

INNOVATIVENESS AND STAKEHOLDERSHIP IN THE *FUFU* PROCESSING SYSTEMS IN SOUTHWEST NIGERIA

¹K. ADEBAYO, ¹J.L. WHITE, M.J. ²MORRIS, ¹A.O. DIPEOLU,
¹I.A. AYINDE, ²T.S. WANDSCHNEIDER, ¹L.O. SANNI, ¹O.B.
OYEWOLE, ²K. TOMLINS AND ²A. WESTBY

¹University of Agriculture, P.M.B. 2240, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria.
E-mail: kolawole_adebayo@hotmail.com

²Natural Resources Institute, University of Greenwich, Chatham Maritime,
United Kingdom

ABSTRACT

Previous research has emphasized the need to explore the population of cassava post-harvest technologies among individuals, processing groups and large-scale processors. This study used data obtained from 129 cassava processors to highlight the relative positioning of key stakeholders and the social dynamics, which promote innovativeness in *fufu* processing in five locations selected after extensive scoping visits to 23 *fufu* processing sites in southwest Nigeria. After the initial analysis of the data, small-scale validation exercise was carried out using focus group discussions in three of the locations. The study found that younger, more active women and men are more likely to specialize in wet paste *fufu* processing. All processors of other cassava products identified in the study were native Yoruba women. The main stakeholders in the *fufu* processing and marketing system identified in this study were *fufu* processors, cassava farmers, family members, cassava traders, transport providers, other service providers, labourers, processors of other cassava products and *fufu* traders. Processors were found to have readily adapted processing techniques to their local situation. This initiative demonstrates that local processors can be innovative. The study concluded that wet paste *fufu* processing is a viable commercial enterprise in rural, peri-urban areas. The relatively recent entrance of men into this business may reflect its growing commercial potential. Individual processor's ownership of an innovation is not necessarily a precursor for its introduction since a key characteristic found in the *fufu* processing system is processors' rental of technologies from service providers.

Keywords: Innovativeness, Stakeholders, Cassava processing, *fufu*, Post-harvest technologies.