should I say that there is a specific focus that the mentorship sessions have helped me gain? It would be the design of the business model and choosing which part of the broader business of Fresh in a Box had become an aggregation, a logistics company, and an e-commerce platform. Which one is the main business and what is the business model defined there? From that point, you can talk about the subsequent activities that happen in the business and that also bring in cash flow.

The mentorship has opened my eyes to determine the actual business of Fresh in a Box; aggregation of smallholder farming. Whether we bring in other players or action ourselves depends on factors like the financial impact on the business, and the efficiency of getting the fresh produce to people's homes because fresh is our brand. Fresh in this case speaks to quality, quantity and essentially the efficiency of how the product gets to the customer and more so consistently doing that over time. This is the biggest lesson I have picked up so far from the mentorship.

What's Next After GAFP?

I am likely to go into another accelerator programme to develop the technology side of the business. For the growth phase, we are currently making strides to expand our operations into South Africa, where there is a larger scope of smallholder farmers. Many of these farmers have less than 2 hectares of land and produce the same type of vegetables as Zimbabwean farmers but are unable to get to market because of their small volumes. With our already existing technology, we plan to start with Johannesburg and then gradually expand across South Africa.

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10 Sanit Wing: Pioneering Avocado Value Addition in Rwanda

Sanit Wing is a processing and manufacturing industrial company that produces a variety of oils, cosmetics and soaps from raw materials, mostly avocados. We use the green gold variety, the best quality avocado from Africa to make our products. We also sell our avocados directly to customers and we can ship to any part of the world. At Sanit Wing our core business is avocado value addition; we process avocado into pure avocado oil, avocado hair cream, avocado vaseline and avocado soap. We have also invested in avocado farming with a goal of 3,000,000 new avocados by 2025 as our future sustainability strategy.

"It has been seven years since I started my business and when I look back from when I started, the journey looks very long. Over that period, there have been different types of support but the financial uplift from the GoGettaz competition, Generation



**Alexandre
Nshimiimana**
CEO and Founder,
Sanit Wing
Rwanda

In 2020, we used to do our deliveries using bicycles and we could only produce 300 kilograms a day. But we are now processing up to 4 tonnes a day. We have grown more than 10 times and all thanks to the GoGettaz Award and the Generation Africa Fellowship Program.



Africa Fellowship Program(GAFP) and AGRA in general has been very significant for my business,” Alexandre Nshimiyimana, CEO and Founder, Sanit Wing reminisces on his entrepreneurial journey.

Before Covid19, the business cycle was to sell, save and then re-invest and it was very difficult when I tried to access loans and financial support from financial institutions. They only gave small amounts of between 10,000 to 15,000 which made it hard to scale up. But after the award by Co-Gettaz, things have changed, it is now me against investors. What I have learnt with all these investors reaching out is that I have to think carefully about who I want to work with. How is our interaction? What are the terms? Is there another investor with a better offer or better terms? I now can't complain about access to finances, I have moved to another level; investor preparedness.

Expansion at Sanit Wing

We have surpassed the projections which we had 2 years ago by over two times. We are currently developing two new products and we decided to halt the production of our other products to give room for new product launch by the end of 2022. We shall be making bamboo bottles and packaging materials. Earlier, before 2022, we used to do our deliveries using bicycles and we could only produce 300 kilograms a day. Today, we are processing up to 4 tonnes a day. We have grown more than 10 times and all thanks to the GoGettaz Award and the Generation Africa Fellowship Program.

Our website visits and followers on social media channels have increased to up to 500 times from what we had before. Sanit Wing has also employed 10 permanent employees and 32 casual workers.





About the Generation Africa Fellowship Program

Through the guidance of my GAFP mentor, Dr. Hannington Odame, we were able to map out the whole business and indicated what we wanted to achieve in the short term and in the long term. After mapping out the business needs we settled on sustainability; how do we maximize and sustain our impact and our footprint? Who recognises when we plant those trees and how do we make money from it?

What next for Sanit Wing?

In the next one - two years, Sanit Wing will focus on expanding the reach of our avocado value addition production and taking our environmentally friendly and sustainable solutions such as the bamboo packaging products. We are already working with some investors who will help us get the business to the next level.

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-  [sanitwing.net](https://www.sanitwing.net)
-  [sanitwingltd](https://twitter.com/sanitwingltd)
-  [1635584483386764](https://www.facebook.com/1635584483386764)
-  <https://www.sanitwing.net/>



Ore Alemede

Co-founder & CEO, Grow Agric
Kenya

“Thanks to the fellowship program for equipping us with skills to tell our impact story better especially when seeking grants and investors.”

11 GrowAgric: Empowering farmers to earn better

GrowAgric is a “Farmers First” AgTech by farmers for farmers that optimises the agricultural value chain for small and medium-scale farmers by providing them with working capital financing, insurance, training, access to digital record keeping tools and connection to buyers at the end of the farming cycle.

“My interest in agriculture was sparked by my parents who are farmers,” says Ore Alemede, the Co-founder and CEO of GrowAgric. Ore met her Co-founder Mr. David Njonjo at Antler, a global start-up incubator. “Our passion for farming and interests aligned. David is a farmer in Kenya whose vast experience in agriculture paved the way for us to dig deeper while seeking to understand the challenges facing farmers in the country,” she says.





The co-founders' initial engagements with farmers in several parts of Kenya were a key eye-opener to the challenges facing the agricultural sector. Some of these challenges are: limited access to working capital, limited access to markets, harsh climatic conditions, limited access to modern farm technology, attack by diseases, and little or no income. Upon learning these issues, GrowAgric began its operations. "Establishing the company in Kenya was an opportunity for us to establish our brand in Kenya and the East African region," she notes.

Ore's move to Kenya happened when she realized that back at home, in Nigeria, there were numerous agri-tech players in the agricultural sector unlike in Kenya and the East African region. "Establishing the company in Kenya was an opportunity for us to establish our brand in Kenya and the region," she notes.

Farmers First

GrowAgric is farmers-centred. The company's slogan is "farmers first" because "We are committed to helping farmers to farm better and earn better. This is what makes us unique and a perfect fit for our farmers. For example, with our business model if our farmers don't make a profit we don't either. Until they win, we don't win and that's the true meaning of partnership," Ore adds.

Since inception, GrowAgric has grown to empower over 1500 Kenyan farmers through providing access to finance, training, record-keeping tools, and buyers. The enterprise has committed about 250,000 USD to farm projects and over 4000 hours to training farmers who have realized an average increase in revenue of up to 750 USD. "Through our intervention we have a positive impact on 4 SDG goals; No poverty, Zero Hunger Gender equality, as well as Decent Work and Economic growth," says Ore.





The Generation Africa Program

In 2021, GrowAgric participated in the Heifer International's Pitch AgriHack, a competition which identifies innovative youth-led businesses with technological solutions to food security challenges, awarding the most impactful businesses. Ore won USD 10,000 in the Women-Led Category and was among the first cohort of agripreneurs who joined the Generation Africa Fellowship Program (GAFP) in 2022.

"When joining GAFP, one of my expectations was to build networks with fellow agripreneurs from the continent and learn from their experiences in agriculture," she notes. The program exposed her to an entire world of possibilities and ideas as she interacted with her fellows in the cohort. GAFP organized peer to peer learning webinars and this was inspirational and eye-opening to Ore. "Thanks to GAFP for equipping us with skills to tell our impact story better especially when seeking grants and investors," she says. GrowAgric emerged the East African Regional Champion at the 2020 U.S Chamber of Commerce and USADF Digital Innovation Competition where Ore bagged 35,000 USD.

What Next after GAFP?

When asked about GrowAgric's plans after GAFP, Ore said, "This year, we have set ambitious goals as a business. We are currently raising our equity round of 1M USD to expand as a team and our operations to other parts of the region." The company also wishes to impact more women and youth farmers in the region from the 60% whom it has engaged over the years. "We are passionate about the youth and we see ourselves as a 'message' to young farmers. We aim to train more youth and empower them to take up agriculture because farming is a viable career too," she adds. The company also looks forward to building more partnerships on a global scale that would empower more African small and medium scale farmers.

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