

Musicians unite to promote agriculture in Africa

ONE.org, a campaigning and advocacy organisation taking action to end poverty and preventable disease in Africa, has launched one of the continent's biggest musical collaborations ever, Cocoa na Chocolate, in support of a new campaign to boost investments in agriculture, 'Do Agric, It Pays'.



Nineteen of the top recording artists from across Africa, including D'Banj and Femi Kuti from Nigeria, Democratic Republic Congo's Fally Ipupa, Cote d'Ivoire's Tiken Jah Fakoly, Kenya's Juliano, and South Africa's Judith Septhuma, have come together to help rebrand agriculture and tell African youth that their future lies literally beneath their feet - and in their hands.

African Union summit

These artists are using their voices to inspire young people to join ONE.org, and tell political leaders ahead of the African Union summit in June that the time has come to adopt better agricultural policies that will help tackle youth unemployment, provide better support to small holder farmers, boost productivity, increase value chains, and help lift millions of Africans out of extreme poverty.

The song is available for download for free at www.one.org after signing the 'Do Agric' petition that tells African leaders to invest in our farmers, our food, and our futures.

"These brilliant artists are role models who connect with African youths," Dr. Sipho S. Moyo, ONE.org Africa executive director, said. "Their voices, in support of African agriculture, are sending a powerful message to the young generation: it's time for African leaders to scale up public investments in agriculture and ensure policy interventions are targeted to benefit smallholder farmers who provide 80% of the food we eat on the continent."

Transparent budgets

"According to the United Nations, agricultural growth is 11 times more effective at reducing poverty than growth in other sectors like mining and utilities. Do Agric is a continent-wide push to appeal to African governments to commit to spending at least 10% of national budgets on effective agriculture investments - a commitment they originally made in Maputo in 2003 - and to do so through transparent and accountable budgets. We are indeed proud and greatly privileged to be partnering with such an inspiring group of individuals to spread the message that not only can Africa feed itself, but it can help to feed the world."

Nigerian music superstar D'Banj said: "As African musicians, agriculture is the single most important cause we could champion together and I am proud to say we are doing it with ONE voice. Here in Nigeria alone, while 70% of Nigerians depend on agriculture for their livelihoods, the federal agriculture budget has been trending downwards, and is now at just 1.47%. This is a serious concern, especially because Nigeria spends billions of Naira importing food every year."

Involving youths

"Through this song, we are calling on youths to go online and join ONE.org, to get more involved in agriculture, and to ask our governments to step up and improve agricultural investments, so that the youths can have a better chance of succeeding in it."

These artists are joining ONE.org to show the current generation of young people that not only can agriculture be cool, but it is also a great way to earn a living. But without strong political will and public support for agriculture, African youth will not be able to take advantage of the potential that agriculture presents.

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