

# Novartis Foundation and Syngenta Foundation Partner to Improve Heart Health through Sustainable Agriculture and Nutrition

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The Novartis Foundation and the Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture are combining their expertise in healthcare and agriculture to address one of the root causes of cardiovascular disease – unhealthy diets.

Cardiovascular disease is the world's #1 disease burden, placing significant strain on communities, economies and health systems, and accounting for nearly half of the world's deaths. The agricultural sector in Africa presents key opportunities for improving nutrition and health. One important way that agriculture contributes to nutrition and health is by increasing rural income and allowing people to improve their diets.

The new global partnership aims to help curb this disease in low-income urban communities by increasing access to healthy, affordable and nutritious foods. This can support continuous efforts to improve access to care and quality of care for patients with high blood pressure through Better Hearts Better Cities, a global Novartis Foundation initiative to improve urban cardiovascular health.

One of the first joint activities is in Senegal, where almost 30% of people suffer from hypertension, and over 90% of these patients do not have the condition under control<sup>[i]</sup>. The two foundations are working with local partners in the capital city of Dakar to identify the local causes of unhealthy diets, and investigate how to improve supply of – and demand for – fresh, healthy, nutritious and affordable food.

## Better Hearts Better Cities

The Novartis Foundation's Better Hearts Better Cities initiative is working to improve cardiovascular health in low-income urban populations. Better Hearts Better Cities is bringing together a multisector network of partners to tackle hypertension from the perspectives of health literacy and lifestyle choices, prevention, screening, diagnosis and patient management. The initiative currently runs in Mongolia, Senegal and Brazil. Existing partners include the American Heart Association, Business Performance Institute (BPI), CDC Foundation, Intel, IntraHealth International, NCD Alliance, the Onom Foundation and PATH.

## The Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture (SFSA)

SFSA creates value for smallholders in developing countries through innovations and the activation of value chains, with a focus on Access to Seeds, Agriservices and Risk Management. The SFSA has been active in the Senegal River Valley since 2014. Rice production is a major focus of activities. Since 2015, the SFSA has been providing access to mechanization for rice farmers through their Center for Mechanized Services.

<sup>[i]</sup> World Health Organization

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1. <https://www.novartisfoundation.org/news/novartis-foundation-and-syngenta-foundation-partner-improve-heart-health-through-sustainable-agriculture-and-nutrition>