

NAME

**Busayo Abayome**

DATE

**February 2018**

VALUE CHAIN

**Cassava Processing**

BUSINESS STAGE

**New**

LGA in Cross River State, Nigeria

**Calabar Municipal**



## YouLead

The YouLead project aims to reduce youth unemployment by promoting entrepreneurship and sustainable economic development in the natural resource sectors in Cross River State, Nigeria. As part of the YouLead project, the Youth Entrepreneurship Business Support Plan (YEBSP) provides funding to young entrepreneurs who can demonstrate their potential to communities, private investors and banks. This profile showcases just one of the thousands of youth already trained by the project and seeking funding from the YEBSP to either grow or start their business.

## Bringing Garri into Fine-Dining

Busayo is a former food processing student, single with no children. She is passionate about refining traditional Nigerian food and has new and refreshing ideas to change the garri landscape in Nigeria. These ideas are not only sustainable but also add a new element of flavor. See below to read more about Busayo's ambitious business ideas:

*Describe your experience in starting and/or running your own business.*

“ I want to process garri, but different forms, such as coconut garri. What keeps me at a higher stage is that my product is not in Nigeria as we speak, right now. Somebody may be doing it that I do not know, but so far I have not seen it here in Nigeria; everybody's focused on raw garri and normal garri. The sweet thing about the coconut garri is that even beyond the coconut, there are other fruits you could use, like mango. All the fruits that we waste at the end of the season can be converted and reused to make something and give garri a different flavour and encourage people to have this interest in Nigerian made products. It can go beyond the coconut, but the coconut is what I am starting with first. If the coconut products work out fine than I will definitely try it out with other fruits I can work with, to ensure there are various flavours of garri.”



Garri is a popular food found in Nigeria and is most commonly made from cassava roots. The cassava is peeled, then mashed to form its malleable texture. It can also be ground into a much finer texture, like a powder. Since garri is high in fiber, it is often consumed with stews or soups

YouLead is happy to announce that Busayo is a winner of our YEBSP's third cycle! In addition to her training, Busayo will be receiving funds to start-up her business as a vibrant entrepreneur. YouLead is thrilled to see what the future holds for Busayo's business.

*What rewards and challenges have you experienced in running your own business?*

“ Rewards for me would be registering my business. Registering was tough, as it took a while (about 4 months). Eventually I got a business name and it was approved! Beyond registering, opening a bank account was also challenging, but there are bridges and I crossed those bridges. One challenge I had to overcome is security. I needed a secure space for my equipment. As soon as I can start at the incubator centre, it will be safer. They have security 24/7, water, their own transformer and even a generator. The only other challenge right now as we speak is getting equipment, and paying off this space (rented space at the business incubator), then I am done.”

*How do you plan to grow your business over the next few years?*

“ Well, with this being a new product to Nigeria, I want to gather feedback on my product. I talked about doing questionnaires initially, but we are going to make sample products first and give to some persons and request questionnaires back. I also intend to do some product testing where I will set up a panel where they will test them without knowing what the product is, even with their eyes closed, just taste and smell and they will tell me what they like, and I will ask them which products they would prefer. If someone is having a challenge, (maybe it's too sugary, or milky) and I hear this from three or four customers, then I will adjust the recipe.”

*What are your future dreams and aspirations?*

“ I would like to move into other fruit varieties, like pineapple garri, or mango garri - as many varieties as I want to! There are many fruits here in Cross River. I believe I can pick up these things while they are in season and make use of the extracts when they are not in season. I want to change the way people think about garri and bring it into the fine-dining market.”

Busayo truly holds the entrepreneur spirit – creating new methods to Nigerian cooking. Busayo's ambition will drive her business idea into success. MEDA can't wait to sample the sweet flavours of coconut garri, and hopefully pineapple and mango too!