

## CONCEPT NOTE

### NATIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP ON APPLICATIONS OF JUNCAO TECHNOLOGY AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN NIGERIA

- Division for Sustainable Development Goals, UN-DESA ▪ National Engineering Research Centre for Juncao Technology of the Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University, China ▪ Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Nigeria ▪ African Union Development Agency-NEPAD/APRM, Nigeria

19 - 21 July 2022

The Ballroom, Fraser Suites Hotel

Abuja, Nigeria

#### I. Purpose of the workshop

The Division for Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DSDG/UNDESA), in collaboration with the National Engineering Research Center for Juncao Technology of the Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University (FAFU) of China, the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Nigeria, and the African Development Agency-NEPAD/APRM Nigeria, is organizing a national capacity building workshop on “Applications of Juncao Technology<sup>1</sup> and its Contribution to the Achievement of Sustainable Agriculture and the Sustainable Development Goals in Nigeria” from 19-21 July 2022.

The capacity building workshop is convened in the context of UNDESA’s mission to advise interested Governments on the ways and means of translating policy frameworks developed in UN conferences and summits into programmes at the country level and, through technical assistance that helps build national capacities. Capacity building activities are also aimed at strengthening and maintaining the capabilities of States and societies to design and implement strategies that minimize the negative impacts of current social, economic and environmental crises and emerging challenges such as those posed by the impacts of rising inflation, disruptions to global supply chains and the COVID-19 pandemic. As a cross-cutting entry point, UN-DESA’s capacity building activities promote the integration of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into national sustainable development planning

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<sup>1</sup> Juncao technology has been developed by the National Engineering Research Centre for Juncao Technology of the Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University (FAFU) of China. The technology has a multi-faceted approach of cultivating mushroom and fungi for food and medicinal purposes while at the same time addressing soil erosion for maintaining the volume of arable land and also supporting livestock feed development.

frameworks, sharing lessons learned and good practices through workshops and related events at the national, regional and global levels.

The 2030 Agenda recognizes that capacity-building forms part of the means of implementation for the SDGs (paragraph 41). Each SDG contains targets relating to means of implementation, including capacity- building. Moreover, SDG 17, which covers means of implementation and the global partnership for sustainable development, contains target 17.9 which aims to: "Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the Sustainable Development Goals, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation".

In that regard, UN DESA is collaborating with the National Engineering Research Centre for Juncao Technology of the Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University (FAFU) of the People's Republic of China, under the UN Peace and Development Trust Fund, on a project entitled "*Enhancing capacity of developing countries to achieve sustainable agriculture through the transfer of Juncao technology for alleviating poverty and promoting productive employment*". This project is linked to issues that are important to developing countries, including eradication of poverty, ending hunger, use of renewable energy, promotion of employment, combating desertification, protection of the environment and responsiveness to climate change. It fits the special conditions and needs of many developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean and has the potential to help developing countries overcome development challenges and advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

This technology, which is being transferred to developing countries through south-south cooperation and upon request, supports efforts undertaken by countries to capacitate smallholder farmers and entrepreneurs to grow mushrooms from dried, chopped grasses, without cutting down trees and damaging the environment. Such an environmental-friendly technology can help small-scale farmers and farming communities to develop a low-cost, commercial-scale mushroom cultivation industry that can provide sustainable livelihoods to large numbers of the rural poor. In addition, the technology can also be used for producing cattle feed, methane gas and minimize soil erosion to combat desertification. In the long run, depending on local demand and the scale of production, it may also provide opportunities for selling mushrooms at local, national and regional markets cultivated using the technology.

Hence, the mobilization of capacity building and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries such as the Juncao technology contributes to achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs. DESA, in partnership with FAFU will continue to work with interested countries to ensure that family farmers, subsistence producers, landless agricultural workers, pastoralists, rural women, and youth, have sustainable livelihoods and decent employment through support to capacity-building efforts aimed at promoting agriculture. When successfully implemented, the Juncao technology will contribute to addressing poverty, employment and environmental concerns in rural and remote areas.

The High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) that has the central role in overseeing follow up and review in implementing the Goals and targets at the global level has also underlined and reiterated the importance of supporting developing countries in their efforts to implement the SDGs and advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.<sup>2</sup>

## **II. Background**

With a GDP of US\$432.29 billion in 2020, Nigeria is the largest economy in Africa. However, 4 in 10 Nigerians - about 80 million people - live in poverty and growth per capita has been negative. In addition, FAO estimates that about 19.4 million people will face food insecurity across Nigeria between June and August 2022. Poverty and hunger have been rising in rural areas and the northern zones, while the southern zones have been seeing general improvements.<sup>3</sup> Eradicating poverty and reducing hunger are being held back by several factors that include sluggish growth, low human capital, labor market weaknesses, and exposure to various shocks. The ongoing impacts of climate change, natural disasters and conflict are disproportionately affecting the country's poor, and their effects have been compounded by COVID-19 and disruptions to global food markets as a result of the war in Ukraine. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, Nigeria had not achieved the sustainable, inclusive growth the country needs to strongly reduce poverty and end hunger. The war in Ukraine has caused prices surge, particularly of wheat, maize and oilseeds, and fertilizers. These increases come on top of already high inflation in both developed and developing countries.

Therefore, addressing poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition remain some of the country's most pressing challenges. As underscored by the Nigeria Voluntary National Report 2020 report, one of the key development challenges facing the country revolves around diversifying the sources of economic growth. This requires moving away from reliance on oil and gas which contribute 86 percent of public revenues and stimulating the agricultural sector where over 70 percent of the population is engaged in, and which is critical for household food security. In particular, national efforts should focus on building resilient food systems and target people living in poverty, the rural poor, women and youth, pastoralists, and other groups in vulnerable situations. These efforts should target boosting agricultural productivity that sustains pro-poor and inclusive growth, investing in quality education and healthcare, and expanding access to universal social protection. Regarding agriculture, strengthening subsistence and smallholder agriculture will require improved access to productive resources such as land, improved seeds and fertilizers, financing,

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<sup>2</sup> UN, Ministerial Declaration of the 2017 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council on the theme eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world, Doc. # E/2017/L.29-E/HLPF/2017/L.2, 14 July 2017.

<sup>3</sup> The World Bank. Nigeria Poverty Assessment 2022: A Better Future for All Nigerians. World Bank: Washington DC

and adopting better farming techniques and science, technology and innovation such as Juncao technology. With the largest population in Africa (206 million in 2020) which is estimated to reach 400 million by 2050, enhanced agriculture productivity through adaptation of new technologies and innovations is critical to ensure food security and nutrition. As underscored by SDG 17, “Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development”, support from all development partners to the efforts by the federal and state governments is central for achieving this goal.

To increase agricultural productivity, the Government has implemented several initiatives and programmes. These include the Agriculture Promotion Policy, Nigeria–Africa Trade and Investment Promotion Programme, Presidential Economic Diversification Initiative, Economic and Export Promotion Incentives and the Zero Reject Initiative, Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+); Nigeria Erosion and Watershed Management Project; and Action Against Desertification Programme.<sup>4</sup>

### **III. Objectives and Methodology**

This capacity building workshop aims to enhance knowledge and strengthen Nigeria’s national capacities to improve its policies and programmes supporting sustainable agriculture through the transfer of Juncao technology in order to eradicate poverty, reduce hunger, and promote productive activities, income generation and entrepreneurship especially among the poor, smallholder farmers, women, youth and to effectively contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. In the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the workshop will highlight the benefits of South-South and Triangular Cooperation as a means of enhancing access to science, technology and innovation, knowledge sharing as well as capacity building and to effectively contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

To accomplish these objectives, national experts will be drawn from various line ministries, academia, research centers, the United Nations Country Team, and civil society organizations engaged in improving rural livelihoods. Smallholder farmers and livestock herders, who are the intended beneficiaries of Juncao technology will also be invited to participate in the national workshop. Juncao technology experts from Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University will make presentations on various aspects of the Juncao technology. The workshop will allow a robust exchange of ideas among national agricultural experts, government officials, representatives from the United Nations system, smallholder farmers and civil society. This interaction will help sharpen policies as well as shape the national debate on how Nigeria and its development partners can speed up progress towards reducing hunger and eradicating extreme poverty.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.fao.org/nigeria/fao-in-nigeria/nigeria-at-a-glance/en/>

#### **IV. Expected outcome of the Capacity Building Workshop**

At the conclusion of the capacity building workshop, it is anticipated that the participants will:

- Have acquired enhanced capability and a better understanding of the requirements for successful implementation of Juncao technology and its utility to support the realization of sustainable agriculture and the implementation of the SDGs.
- Be able to participate in ongoing and planned national Juncao activities to advance the Agenda and the SDGs' implementation.
- Be able to participate in a community of similar practitioners and experts to support one another in reaching the implementation of Juncao technology and sustainable agriculture.

#### **V. Contacts**

##### **Mr. Amson Sibanda**

Chief, National Strategies and Capacity Building Branch  
Division for Sustainable Development Goals  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
United Nations  
New York, NY 10017 USA  
Email: [sibanda@un.org](mailto:sibanda@un.org)

##### **Dr. LIN Dongmei**

Vice Director of National Engineering Research Center of Juncao Technology  
Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University  
Fuzhou, Fujian, P.R. China  
Email: [982245079@qq.com](mailto:982245079@qq.com)

##### **Ms. Ruoshi Geng**

National Strategies and Capacity Building Branch  
Division for Sustainable Development Goals  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
United Nations  
New York, NY 10017 USA  
E-mail: [ruoshi.geng@un.org](mailto:ruoshi.geng@un.org)