Progress Report: SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) – Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University (COOU)

2024/2025 Session

Executive Overview

Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University (COOU), primarily through its Faculty of Agriculture located at the Igbariam Campus in Anambra State, actively aligns its academic, operational, and extension activities with **Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG 2: Zero Hunger)**. COOU addresses regional food insecurity by advancing climate-smart agricultural research, expanding campus-based food production, preserving indigenous genetic livestock, and building strategic public-private partnerships to enhance agricultural productivity and local food access.

Key Areas of Progress & Implementation

1. Campus Farming Infrastructure & Food Production Initiatives

COOU utilizes its land resources across its campuses to serve as both functional agricultural production centers and practical learning hubs for students:

- **Specialized Plantations:** The university maintains a 0.4-hectare plantain and banana plantation at the Igbariam campus for research, sustainable harvest, and internal food distribution.

- **Public-Private Agriculture Partnerships:** COOU executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with SARBJJACK FARMS to establish F1 hybrid plantain and Smooth Cayenne pineapple plantations within the university community. This Public-Private Partnership (PPP) scales high-yield crop production and strengthens student practical exposure.

- **Livestock & Aquaculture Operations:** COOU operates functional poultry farms, fish ponds, and an expanding livestock unit. Products such as poultry, fish, and processed food items are integrated into campus food systems to bolster food supply stability.

2. Indigenous Genetic Conservation & Livestock Breeding

- **Muturu Cattle Breeding Program:** To preserve local biodiversity and improve meat supply resilience, COOU maintains a dedicated breeding and research unit for hybrid

local cattle (*Muturu*). The project supports Target 2.5 (Genetic Diversity) by conserving indigenous cattle species that possess high resistance to local tropical diseases.

3. Academic Capacity, Accreditation & Knowledge Dissemination

COOU continuously strengthens its academic structure to generate evidence-based solutions for food security:

- **Accredited Degree Programs:** The university offers specialized degree training across six departments within the Faculty of Agriculture: *Agricultural Economics and Extension, Animal Science, Crop Science and Horticulture, Fisheries and Aquaculture, Food Science and Technology,* and *Soil Science*. Departments like Food Science & Technology and Fisheries & Aquaculture maintain full National Universities Commission (NUC) accreditation.

- **International Research Engagement:** COOU regularly hosts scholarly convenings, such as its 3rd International Agricultural Conference, to bring together researchers, industry leaders, and policymakers to address post-harvest losses, soil degradation, and crop yield optimization in Sub-Saharan Africa.

4. Extension Services & Smallholder Support

- **Rural Farmer Outreach:** Through the Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension, COOU personnel engage surrounding rural farming communities in Anambra State. Smallholder farmers receive direct training in climate-smart soil management, post-harvest processing, and improved seed utilization, boosting local agricultural yields and smallholder household incomes.

Performance Summary against SDG 2 Targets

SDG 2 Target Area	COOU Operational Contribution	Impact Level
2.1 Universal Access to Safe & Nutritious Food	Campus crop plantations, commercialized fish/poultry production, and student-accessible agricultural products.	**Moderate** (Campus & Surrounding Communities)

SDG 2 Target Area	COOU Operational Contribution	Impact Level
2.3 Double Productivity & Incomes of Smallholders	Extension services, farm advisory, and training rural smallholder farmers in modern techniques.	**High** (Anambra State Agro-Networks)
2.4 Sustainable Food Production & Resilient Agriculture	PPP plantation models (e.g., SARBJJACK FARMS MoU) and sustainable soil/crop management research.	**High** (Institutional & Regional Level)
2.5 Maintain Genetic Diversity of Seeds & Animals	*Muturu* (indigenous cattle) preservation, breeding, and research project.	**Moderate to High** (Regional Biodiversity)

Strategic Recommendations for Acceleration

1. **Institutional Food Subsidy & Pantry Program:** Establish a formalized, campus-wide food bank or subsidized meal program leveraging harvests from university farms to support financially vulnerable students facing food insecurity.

2. **Expand Solar-Powered Irrigation & Storage Facilities:** Invest in off-grid solar irrigation systems and modern cold-storage infrastructure to reduce post-harvest losses on campus plantations during dry seasons.

3. **Establish a Dedicated SDG 2 Metric Dashboard:** Track and publish yearly quantitative outputs regarding total food tonnage harvested on campus, exact numbers of local farmers trained, and nutrition outcomes across all campuses.

Signature:  Date: 24/09/2026

Prof. Kate AZuka Omenugha, Fnipr

Vice Chancellor