



The following case study was received as a result of a call issued by the Committee on World Food Security for case studies highlighting examples of initiatives aimed at 'Developing the knowledge, skills and talent of youth to further food security and nutrition'. The cases received provide the background for a discussion of lessons learned and potential policy implications at a special event on October 15th, 2015 during CFS 42. Find out more at www.fao.org/cfs/youth.

BUILDING KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND TALENT DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH TO FURTHER FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

Case study – EU initiatives on young farmers and youth in EU rural areas

Background

Brief overall context of where the initiative took place

The EU Common Agricultural Policy includes measures in favour of **young farmers** to encourage **generational renewal**. In particular, under the Rural Development Policy EU Member States can decide to implement, as part of their programming, series of measures to support young farmers. This includes business start-up grants, support for investment, **training** and **advisory** services. The following brochure includes examples of project support for young farmers and younger people in rural Europe.

http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/sites/enrd/files/assets/pdf/EAFRD-project-brochure/EAFRD_youngfarmer_en.pdf

Challenges

Overview of the challenges faced in building knowledge, skills, or talent development of youth

Generational renewal in agriculture is a precondition for maintaining viable and sustainable food production and improving the competitiveness of the sector. New entrants are needed to take over from retiring farmers, to invest and to modernise their agricultural holdings. The farming population in the EU is rapidly getting older. In 2007, for each farm holder younger than 35 years ("young farmers"), there were 9 farmers older than 55 years ("elderly farmers"). The share of young farmers in the EU is declining.

The following document provides a statistical background on generational renewal in EU agriculture.

http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rural-area-economics/briefs/pdf/06_en.pdf

Approach Used

Why the approach was chosen for the specific challenges and context

Up to 2013, measures to support young farmers under the rural development policy were optional for EU Member States.

Outcome and Impact Achieved

For Rural Development Policy over the years 2007-2013, the measure for supporting the setting-up of young farmers (art. 20 (a) (ii) of Reg. (EC) N° 1698/2005) has supported 145 000 applicants across the EU¹. This measure is co-financed by EU and national funds and adds up to private investment.

¹ More data available from RD monitoring database based on MS RD Annual Progress Reports.



Lessons Learned/Opportunities for Scaling-Up

How should the approach be adapted to other situations in the future? Suggestions for overcoming challenges?

In December 2012 the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD) launched a thematic **initiative on Youth and Young Farmers in rural areas**. The initiative is part of a wider framework to accompany the preparation of the Rural Development Programmes (RDPs) for the 2014-2020 period. The ENRD youth initiative considers best options to improve the ways in which rural youth and young farmers can benefit from EU support, through:

1. identifying and understanding **what worked well and less well** in the implementation of RDPs in regards to supporting young farmers and rural youth;
2. exploring ways in which young people can be **involved** in the design and implementation of rural development policy at EU, national and regional level; and
3. raising **awareness** of the possibilities offered by rural development policy in support of youth in rural areas, while emphasising the **needs** of young people.

The initial findings that emerged from the work carried out during the first phase of the youth initiative are presented in the documents available on the internet site below, together with examples of the case studies collected.

<http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/en/themes/youth-and-young-farmers/thematic-initiative>

Policy Implications

What policy changes are needed to support this type of initiative and scaling up?

Based on previous experience, in the latest **reform of the CAP** (adopted in 2013) measures in favour of **young farmers** were further **strengthened**. As a compulsory part of the basic direct payment scheme, new entrant young farmers should benefit from a top up.

http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-post-2013/agreement/index_en.htm

The new Rural Development Policy is streamlined around 6 EU-wide priorities, that include fostering **knowledge transfer and innovation**. The new RD Policy indeed includes series of measures to promote innovation and knowledge transfer, including cooperation and strengthened farm advisory services. Member States/regions will also have the possibility to design thematic sub-programmes to pay specific attention to selected targets, of which **young farmers**.

In addition, the **new European Innovation Partnership for Agricultural productivity and sustainability** (EIP) promotes greater cooperation between agriculture and research in order to accelerate technological transfers to farmers.

<http://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/>