

NMASINACHI CHINAZA AGADA

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Scholar, consultant, and entrepreneur working at the intersection of agricultural systems research, sustainability advisory, and agri-food ecosystem-building. Doctoral candidate at Arizona State University, where the omni-resilience framework developed through her doctoral research directly informs an active consulting practice. A decade of experience spanning agri-food systems strategy, sustainability & supply chain advisory, ESG and governance, climate finance, impact evaluation, and field-based multi-stakeholder engagement across Nigeria, Ghana, Indonesia, and the US.

EDUCATION

Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona, USA

Aug 2022 – Expected Aug 2026

Ph.D. in Innovation in Global Development

CGPA: 3.96/4

- Dissertation: Intermediaries of Resilience in High-Value Agricultural Systems: The Case of Farmer Cooperatives in Ghana's Cocoa System | Presidential Fellowship Award (2022–2026).

George Washington University, Washington, DC, USA

Aug 2019 – May 2021

M.A. in International Development Studies

CGPA: 3.9/4

- Specialization: Private sector-led development with a focus on sustainable agriculture | Frank Wong Fellowship Award (2019–2021).

Bowen University, Iwo, Nigeria

Sep 2010 – Nov 2014

B.Sc. in Economics, First Class Honors

EXPERIENCE

Graft Africa, Nigeria & USA

2024 – Present

Founder

- Founded and built Graft Africa into an operating agri-food systems enterprise, from problem validation and organizational design through incorporation, team assembly, and launch, establishing active West Africa-focused pilots, a regional ECOWAS scope, and a structured West Africa–North America corridor within the first year.
- Grew an institutional partnership portfolio from zero, securing co-hosting and co-sponsorship relationships with GWU's International Development Studies Program, Institute for African Studies, and Global Food Institute, and publishing policy analysis at the inaugural Food and Agriculture Policy Summit and the IFPRI Policy Seminar on food systems financing, establishing Graft Africa as a credible voice in continental and transatlantic agri-food discourse within twelve months of launch.
- Built and leads an agricultural data advisory practice and a practitioner knowledge platform – Common Grounds, that convenes researchers, investors, and policymakers around West Africa's most pressing agri-food systems problems, producing written insights and catalyzing partnerships that extend beyond each session. Also convenes and oversees the organization's Academic Working Group and Communities of Practice.

Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona, USA

Aug 2022 – Present

Graduate Researcher and Presidential Fellow

- Developed the Omni-Resilience Framework, a one-of-its-kind analytical architecture explaining how resilience cascades across system levels through institutional intermediaries, is shaped by distributed agency and power, and diverges in trajectory based on structural conditions and mediation capacity. Submitted to *Frontiers in Political Science*; accepted for presentation at CAAS Annual Conference (May 2026).
- Designed and independently managed original qualitative fieldwork across three cocoa-producing regions of Ghana, from IRB approval and data governance through focus group discussions disaggregated by gender, key informant interviews across six actor categories, and abductive thematic analysis in MAXQDA, generating the primary empirical dataset for two dissertation papers in progress.
- Contributed to applied research beyond the dissertation: co-authored the Capital and Transportation Needs Assessment for rural communities in Apache County, Arizona navigating the clean energy transition (JET Center, 2025); supported expert stakeholder workshops on carbon dioxide removal technology governance across North America (CSPO, 2023); served as teaching assistant across seven courses spanning futures studies, innovation policy, and global development, designing and delivering one original module.

USAID Bureau for Resilience and Food Security

2021

Capstone Research Consultant

Washington, DC

- As part of a GWU capstone team commissioned by USAID, contributed to a research study assessing 27 climate funds and 16 multilateral development banks to map critical gaps in climate finance deployment, including weak private sector engagement, inefficient fund deployment, and inadequate local ownership of adaptation programs. Findings and recommendations on blended finance structures and market systems design were delivered directly to USAID to inform Feed the Future climate integration strategy across priority countries.

GW-CIBER / American Frozen Food Institute

2020

International Business Bootcamp, Africa, India, and the Middle East Team Lead

Washington, DC

- Contributed to the AIME regional team in a pro bono global market entry study for the American Frozen Food Institute, building quantitative country and city-level scoring models across 40+ markets and delivering investment-grade export expansion recommendations adopted by AFFI's management team.

The Adventure Project, New York, USA

Apr – Jul 2022

Impact Evaluation Manager

- Designed and delivered seven interconnected programmatic infrastructure tools, including a theory of change-based MEL framework, a 12-dimensional partner eligibility framework, and a performance indicator bank, that TAP adopted and deployed to systematize partner selection, monitoring, and reporting across its multi-country hunger, health, water, and environment portfolio.

Moonshot Global, Washington, DC, USA

Sep 2021 – Feb 2022

Impact Advisor, Evidence, Learning, and Impact

- Supported 16 enterprises selected through USAID's Open Agriculture Technology Challenge in Nigeria, strengthening each grantee's impact measurement and management systems to produce more rigorous, investable evidence of outcomes. Contributed to the development and market launch of a third-party verification product targeting the \$715 billion impact investing market, benchmarking 45+ institutional investors and producing positioning materials aligned with the Operating Principles for Impact Management and UNDP SDG Impact Standards.

Duithape, Jakarta, Indonesia

Jun – Aug 2020

Growth and Investment Summer Associate

- Contributed market sizing analyses and revenue forecast models across five fintech verticals targeting Southeast Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa's unbanked populations, developed an alternative credit scoring model leveraging agent network and utility payment data, and led six COVID-19 grant applications aggregating over \$10 million in potential funding.

Translantic Development Limited, Lagos, Nigeria

Dec 2018 – Aug 2019

ESG Consultant and In-Country Lead

- Contributed to the design and delivery of The Green Pearl, Platform Capital's IFC PS 2012 and GRI-aligned ESG framework and toolkit, from executive KIs and baseline survey through firm-wide training and implementation support, equipping a pan-African investment firm with the governance infrastructure to embed sustainability across five global offices.
- Led data collation, cleaning, analysis, and production of the Needs Assessment Report, Grievance Redress Mechanism, and Stakeholder Management Plan for the social research workstream of a \$50M electricity access initiative in Kaduna State, forming the project's social governance architecture.

KPMG Nigeria, Lagos, Nigeria

Sep 2015 – Sep 2017

Experienced Analyst, Internal Audit, Risk, and Corporate Governance

- Conducted board appraisals and governance advisory for Wema Bank, Skye Bank, FSDH Merchant Bank, Nigerian Breweries, and GTBank across multidisciplinary teams, working across evidence gathering, governance memo authoring, and peer appraisal design. Contributed to the design of a complete corporate governance framework for Mutual Benefits Assurance, benchmarked against NAICOM, CBN, SEC, and international codes.
- Consulted on risk-based internal audit engagements across GTBank's nationwide network, Access Bank, UAC Nigeria, Deli Foods, and Nigerian Bottling Company, executing assigned workstreams across control testing, documentation, and findings reporting within senior-led engagement teams.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

- Agada, N. C. (Under Review). Omni-resilience: A framework for mediating multi-level resilience to multiple shocks and stressors in high-value agricultural systems. *Frontiers in Political Science*.
- Agada, N. C., Koudelka, M., et al. (2021). Mechanisms, risks, and outcomes for financing climate-smart agriculture in developing and emerging markets. USAID Bureau for Resilience and Food Security.
- Agada, N. C. (Accepted, May 2026). Omni-resilience: A framework for mediating multi-level resilience in Africa's high-value agricultural systems. CAAS Annual Conference.
- Agada, N. C. (2025). Policy that meets the plate; The junction of abundance and absence; Green gold: Why agriculture is Africa's next big harvest. Graft Africa Insights.
- Agada, N. C., & Grossman, L. (2021). Owning your own land makes a difference: The role of female land rights in increasing agricultural production. IISD SDG Knowledge Hub.

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, AND AWARDS

- Presidential Fellowship Award, ASU (2022–2026) | Chester O. McCorkle Jr. Scholarship Award, AAEA (2025), \$2,000
- Nathalie Hervé Memorial Travel Award, ASU (2025), \$500 | Graduate Research Support Program Grant, ASU (2024), \$2,000
- Frank Wong Fellowship Award, Elliott School, GWU (2019–2021), full tuition

CERTIFICATIONS AND LANGUAGES

- Certified Scrum Master (CSM), Badge ID: 1881359 (2024 – present)
- English: Native | Igbo: Advanced | Yoruba: Elementary | French: Elementary