

# Indigenous Efforts to Address Food Security

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## ABSTRACT

Imagine the food demands within one of the world's fastest growing economies. Couple this demand with limited access to education, technology and expertise within a framework of high bureaucracy, poverty and unemployment. Population and GDP throughout Africa are currently rising at substantial rates. As both increase, the demand for food as well as the demand for higher qualities and more variety, rises. At the same time, much of the fertile land in Africa is unutilized or underutilized because of subsistence farming with little to no agricultural inputs. Additionally, what production is available for resale is inefficiently processed, moved and marketed.

This increasing demand and systemic inefficiencies have not gone unnoticed by African governments. These governments wish to accelerate development and increased incomes for the farming population that represent a huge majority of almost all African nations. Most countries and trans-African institutions, often supported by aid from the international community, have turned to creating the legal and financial institutions necessary to support increased agricultural production amongst farmers. Greater productivity, in turn, requires additional investments in agricultural assets, including: equipment, inputs, institutions, infrastructure and specifically technological know-how. These assets are now widely unavailable or prohibitively expensive throughout the continent.

## SOLUTIONS

One solution currently underway in Ethiopia is NutraAfrica, an indigenous operation that engages practical experts throughout the world to create Ethiopian-owned businesses directly tied to enhancing food production, added value processing and sustainable employment. By avoiding the complexities of international partnerships, while using available international development resources, NutraAfrica is building an exciting new model for external investment in the East African region

## BACKGROUND



The business was designed to address the Malabo Commitments. Beginning with injera manufacturing, NutraAfrica built a 100+ employee factory employing 85% women using grain from local farmer cooperatives. By incorporating both electric and traditional fuel-fired metal cookers, production now runs at 5,000 - 10,000 injera per day depending on available electricity.

Opportunities in the USA and Europe abound in the organic foods market. Increased profitability could result if certified organic teff is used for exported injera. NutraAfrica has established a partnership to obtain certified organic status.

The Ethiopian Government has supported NutraAfrica's initiatives expand to supply 1,000,000 students with nutritionally balanced school lunches with locally grown, processed and packaged foods. This requires an expansion of the menu to truly implement an integrated food delivery system using locally available production and the creation of regional food processing parks in support of the goal of eliminating hunger by 2025.

## RESILIENCY EFFORTS

In order to protect the operations these resiliency efforts were tried:

- 1) Experts in industrial engineering where an automated production device was designed, capable of increasing production by 10x -100x.
- 2) Architectural engineers designed affordable housing for the workforce.
- 3) Finance experts developed funding programs to enable home ownership for any the NutraAfrica workers.
- 4) Enabled biofuel production using indigenous oil crops like castor jatropha, vernonia and others grown on NutraAfrica lands.
- 5) Assisted research in developments for soil enhancement through biochar production and use promising long-term improvement for grain yields.
- 6) Expanded product offerings to include coffee and mushrooms made possible by locating experts in these fields open to expanding their businesses in Ethiopia.
- 7) Engaged alternative energy companies to create fuel briquettes from coffee husk waste, reduce production costs and reduce reliance on electricity.
- 8) Designed a program to establish agro-food parks to centralize food processing accepted by several governments.
- 9) Identified export options for processed food and in teff flour to Europe and USA.
- 10) Secured comprehensive marketing image and brand establishment.

## Yet all of these resiliency building efforts have stalled or failed

### WHY?

Inadequate supply of appropriate knowledge, information, and skills to users  
Unsuitable, unreliable and unaffordable mechanization and energy supplies  
Regulatory disincentives for teff farming and production  
Lack of experts vested in local implementation  
Lack of access to finance by local farmers  
More interest in data than in results  
Too much study, not enough action  
Words not deeds.

### CONCLUSION

Experts throughout the world have shown that investing in the rural farmer has the greatest impact. Investing includes knowledge, expertise, equipment, facilities and funds. These exist in plenty in the West and the willingness to learn has been demonstrated by rural farmers throughout the developing world.

1% of the cost of this conference would pay for NutraAfrica's workforce for one month. Imagine how much good 5% of the cost of ALL food security conferences would have.

### NUTRAFRICA'S PLAN

Build an integrated food delivery operation with indigenous peoples, capable of supporting Ethiopia's efforts to feed 1,000,000 students each day.

Business operations are required in the areas of: NutraAfrica provides:

- Organic teff farming
- Dairy & yoghurt
- Flour milling
- Poultry
- Fruits & nuts
- Vegetables and pulses
- Baking
- Honey
- Seed oils
- Spice processing
- Animal feed
- Food packaging
- Logistics
- Land
- Facilities
- Workforce
- Matching capital funding
- Management
- Government navigation
- Local connections
- Regional transportation
- Technology transfer
- Local language education

Proposals are being accepted from businesses willing to partner with us to expand operations in Ethiopia with experts eager to teach a motivated and curious population.

### HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Connect NutraAfrica with food companies ready to expand and willing to consider Africa as a growing, profitable market for their operations.

### REFERENCES

2003 Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in Africa  
2004 Sirte Declaration on the Challenges Of Implementing Integrated and Sustainable Development in Agriculture and Water in Africa  
2009 Sirte Declaration on Investing in Agriculture for Economic Growth and Food Security  
2007 Decision on Abuja Special Summit of the AU on Fertilisers  
2007 Decision on the Abuja Summit on Food Security in Africa  
2014 Malabo Commitments - Transforming Africa's Agriculture for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods through Harnessing Opportunities for Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development

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