



CHAIN PROJECT
COOPERATION FOR HOLISTIC AGRICULTURE
INNOVATION NESTS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA
ERASMUS+ CBHE PROJECT CHAIN – 101082963



CHAIN NEWSLETTER

General objective of CHAIN Project

To modernize agricultural education in Togo, Nigeria and Kenya by fostering a more holistic and human-centered approach to agricultural education, training and innovation.

Specific objective

Competence-based master curriculum on FVC developed and approved at 6 partner HEIs by 2024

HA innovation nests established at 6 partner HEIs by 2025,

108 teaching staff improved competences in teaching methodology prone to entrepreneurial thinking and innovation, with emphasis on e-learning and digital tools by 2025 ;

Result

- Approval decision of the Councils of 6 partner HEIs, evidence of enrolled students to new master curriculum, project report;
- Self-evaluation reports of 6 partner HEIs, student evaluation of teachers at 6 partner HEIs, training agendas, reports, attendance lists, photos, external evaluation report;
- Decision of the Councils of 6 partner HEIs to establish HA innovation nests, reports from student hackatons, cooperation agreements with SMEs, evidence of beneficiaries of services of nests, annual reports of 6 partner HEIs, external evaluation report;





University of Lome

CHAIN NEWSLETTER UL

Welcome to the latest edition of our Newsletter for the Cooperation for Holistic Agriculture Innovation Nests (CHAIN) in Sub-Saharan Africa Project at the University of Lomé!

Our project is dedicated to fostering cooperation and innovation in sustainable agriculture by bringing together students, researcher's, innovators, and agripreneurs to drive impactful change in food value chain.

Key Highlights Include



Master Degree in Food Value Chain Management

We are developing an advanced program to equip future leaders with the skills to optimize food systems.



Hackathons - Engaging young minds to tackle real-world agricultural challenges through creativity and technology



Signing Cooperation Agreements with Innovators Strengthening ties with experts and industry leaders to bring cutting-edge solutions to agribusiness.



Innovation Nests for Agripreneurs - Establishing hubs where startups can thrive with mentorship, funding, and market access.

Internal Dissemination seminar of the CHAIN Project

The aim of the Master of Technology in Food Value Chain Management Programme is to prepare graduates to be effective leaders, problem solvers, and innovators who can drive positive change and contribute to the sustainability, resilience, and inclusivity of food systems globally.



Consultative Meeting with Stakeholders on the curricula of Master in Food Value Chain



Consultative Meeting with Stakeholders on the curricula of Master in Food Value Chain



Participants at the CHAIN Project Meeting at HSWT Triesdorf, Poland, 2024 Germany, 2024 Curriculum for Development



CHAIN Project Seminar at Wroclaw

Africa aims to foster a more holistic and human-centered approach to agricultural education, training, and innovation. The project focuses on teaching staff from Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), students in agriculture, administrative staff, and farmers/entrepreneurs

In 2024, the project developed and submit a Master degree curriculum in Food Value Chain (FVC) Management, with the University academic section for approving. We are now waiting for authorization to ride the processus.

Questionnaires were administered to agri-food entrepreneurs, university professors, students, and entrepreneurs to assess skills and difficulties n the agri-food sector. Incubation centers were established at the Entrepreneurship Centre, to assist scholars, researchers, and business owners in creating novel approaches to problem-solving. Internal dissemination activities were organized to showcase the project's benefits to stakeholders.

Upcoming Events

Upcoming plans for 2025 include active public appearance, video creation, establishment of Innovation Centres, signing long-term Cooperation Agreements with industry partners, administering crash courses to students, farmers, and businesses, hosting a hybrid National CHAIN Diffusion Conference, and conducting six student hackathons.

Special Features

Master in Food Value Chain Management has been submitted and probably advertised for the 2025/2026 Academic Session. Incubation Centres have also been created.

Join our workshops and be part of a thriving community driving holistic agriculture innovation through collaboration! Your ideas and expertise can help shape sustainable solutions. Let us grow together!

More about the CHAIN Project:
Official Website: <https://project-chain.eu/>
Facebook: CHAIN E+Project
LinkedIn: Chain Erasmus





Federal University of Technology, Minna

CHAIN NEWSLETTER FUTMINNA

Welcome to the latest edition of our Newsletter for the Cooperation for Holistic Agriculture Innovation Nests (CHAIN) in Sub-Saharan Africa Project at the Federal University of Technology, Minna! Our project is dedicated to fostering cooperation and innovation in sustainable agriculture by bringing together students, innovators, and agripreneurs to drive impactful change.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS



Master Degree in Food Value Chain Management

We are developing an advanced program to equip future leaders with the skills to optimize food systems.



Signing Cooperation Agreements with Innovators

Strengthening ties with experts and industry leaders to bring cutting-edge solutions to agribusiness.



Student Hackathons - Engaging young minds to tackle real-world agricultural challenges through creativity and technology.



Innovation Nests for Agripreneurs - Establishing hubs where startups can thrive with mentorship, funding, and market access.

The aim of the Master of Technology in Food Value Chain Management Programme is to prepare graduates to be effective leaders, problem solvers, and innovators who can drive positive change and contribute to the sustainability, resilience, and inclusivity of food systems globally.



A cross-section of participants during the ICAAT Conference



Cross-section of some participants at the International Conference on Agriculture & Agricultural Technology (ICAAT) co-hosted by SAAT, and CHAIN Project, FUTMinna. In the picture: the Vice Chancellor, DVC (FUTMinna); Commissioner of Agriculture, Niger State, Deans of PG School & SAAT, and CHAIN Project Team Lead, FUTMinna



Some CHAIN Project Equipment Procured at FUTMinna

CHAIN Project FUTMINNA

The Cooperation for Holistic Agriculture Innovation Nests (CHAIN) project in sub-Saharan Africa aims to foster a more holistic and human-centered approach to agricultural education, training, and innovation. The project focuses on teaching staff from Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), students in agriculture, administrative staff, and farmers/entrepreneurs.

In 2024, the project developed a Master degree curriculum in Food Value Chain (FVC) Management, with the FUTMinna University Senate approving the program. International travel was undertaken to develop and finalize the Master degree curriculum.

Questionnaires were administered to agri-food entrepreneurs, university professors, students, and entrepreneurs to assess skills and difficulties in the agri-food sector. Incubation centers were established at the Entrepreneurship Centre, FUTMinna, to assist scholars, researchers, and business owners in creating novel approaches to problem-solving. Internal dissemination activities were organized to showcase the project's benefits to stakeholders.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Upcoming plans for 2025 include active public appearance, video creation, establishment of Innovation Centres, signing long-term Cooperation Agreements with industry partners, administering crash courses to students, farmers, and businesses, hosting a hybrid National CHAIN Diffusion Conference, and conducting six student hackathons.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Team members obtained recognized achievements as follows:

- 1) **Prof. CHINMA Chiemela Enyinnaya**, being appointed as Director, Directorate for Research, Innovation and Development (DRID), FUTMinna, and awarded as Fellow, by the Nigerian Institute of Food Science and Technology (NIFST);
- 2) **Prof. OIRE Muhammad**, was awarded as Fellow of the Fisheries Society of Nigeria (FISON).
- 3) **JIBRIN Safiya (Mrs)** obtained a PhD in Agricultural Extension, and
- 4) **Dr. YISA Ezekiel** was promoted to the rank of Professor of Agricultural Economics.

Extension villages of the university have been encouraged to actively participate in CHAIN Workshops and initiatives to co-create solutions that address local challenges leading to enhanced food security.

SPECIAL FEATURES

Master in Food Value Chain Management has been created and advertised for the 2024/2025 Academic Session. The admissions will be done in April, 2025. Incubation Centres have also been created.

Join our workshops and be part of a thriving community driving holistic agriculture innovation through collaboration! Your ideas and expertise can help shape sustainable solutions. Let us grow together!

More about the CHAIN Project:
Official Website: <https://project-chain.eu/>
X Handle: @CHAIN_FUTMINNA
Facebook: CHAIN E+Project
LinkedIn: Chain Erasmus





South Eastern Kenya University

CHAIN NEWSLETTER SEKU



Group photo of participants during a hackathon training workshop in Poland.

We are pleased to welcome you to CHAIN project, a transformative initiative aimed at enhancing agricultural education across several esteemed universities. This project seeks to empower the next generation of agricultural leaders by providing them with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to drive sustainable practices and innovations in the agricultural sector. As institutions of higher learning, we recognize the critical role universities play in shaping the future of agriculture, not only in our region but across the globe. Through collaborative partnerships and practical training, we aim to build a robust, resilient agricultural sector that can address the challenges of food security, climate change, and rural development. We look forward to working together with faculty, students, and stakeholders in building the capacity needed to foster long-term growth and sustainability within the agricultural industry. Together, we can cultivate a brighter and more prosperous future for agriculture, one that benefits communities, economies, and the environment alike.

CHAIN project coordinator, Dr. Bernd Muller, SEKU project team members and students pose for a photo after a CHAIN dissemination event held at SEKU on 28th November 2024.



CHAIN-PROJECT

BACKGROUND, OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES,
PROJECT PARTNERS

The Cooperation for Holistic Agriculture Innovation Nests in Sub-Saharan Africa [CHAIN] is a joint project comprising of three Universities in Europe, namely: **University of Applied Sciences Weihenstephan-Triesdorf [HSWT]**, "**Ion Ionescu De La Brad**" **Iasi University of Life Sciences (IULS)** and **Wroclaw University of Environmental and Life Sciences (UPWR)**; Six Universities in Africa, namely: **Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOOUST)** in Bondo, Kenya; **South Eastern Kenya University (SEKU)**, Kitui, Kenya; **University of Lome (UL)**, Togo; **University of Kara (UK)**, Togo; **Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike (AE-FUNAI)**, Ikwo, Nigeria and **Federal University of Technology (FUTMINNA)**, Minna, Nigeria; and an NGO (Farming Systems Kenya [FSK]).

The general objective of the CHAIN project is to:

To modernize agricultural education in Togo, Nigeria and Kenya by fostering a more holistic and human-centered approach to agricultural education, training and innovation.

The specific objectives are:

- 1) To develop competence-based master program on FVC at 6 partner HEIs;
- 2) To build teacher capacity at 6 partner HEIs from rural and remote areas to promote learning methods and use teaching methodology prone to entrepreneurial thinking and innovation, with emphasis on e-learning and digital tools;
- 3) In cooperation with private sector to establish Collaborative Holistic Agriculture Innovation Nests (CHAINS) at 6 partner HEIs and offer support to innovation initiatives of students, farmers, and entrepreneurs, enhancing their employability, sense of initiative and entrepreneurship.





Major events of Year 2024

1

MSc. Programme in Food Value Chain Management needs assessment survey: The survey was designed with a goal to determine whether the academic programme sufficiently addresses the needs of the market.

2

Focus Group Discussion [FGD] for Holistic Agri-food Entrepreneurship: The sessions were conducted at SEKU, Kitui Town campus on May 29, 2024 and involved different stakeholders.

3

Stakeholders' engagement workshop for the proposed MSc. Food Value Chain Management [MSc. FVCM] curriculum: The workshop was held virtually on 22nd August 2024 and brought together stakeholders from different organizations including Universities; Research Institutes; International organizations

4

Training Workshop of Partner Staff on Organization of Hackathons: The Training Workshop of Partner Staff on Organization of Hackathon took place in Wroclaw, Poland from 23rd – 28th September 2024 and was organized as one of the activities and deliverables of WP 3.

Report on key Project's work

1

CHAIN project seminar held at Weihenstephan-Triesdorf University of Applied Sciences, Triesdorf, Germany. The workshop was on the topic "Curricula Development of a Master program in Food Value Chain Management" and was held from 31.03.2024 to 06.04.2024 at Weihenstephan-Triesdorf University of Applied Sciences, Triesdorf, Germany.

2

MSc. Food Value Chain Management [MSc. FVCM] curriculum development: This is a major project outcome with the development process having gone through major stages including internal approvals and external review.

3

Procurement of project equipment: the project was initiated and as at now LPOs have been issued for the delivery of the equipment after going through the rigorous procurement procedure as required by the government.

4

Training on writing project proposals for international donors: This was a three-day online training targeting all partner institutions participating in the CHAIN project and was delivered by the Weihenstephan Triesdorf University of Applied Sciences.



SEKU CHAIN team during a Master of Science in Food Value Chain management Curriculum drafting meeting at SEKU Wote town campus



CHAIN project coordinator, Dr. Bernd Muller, SEKU project team members and students pose for a photo after a CHAIN dissemination event held at SEKU on 28th November 2024.



CHAIN project coordinator, Dr. Bernd Muller and SEKU CHAIN team members look at a herd of goats and sheep during a visit of the SEKU farm on 27th Nov. 2024.

Team Highlights

We would like to extend our heartfelt appreciation to all team members for their unwavering dedication and active participation in the project activities. Your hard work, collaboration, and commitment have been instrumental in driving the success of this initiative, and we are truly grateful for your contributions. Thank you for your continued support and enthusiasm as we work towards achieving our shared goals.

Community Engagement

Community involvement is at the heart of our project, driving collaboration and ensuring that local perspectives and needs shape sustainable agricultural solutions. In the implementation of key project activities, we acknowledge the involvement of key stakeholders. We believe that together, we can create lasting change and empower communities for a brighter future.

Special Features

MSc. Curriculum in Food Value Chain Management at an advanced stage of development.

Call to Action

We invite you to take an active role in the CHAIN Project by engaging with our upcoming conferences and initiatives. These conferences offer an invaluable opportunity to deepen your knowledge, share insights, and collaborate with experts and peers in the field of agriculture. Whether you're a student, educator, or industry professional, your participation is crucial to fostering innovation and growth in the agricultural sector.

Closing

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to each of you for taking the time to engage with this issue of our project magazine. Your interest and support in the Agricultural Capacity Building Project in Higher Education are truly appreciated. As we continue our journey towards enhancing agricultural education, empowering students, and fostering innovation, your involvement plays a crucial role in driving the success of our initiatives.

Upcoming Plans (2025)

The CHAIN Project is set to make significant strides toward achieving its objectives, with key initiatives underway that will propel agricultural education and innovation forward. As part of our commitment to enhancing the agricultural higher education sector, we are finalizing the procurement of essential project equipment, which will equip our universities with cutting-edge resources necessary for advanced research and practical training. This investment in equipment will support the project's overarching goal of improving agricultural productivity and sustainability.

In tandem with this, the project is set to launch a Master's of Science (MSc) program in Food Value Chain Management. This innovative curriculum will offer students an in-depth understanding of the entire food value chain, from production to consumption, emphasizing sustainable practices, market linkages, and value addition. By offering this program, we aim to equip future leaders with the expertise to transform agricultural industries globally.

Furthermore, the project will host a major conference that will bring together academics, practitioners, and stakeholders to discuss the future of agriculture, share project experiences, and explore new collaborative opportunities. This conference will serve as a platform for knowledge exchange, fostering partnerships that drive innovation in the sector.

As part of our dedication to nurturing young talent and innovation, we will also be conducting hackathon training sessions. These trainings will challenge students and professionals to develop creative, tech-driven solutions to pressing challenges in agriculture, particularly in areas like food security and climate change.

Finally, the project will upgrade and enhance an incubation hub that will provide students and entrepreneurs with a space to develop and launch agri-tech startups. This hub will offer mentorship, access to resources, and networking opportunities, playing a critical role in driving entrepreneurship and innovation in the agricultural sector.

These initiatives represent our commitment to building a robust, dynamic, and sustainable agricultural ecosystem through higher education and innovation. Together, they will contribute to a future where agriculture not only feeds the world but also supports the well-being of all communities.

Warm regards,

The Project Coordinator and Team

Dr. Benjamin K. Muli

Email: bmuli@seku.ac.ke



Jaramogi Oginga Odinga

University of Science and Technology , 2024

CHAIN NEWSLETTER JOOUST

The Erasmus+ CHAIN Project (Cooperation for Holistic Agriculture Innovation Nests in Sub-Saharan Africa) has continued to make significant strides in modernizing agricultural education. Through curriculum development, business incubation, stakeholder engagements, and research collaborations, JOOUST has established itself as a leader in holistic agriculture and food value chain management.

Key Achievements in 2024

1

Competency-Based Master of Science Degree in Agricultural Commodities Value Chain Management (MSc ACVM):

JOOUST has successfully developed a MSc Degree in Agricultural Commodity Value Chain Management aimed at equipping students with practical, digital, and entrepreneurial skills. The program launches in 2025.

2

Needs Assessment and Stakeholder Consultations:

Between December 2023 and March 2024, extensive needs assessment fieldwork was conducted across eight counties (Siaya, Kisumu, Kericho, Homa Bay, Migori, Bungoma, Busia, Kisii) to understand the challenges faced by farmers and agricultural stakeholders. The findings informed curriculum innovation, emphasizing practical training methodologies to bridge the gap between theory and practice, integration of digital agriculture and precision farming into academic programs, entrepreneurship and business development skills for graduates, enhanced industry-academia collaboration to align curricula with market needs. A Consultative Meeting with Stakeholders (May 2024) further explored entrepreneurial and innovative thinking in agriculture, identifying key barriers and opportunities.

Capacity Building and International Collaboration

3

Faculty Training and Student Scholarships

Through Erasmus collaborations, JOOUST faculty members received specialized training on; entrepreneurship & Agribusiness Management, digital Learning Tools & Precision Agriculture, Sustainable Agricultural Practices.

4

Hackathon & Research Workshops in Europe and Kenya:

- Kick-Off Seminar at Triesdorf, Germany (March-April 2024) – Focused on curriculum development
- Hackathon Project Workshop in Wroclaw, Poland (September 2024) – Developed digital solutions for Africa's agricultural challenges
- Project Dissemination Workshop at JOOUST (November 2024) – Over 100 stakeholders engaged

Innovation and Business Incubation

5

Strengthening Business Incubation at JOOUST:

To foster entrepreneurial thinking, JOOUST is establishing a Business Incubation Hub designed to: Support student-led agribusiness startups, facilitate commercialization of research innovations, strengthen industry partnerships for real-world experience.

6

Course Content Development for MSc Program:

A two-day workshop (April 2024) refined the MSc curriculum, ensuring; incorporation of Fieldwork Practicum from the first semester, alignment with Commission for University Education (CUE) requirements, integration of new technologies such as data management, digital tools, and climate-smart agriculture.

Community Engagement

Key findings from fieldwork in Migori, Busia, Kisii, Bungoma, Kisumu, Homa Bay, Kericho, and Siaya counties identified; lack of practical skills among graduates, challenges in accessing capital and agricultural technologies, gaps in entrepreneurial and business knowledge for farmers and need for better market linkages and supply chain efficiency.

Special Features

- Modern Master Programme developed.
- International Partnership fostered.
- Capacity Building for Faculty and Students
- Establishment of Innovation Incubation Centers
- Stakeholder Engagement

Call to Action

- ✓ Join our trainings and workshops.
 - ✓ Participate in research and innovation activities.
 - ✓ Connect with an international network of partners and experts.
 - ✓ Contribute ideas at our Innovation Incubation Centers.
- Don't miss your chance to be part of this transformative journey!



Upcoming Plans (2025)

- Program Advertisement – Promote MSc program to attract students, farmers, and industry partners (Jan – May 2025).
- Launch of MSc Program – Begin admissions and implement curriculum (May 2025).
- Romania Lasi Workshop – Address food security, climate change, hunger alleviation, and farm data management (May 2025).
- Industry Partnerships Expansion – Strengthen industry collaborations for internships, mentorship, and research (Continuous).
- Regional Training Centers – Establish accessible training and innovation hubs (Mid-2025).
- Continued Dissemination – Organize workshops and publicize progress (Throughout 2025).
- Incubation Centre – Support innovation and entrepreneurship hub (Continuous).
- Cooperation Agreement on Incubation Centers – Formalize partner agreements (Continuous).
- CHAIN Project Video – Produce a 10-minute impact video (Continuous).
- Short Courses on Entrepreneurship – Offer entrepreneurship training for students and farmers (Continuous).
- Innovators (10 per university) – Identify and support 10 innovators per university (Continuous).
- Beneficiary Stories – Share success stories of beneficiaries (Continuous).
- Student-Farmer/Industry Collaboration – Facilitate student-farmer/industry engagement (Continuous).
- International Conference – Host one conference per partner on CHAIN project impact (Throughout 2025).

Group photo during course content development



Closing

Thank you for your support and commitment to making the Erasmus CHAIN Project a success! Contact information and social media links.

Follow our activities on <https://drie.jooust.ac.ke/nproject/>

Prof. Christopher Obel-Gor (PhD-AgEcon), Coordinator JOOUST ERASMUS CHAIN PROJECT





ALEX EKWUEME FEDERAL UNIVERSITY, NDUFU-ALIKE

CHAIN NEWSLETTER AEFUNAI



Group Photo of Participants During a CHAIN Project Hackathon Training Workshop in Wroclaw, Poland – September 2024.

The CHAIN (Cooperation for Holistic Agriculture Innovation Nests in Sub-Saharan Africa) Project is a collaborative initiative supported by the Erasmus+ programme. It brings together a consortium of academic and non-academic partners from Europe and Africa with the shared aim of transforming agricultural education and innovation. The consortium includes three European institutions—University of Applied Sciences Weihenstephan-Triesdorf (HSWT) in Germany, Iasi University of Life Sciences (IULS) in Romania, and Wroclaw University of Environmental and Life Sciences (UPWR) in Poland—alongside six African universities: Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOUST) and South Eastern Kenya University (SEKU) in Kenya; University of Lome (UL) and University of Kara (UK) in Togo; and Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike (AE-FUNAI) and Federal University of Technology, Minna (FUTMINNA) in Nigeria. The project also includes a key non-governmental partner, Farming Systems Kenya (FSK).



Major Achievements & Events

1. Development of the MSc Curriculum in Agribusiness with Specialization in Food Value Chain Management

- The MSc curriculum developed under CHAIN were approved by the University Senate after peer reviews and consultations with farmers, entrepreneurs, students, policymakers, and academics.
- The curriculum incorporates six common courses agreed upon by CHAIN partners, including Food Value Chain Management, Agripreneurship, Food Processing Technology, Digital Technology, and Sustainability.
- The curriculum is tailored to address core challenges in Nigeria's agri-food system including climate change, value addition, postharvest losses, and weak market linkages.
- The National Universities Commission also visited AE-FUNAI for resource assessment of MSc and PhD programmes in Agribusiness, where Food Value Chain Management is an area of specialization.

2. International Seminars in Germany and Poland

- AE-FUNAI delegates participated in the CHAIN seminar on MSc curriculum development held at Weihenstephan-Triesdorf University, Germany. There, the six compulsory CHAIN courses were finalized.
- In Poland, AE-FUNAI staff took part in hackathon training to foster student innovation. The seminar emphasized experiential learning through case studies, group projects, and site visits focused on local food value chain solutions.

The overarching goal of CHAIN is to renew and modernize higher education in agriculture across Nigeria, Kenya, and Togo, promoting a holistic, innovation-driven, and people-focused approach to agricultural learning and research. More specifically, CHAIN seeks to:

1. Develop and implement competence-based master's degree programs in Food Value Chain (FVC) Management at six African universities.
2. Strengthen teaching capacities, particularly in rural and underserved areas, by encouraging modern instructional techniques and the use of digital learning platforms, while promoting entrepreneurship and innovation.
3. Create and support Collaborative Holistic Agriculture Innovation Nests—referred to as "CHAINS"—in each participating African institution, to empower students, farmers, and agri-entrepreneurs with resources and mentorship for innovative start-ups and enhanced employability.

Together, these efforts aim to bridge the gap between academic theory and practical solutions, ensuring that agricultural education remains responsive to current food system challenges and fosters the next generation of leaders and innovators in the agri-food sector.



AEFUNAI CHAIN team members (Prof. Robert Onyeneke, Dr. Anthony Oka-Iso, Dr. Daniel Nwaogu and Dr. Chukwuemeka Emenekwe) with key stakeholders during a Consultative Group Meeting on the Curriculum of Masters of Science in Food Value Chain Management – May 2024.

3. In-Depth Research: Stakeholder Interviews and Surveys

- 29 in-depth interviews with students, lecturers, and entrepreneurs were conducted to understand sector-specific gaps. Surveys were also administered: 19 entrepreneurs, 34 lecturers, and 65 students responded.
- Insights from these interviews were directly fed into curriculum development and innovation nest planning, ensuring relevance to real-world challenges.

4. Establishment and Strengthening of Incubation Hubs

- Key incubation centers at AE-FUNAI including the Entrepreneurship and Employability Centre, the Agribusiness Value Addition Lab, the Centre for Adaptive Research and Fabrication (FABLAB), and the University Farms will support practical learning, innovation, and research, where necessary.

5. Stakeholder Consultative Meeting

- A wide-ranging consultative meeting was held with representatives from ministries of agriculture, commerce, rural development, finance, and private sector stakeholders.
- The curriculum received commendation and feedback on integrating food safety, finance, experiential learning, and gender inclusivity. Adjustments were made accordingly.

6. Community Engagement

- A landmark outreach to Ndufu-Alike community took place in April 2025. The CHAIN team met with farmers and community members to raise awareness about the program and explore avenues for collaboration.





Image: Interviews with Lecturers.



Image: A collage showing students during the interviews.



Key Project Work

- Curriculum Development: Completed and approved MSc curriculum in Agribusiness with Specialization in Food Value Chain Management.
- Institutional Development: CHAIN-led capacity building and procurement enabled resource upgrades including ICT, processing, and teaching equipment.
- Knowledge Generation: Two rapid reconnaissance reports on the fish and vegetable value chains were conducted and synthesized to guide curriculum content.
- Stakeholder Engagement: Dialogue with policymakers and industries strengthened buy-in for new master programme, innovation nests and employability pathways.



CHAIN Project team members and the Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Ebonyi State



Team Highlights

- **Prof. Robert Onyeneke** – AE-FUNAI CHAIN Project Coordinator. Led curriculum design, outreach, and stakeholder engagements.
- **Dr. Anthony Oko-Isu, Dr. Jane Munonye, Dr. Emeka Osuji, Dr. Chukwuemeka Emekwe,**
- **Dr. Chinedu Nwaogu, Prof. Johnny Ogunji, Mrs. Chinenye Onyeneke, Dr Geoffrey Nkwocha, and Mr Francis Anosike** – Played critical roles in research, curriculum development, and fieldwork.



CHAIN Project team members and the Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Finance, Budget and Economic Planning, Ebonyi State; and Chairman Ebonyi State Committee on Food and Nutrition



Community Engagement - 2025

The outreach to the Ndufu-Alike community was a success, strengthening town-and-gown relations. The community embraced the CHAIN project with enthusiasm and expressed interest in engaging further through training, internships, and enterprise incubation.



Special Features

- MSc Food Value Chain Management Curriculum: Successfully developed, reviewed, and approved. The curriculum is practical, interdisciplinary, and responsive to local agri-food challenges.
- Incubation Facilities: Strengthening existing innovation centers and procured training equipment.
- Research-Driven Curriculum: Interview and survey findings directly informed course content and structure.



Closing

Contact & Social Media

Follow us:

Instagram: @chainprojectaefunai

X (formerly Twitter): @EAefunai91704

Thank you for being part of the CHAIN Project journey!



Upcoming Plans (2025)

- Implementation of the MSc Program: Admission and commencement of the MSc in Food Value Chain Management.
- Innovation Nest Launch: Activation of AE-FUNAI's agribusiness innovation nest to host start-ups, student enterprises, and collaborative projects.
- Student Hackathons: Launch of localized student hackathons to encourage agrifood innovation.
- International Exchange: Kick-off of student and staff mobility schemes across partner institutions.
- National conference on agri-food value chain management
- Dissemination Activities: Wider dissemination of project outcomes through social media, state ministries, and stakeholder workshops.



Call to Action

We invite students, farmers, and agripreneurs to take advantage of the MSc program and upcoming innovation nest. Policymakers and industry partners are encouraged to collaborate with us in capacity building, research, and enterprise development.

Stay connected with us on social media and look out for our upcoming workshops and calls for participation in hackathons





University of Kara

CHAIN NEWSLETTER UK



Project Meeting at HSWT Triesdorf, Germany, April 2024

CHAIN (Cooperation for Holistic Agriculture Innovation Nests in Sub-Saharan Africa) is an EU-funded project in the field of capacity building in higher education (CBHE). The project is built around a consortium of six universities in three Sub-Saharan countries i.e. Togo, Nigeria and Kenya, with the ultimate goal to contribute to innovation in agricultural education and foster collaboration potential among Sub-Saharan African partner universities).

Project launch at UK and Key progress

CHAIN project was initiated at UK in July 2023, following kick-off meeting held virtually on 19/07/2023 by HSWT. Since then UK team actively engaged in all activities of the project implementation and progress. Following is the highlight of key activities realized at UK.

UK project team fully participated during the preparatory phase (WP1) organized by HSWT, i.e. several online trainings to ensure a better understanding of contractual obligations, E+ CBHE programme rules, financial management and administrative requirements.

Meanwhile, activities were initiated at the level of UK to ensure effective implementation of the project at the university. Meetings were held with the Rector of the university on July 4, 2023 to discuss project implantation at the university, and with the financial administration on July 28, 2023 to discuss all aspects related to the project financial management. The Consortium agreement was signed by UK rector, and financial procedures were set ready to allow implementation of project activities at UK. Following these steps, a meeting was held to present the scope of the project and to setup CHAIN project team at UK.

Activities in 2024 were focused on the development of the Master curricula in FVC at UK. These include identification of the Master to be established, development of draft curricula, travel to Triesdorf to discuss relevant content of the Master programs and identify core modules of the curricula to be shared by the consortium in respective curricula, need assessment survey. There was a full engagement of Stakeholders, as demonstrated by their active

Participation in the consultative stakeholder meeting organized on 13th September 2024. A new master's curriculum in FVC has been developed, and has already passed through several necessary steps, for its creation, and presently in the final step at the level of University Scientific Council.

Furthermore, UK team (3 males, 1 female) were trained on student hackatons, reflective thinking and self learning methods through various online trainings and in presence training organized at UPWR in Wroclaw (Poland) on 23 - 27 September 2024.

The projects intends to achieve the following specific objectives:

- 1. To develop a competent-based Master program on Food Value Chain at each partner University;**
- 2. To build teacher capacity at 6 partner universities to promote learning methods use of teaching methodology prone to entrepreneurial thinking and innovation, with focus on e-learning and digital tools**
- 3. To establish collaborative holistic Agriculture innovations nests in cooperation with pre=ivate sector at each paterner univesity.**

The backbone of CHAIN project revolving around food value chain is the development of a Master program in Food Value Chain (FVC) at each partner universities.

The CHAIN consortium includes - 6 beneficiary universities from three SSA countries: the Université de Kara (UK) and the Université of Lomé from Togo, Federal University of Technology, (MINNA) and Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu Alike (AE-FUNAI) from Nigeria, the Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOOUST) and the South Eastern Kenya University, from Kenya. The consortium is led by Weihenstephan-Triesdorf University of Applied Science (HSWT) in Germany, with support from the Wroclaw University of Environmental and Life Sciences (Poland) and the IASI University of Life Sciences (Romania).

CHAIN work plan

CHAIN is structured around 6 work packages (WP) and will be running for 36 months. The first WP (WP1) is dedicated to preparatory activities, the WP2, WP3 and WP4 include activities that will ensure the achievement of the set of key objectives, and the last 2 WPs (WP5, WP6) are dedicated to quality assurance, activities dedicated to dissemination, communication, and project management.

The key expected outcomes by the end of the project are: (i) Competence-based, Master Curriculum on FVC developed and approved at 6 partner HEIs by 2024; (ii) 108 teaching staff have acquired competences in teaching methodology prone to entrepreneurial thinking and innovation, with emphasis on elearning and digital tools by 2025; (iii) Holistic agriculture

Keeping the move – further tasks

The UK CHAIN project team is dedicating much effort to ensure a smooth ongoing of project activities. In the same line of effort, The upcoming events are related mostly to WP3 and WP4 creation of collaborative holistic agriculture innovation nests (WP4) and training sessions (WP3). such as:

- **hosting of student hackatons;**
- **crash courses for students, farmers, and SMEs;**
- **organization of a hybrid national CHAIN diffusion conference;**
- **expansion of innovation centres and increased public visibility.**

In the same line of these trainings, a travel is already planned for the training at IASI (Romania) from 11-18 May 2025 in the framework of WP3.

The accreditation process (at the level of university) for the new Master to be developed at UK is ongoing and the new cohort of the Master is expected by the beginning of the academic year 2026.



Sample photos of the survey questionnaire and UK Staff

For more information about the project, see the link <https://wbmoodle.hswt.de/enrol/index.php?id=3455>

