The food economy presents a large and unexploited jobs potential that will continue to grow with population growth, urbanisation and income growth.

In urban areas, one out of three jobs for women (1 out of 7 for men) are in off-farm food activities. Food processing and food away from home services are growing and lucrative activities. “In the Attécoubé district of Abidjan (Côte d’Ivoire), female attiéké processors earn on average 30 to 50% more than most other professions (hairdressers, mechanics, upholsterers, etc.)” (MADR/Côte d’Ivoire, 2015). Food away from home and other food services are projected to grow faster than other food segments (Staatz and Hollinger, 2016, Tschirley et. al. 2016). The sector generates high value added (also on imported products) and creates strong linkages with other food system activities.

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Policies and investments that promote off-farm food economy segments and unlock productive, large scale women’s economic activities.

Where food is produced, by whom and how it reaches the consumer is a central element of food economy development.

Developing these new employment opportunities – on- and off-farm and in rural and urban areas – depend on an understanding of food systems, capturing the links between agricultural productivity, off-farm employment and rural and urban areas.

More information:
www.oecd.org/swac/topics/food-system-transformations

Contact: philipp.heinrigs@oecd.org
SWAC/OECD, 2, rue André Pascal 75775 Paris Cedex 16, France

AGRICULTURE, FOOD & JOBS IN WEST AFRICA

MARKETS

LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INFRASTRUCTURE
ADVISORY AND FINANCIAL SERVICES REGIONAL TRADE
PEOPLE, GOODS AND INFORMATION SMALL AND MEDIUM BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT EXTENSION SERVICES MOBILITY WOMEN DATA MOBILITY ROADS AND ELECTRICITY REGIONAL TRADE MARKETING AND LOGISTICS INFRASTRUCTURE

REGIONAL TRADE

RURAL-URBAN CONNECTIVITY PEOPLE, GOODS AND INFORMATION

EDUCATION & TRAINING

Agricultural Potential

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FOOD ECONOMY: WEST AFRICA'S LARGEST EMPLOYER

66% of total employment in West Africa is in the food economy.
The food economy, including all activities from the farm level, to processing, packaging, transportation, distribution and retailing, provides jobs for 482 million people.

THE IMPORTANCE OF OFF-FARM FOOD ECONOMY JOBS

22% of total food economy employment is in off-farm food activities.
Beyond the direct effect on employment, these activities are also important for driving agricultural development and broader structural transformations.

In Côte d'Ivoire 70% of household income and 27% of GDP is generated by the food economy.

31% of all non-agricultural jobs in West Africa are in the off-farm segments of the food economy.

70% of all off-farm food system jobs are in food marketing activities - transport, storage, wholesale, retail. It is the largest off-farm segment accounting for 27% of all services sector employment.

RURAL EMPLOYMENT DIVERSIFICATION

85% of rural food economy jobs are in agriculture.
Many of the new jobs are linked to agriculture. Specialization of agricultural production systems towards higher-value food products (fruit, vegetables, dairy, meat) and processing trends, leads to increased demand for rural labour in the off-farm segments of the food economy. Increasing agricultural productivity will be central in developing the job potential in off-farm employment opportunities, as well as in agriculture itself.

15% of rural food economy jobs are in off-farm segments.
These are the only points to markets, linking food production to food consumption and are crucial for agricultural growth, income generation and rural transformation.

Share of food economy employment in total employment

35% of jobs in urban areas are in the food economy.
60% of food system jobs in urban areas are in marketing and food away from home.

Many of these jobs are vendors in small shops, street markets, hawkers or food stalls and street food. These mostly informal activities provide the bulk of urban food supply. In particular, poor urban households are dependent on these distribution networks. In Addis Ababa, Cambodian and local people spend more than 30% of their food budgets on food away from home.

81% of jobs in rural areas are in the food economy.
65% are in food processing, food marketing and food away from home.

Share of rural food employment by food system activity

82 million people for urban food supply. In particular, poor

Strong regional differences in rural employment transformation

In Nigeria, agricultural employment accounts for less than 50% of rural food economy employment in 15 Local Government Areas (LGAs).
Prospectivity to import and export markets is clearly market. Areas connected to urban markets and with specialised production offer more productive off-farm opportunities in the downstream segments of agricultural value chains.
### The Importance of Off-Farm Food Economy Jobs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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#### Rural Employment Diversification

- **The transformation of food systems creates new off-farm employment opportunities in rural areas.**
- **85% of rural food economy jobs are in agriculture.**
- **15% of rural food economy jobs are in off-farm segments.**

#### Food Processing Employment in Total Manufacturing Employment

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Agriculture, Food & Jobs in West Africa

The food economy presents a large and unexploited jobs potential that will continue to grow with population growth, urbanisation and income growth.

Needs for Job Strategies

Developing these new employment opportunities - on- and off-farm and in rural and urban areas - depends on an understanding of food systems, capturing the links between agricultural productivity, off-farm employment and rural and urban areas.

Markets

Agricultural Potential

National Economic Development

Infrastructure

Business Environment

Youth Mobility

Small and Intermediate Cities

Regional Trade

People, Goods and Information

Food & Jobs

Where food is produced, by whom and how it reaches the consumer is a central element of food economy development.

Policies and investments that promote off-farm food economy segments and have a particularly large impact on women’s economic activities.

Women and Youth

Food away from home and other food services are projected to grow faster than other food segments (Staatz and Hollinger, 2016, Tschirley et. al. 2016). The sector generates high value added (also on imported products) and creates strong linkages with other food system activities.

The youth transition into non-agricultural activities is taking place in faster and in greater numbers than in older age groups. A decline in inactivity levels with age is accompanied with increases in employment in off-farm activities in both the food and the non-food system.

Decision-makers need a clear understanding of the links between agricultural productivity, off-farm employment and rural and urban areas.

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Women are of particular importance in the jobs agenda. Women account for 88% of total food away from home employment, 83% of total food processing employment, 72% of total food marketing employment, 88% of total food away from home employment of total food processing employment, 83% of total food marketing employment.

Youth are also important in the food system. A decline in inactivity levels with age is accompanied by increases in employment in off-farm activities in both the food and the non-food system. 51% of employed 20 to 29 year old are in non-agricultural activities, of which two-thirds are in non-food system activities.

Policies and investments that promote off-farm food economy segments have particular impact on women’s economic activities.