



# FOOD *for* THE CITIES

## Processed foods



*Fruit jam, nectar and syrup processed by a small producer in Bamako, Mali. FAO disseminates technologies and good practices to maintain the quality and safety of highly perishable foods*

FAO/D. Njile

### Challenges...

Urban lifestyles, increasing distances between home and workplace, working women, and changes in family cohesion are all factors increasing the demand for shelf-stable, convenience (time-saving) and value-added foods. This has stimulated the rapid growth of food processing industries in urban areas, and created opportunities for

income generation, employment and economic growth. Urban food industries benefit from easier access to consumer markets, lower transport and distribution costs, and proximity to diverse services including information technology and waste treatment facilities. However they also face considerable challenges in achieving required standards of quality and safety, and in operating in an efficient and sustainable manner. Competition for resources (land, water, labour and energy) often results in insufficient quantities and quality of water, unreliable electricity supply for powering processing equipment, unsanitary premises lacking appropriate facilities for disposing process waste, difficulty in accessing processing inputs including raw materials, packaging and equipment, and lack of trained staff.



FAO/D. Njile

*Pre-cooked fonio is in high demand in urban areas of West Africa. Processing operations were designed to yield a product with qualities desired by consumers*

FAO/D. Njile



*Washing fonio grain at a medium-scale operation in Bamako, Mali. Food processing to meet urban needs offers income generating opportunities, especially for women*

### FAO's response...

FAO has expertise in providing technical support and policy advice that can be applied in overcoming the above-mentioned challenges. The Organization's work is geared toward upgrading food processing and preservation technologies, improving food quality and safety, adding value to raw agricultural materials (cereals, fruits and vegetables, oilseeds, roots and tubers), and developing innovative processed foods to supply urban markets. To meet the needs of urban consumers, efficient value chains are developed by facilitating linkages between various stakeholders involved. Thus, farmers are linked to intermediaries and traders, who in turn are linked to food processing industries, who ultimately supply retailers, wholesalers and other distributors. Improvement of the efficiency of the value chain fosters a more equitable, transparent and sustainable distribution of benefits amongst the various stakeholders. The Organization prepares technical bulletins and training guides, implements training courses and workshops for the various stakeholders, and works with local authorities, regulatory bodies and policy makers to facilitate provision of services and infrastructure required to maintain quality and safety of food throughout the value chain.

## FAO's action...

**Processing technologies and good manufacturing practices.** FAO is developing Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) for value-added processing of cereals, roots, tubers, fruits and vegetables in developing countries. With the support and collaboration of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) and the Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement (CIRAD), the Organization created the Information Network for Post-harvest Operations (INPhO) to improve access to technical data and foster exchange of information among different actors involved in post-harvest processing. [www.fao.org/inpho](http://www.fao.org/inpho)



FAO/R. Rolle

*Coconut water processing in the Caribbean. Appropriate technologies and good practices prevent contamination, ensure a safe and wholesome product and minimise negative impact on both environment and health*



FAO/R. Rolle



FAO/D. Nijie

*Hot pepper sauce processing in Trinidad and Tobago. Good Manufacturing Practices increase efficiency, reduce waste and obtain high-quality finished products*



FAO/D. Nijie

**Technical support.** Over the years, FAO provided technical support to improve **oil seeds** processing in Ghana, Kenya, Uganda and Zambia where large quantities of palm and other vegetable oils are consumed in urban areas.

The Organization's regional office in Accra provided technical assistance to the government of Ghana for the creation of a **tomato processing** promotion centre. Through training in processing techniques, GMP, quality assurance, and business management, the centre supports transformation of tomatoes into paste and other value added products.

In West Africa **pre-cooked fonio** is becoming more and more popular in urban areas because it is easy to prepare, a convenience highly valued by consumers in cities. FAO collaborated with other partners to develop machines for post-harvest processing of fonio in Mali, Guinea and Burkina Faso.

In the Caribbean, FAO is currently developing best practices and appropriate technologies for cottage-scale processing of **hot pepper sauce**. Hot pepper sauce is a major spice in Caribbean countries and is produced in facilities located in or near urban areas. FAO has also developed technologies for processing **coconut water**, a beverage that is popular and widely consumed in urban areas of the Caribbean.



**Food for the Cities - Multidisciplinary Area**  
**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS**  
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