



AGRICULTURE, FOOD & JOBS IN WEST AFRICA

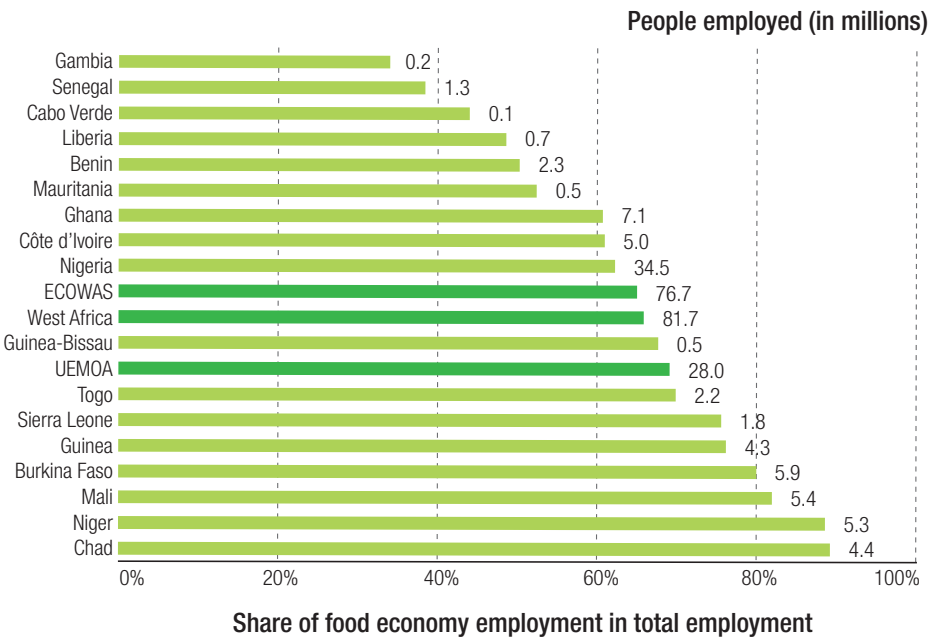
SAHEL AND
WEST AFRICA **Club**
Secretariat

 **OECD**
BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

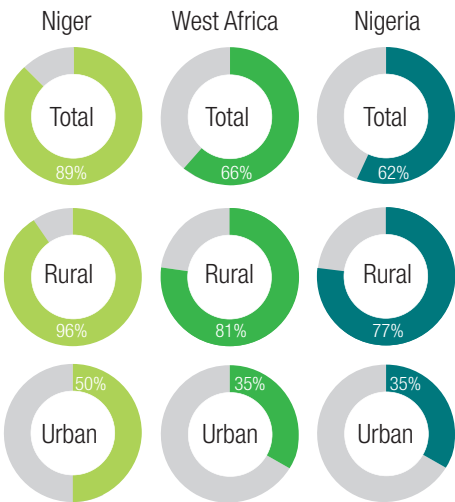
FOOD ECONOMY: WEST AFRICA'S LARGEST EMPLOYER

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 **82 million people**.



Share of food economy
in total employment



78%
of food economy jobs are
still in agriculture.

The share of agriculture in food economy employment varies significantly across countries – in Mali and Niger it is more than 90%, whereas in Cabo Verde, Ghana and Nigeria it is closer to 60%.

81 %
of jobs in rural areas are
in the food economy.

15% are in food processing, food marketing and food away from home.

35%
of jobs in urban areas are
in the food economy.

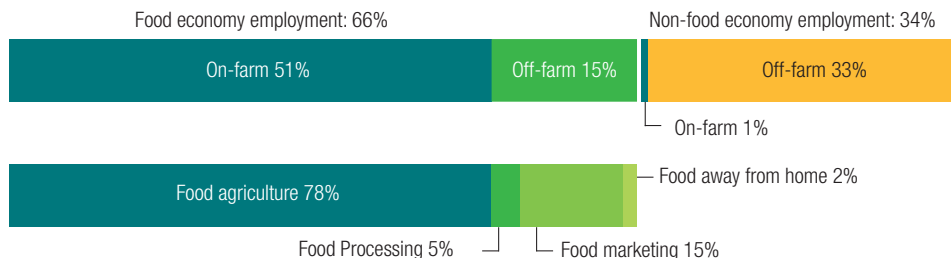
60% of food system jobs in urban areas are in marketing and food away from home.

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.

Food processing is the largest manufacturing sub-sector in several countries.



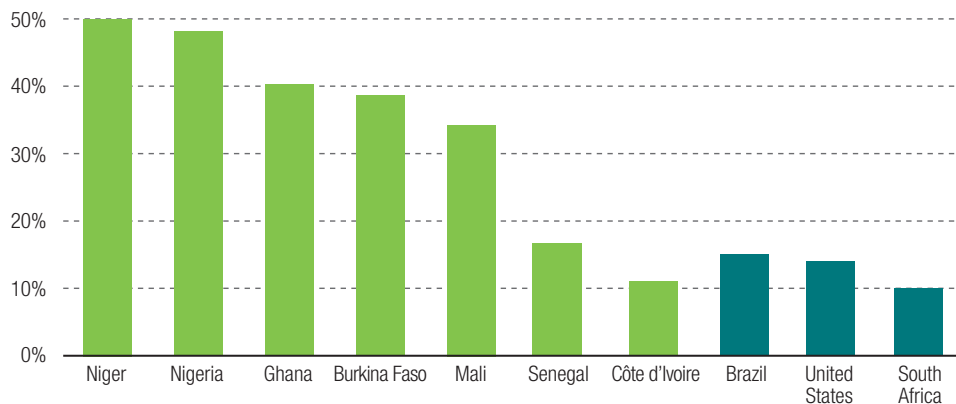
31 % of all non-agricultural jobs in West Africa are in the off-farm segments of the food economy.

In Côte d'Ivoire

"(...) food manufacturing stands out as the most important contributor to [formal] value added and the second biggest contributor to [formal] employment. (...) While the share of firms in the agribusiness sector was only 4 percent in 2012 it generated 18 percent of jobs."

- World Bank 2017

Share of food processing employment in total manufacturing employment



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 Abidjan, Cotonou and Lomé people spend more than 30% of their food budgets on food away from home.

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 service sector employment.

10% of all off-farm food
system jobs are in food
away from home activities.

RURAL EMPLOYMENT DIVERSIFICATION

The transformation of food systems creates new off-farm employment opportunities in rural areas.

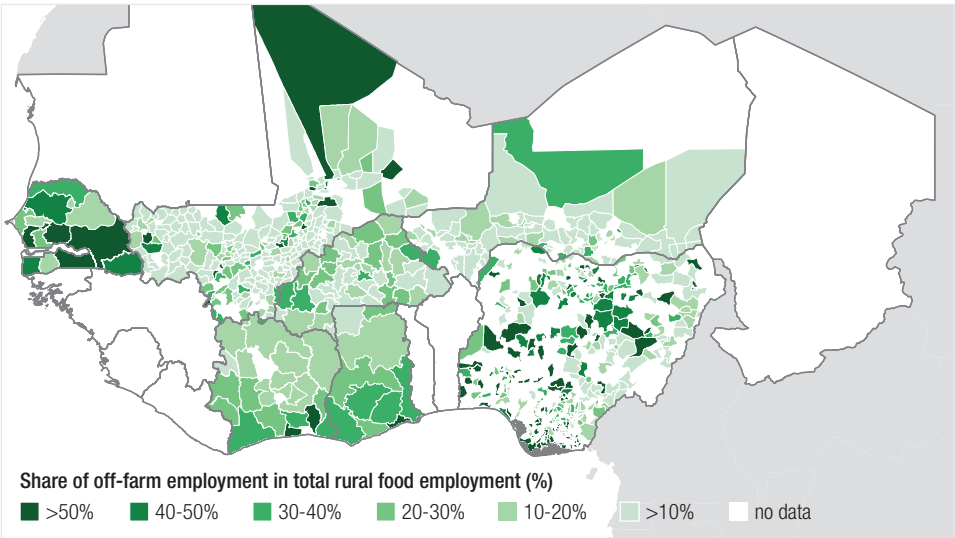
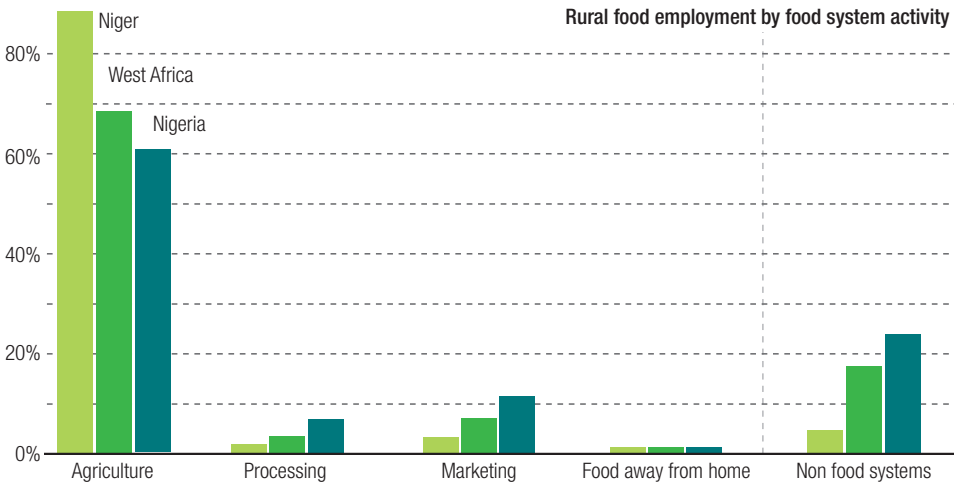
85% of rural food economy jobs are in agriculture.

15% of rural food economy jobs are in off-farm segments.

They are the entry points to markets, linking food production to food consumption and are crucial for agricultural growth, income generation and rural transformation.

Many of the new jobs are linked to agriculture. Specialisation of agricultural production systems towards higher-value food products (fruit, vegetables, dairy, meat) and processed foods, 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.



Strong regional differences in rural employment transformation

In Nigeria, agricultural employment accounts for less than 50% of rural food economy employment in 1 out of 3 Local Government Areas (LGAs).

Proximity to output and input markets clearly matters. Areas connected to urban markets and with specialised production offer more productive off-farm opportunities in the downstream segments of agricultural value chains.

WOMEN AND YOUTH

68%
of all employed women
work in the food system.

Off-farm food system activities are particularly important in providing job opportunities for women.

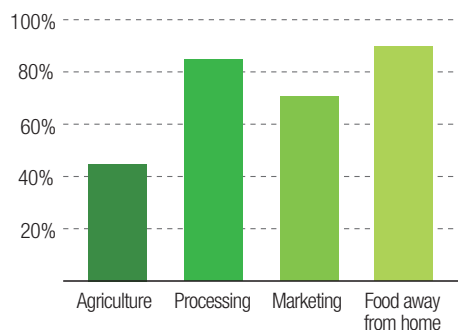
Women account for

88% of total food away from home employment

83% of total food processing employment

72% of total food marketing employment

Share of women's employment by food system activity



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.

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

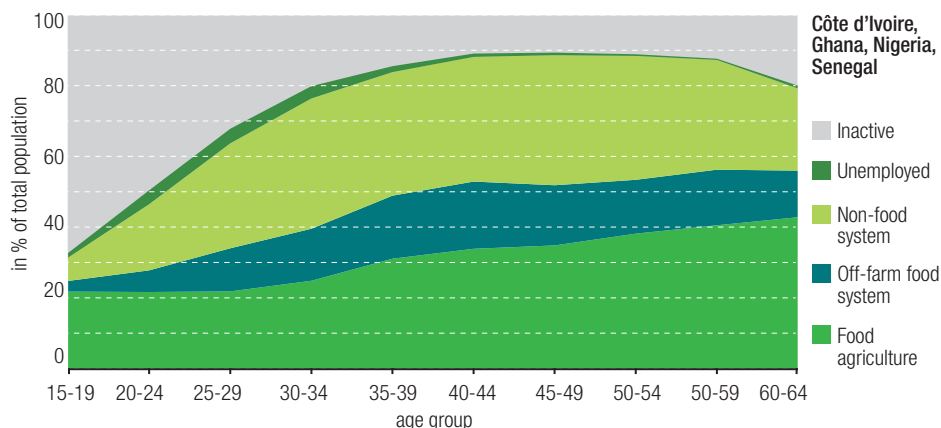
Youth are of particular importance in the jobs agenda given their high share in the total population.

36% of the total
working age population
(15-65) is between 15
and 24 years old.

64% of employed 20
to 29 year olds are in the
food economy.

The youth transition into non-agricultural activities is taking place in faster and in greater numbers than it is for 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. 51% of employed 20 to 29 year old are in non-agricultural activities, of which two-thirds are in non-food system activities.



NEEDS FOR JOB STRATEGIES

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

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
LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INFRASTRUCTURE
ADVISORY AND FINANCIAL SERVICES EDUCATION & TRAINING
PEOPLE, GOODS AND INFORMATION RURAL-URBAN CONNECTIVITY
BUSINESS SMALL AND INTERMEDIARY CITIES
EXTENSION SERVICES ENVIRONMENT YOUTH
DATA MOBILITY WOMEN
ROADS AND ELECTRICITY
REGIONAL TRADE MARKETING AND LOGISTICS INFRASTRUCTURE

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



More information:

Allen, T., P. Heinrigs and I. Heo (2018), “Agriculture, food and jobs in West Africa”, West African Papers, N°14, OECD Publishing, Paris.

www.oecd.org/swac/topics/food-system-transformations

Contact: philipp.heinrigs@oecd.org

SWAC/OECD, 2, rue André Pascal 75775 Paris Cedex 16, France