





Street Foods, Urban Agriculture and School Feeding

in Nigeria

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Street food and urban agriculture hold great promises to school meal subsector in Nigeria. Unfortunately, the country looks elsewhere leaving commuter secondary and tertiary institutes to be fed by street food vendors during break times. In Kano state for example in the last four years, the state government had realized social and economic significance of this problem and intervened by empowering women in the street food business with training and some amount of money to expand or start up as the case may be. You see, street food business in Nigeria is so lucrative for obvious social and economic reasons that formal restaurant business with organized infrastructures and operating within same territory could not sustain ‘killer’ competition from street food business. This is the case in all major cities and towns in the country. What is required from government is intensive training and constant information dissemination covering food nutrition, hygiene and business development. A typical street roast meat table in Nigeria is a luxury treatment for the rich and upper strata in many developed countries.

Urban agriculture in Nigeria is yet to bloom due to many reasons. Rural agricultural production has no organized market and no local processing or preservation facility therefore urban area is the only place farmers could send their farm produce from the nooks and corners of the region. This creates market glut thereby bringing down produce price for street food producers to have a field day. This is normal and daily trend until change comes along in future. But by organizing street food businesses to work hand in hand with farmers groups to cater for student meal business perhaps this would trigger development of the urban agriculture since there is untapped potential in existence all over the environment, in government ministry premises, company premises and residential land surplus for intensive horticultural production.

However, by matter of extrapolation of the street food subsector, Homebound Food Business (HFB) is another dimension of the street food business in Kano and many other towns in Northern Nigeria. HFB is where food is prepared by women (housewives) in the home for selling outside in the street by their daughters, sons, or hired sales personnel. HFB is a major role player in providing meals to aforementioned secondary and tertiary institutes.