



YOUNG PEOPLE FARMING & FOOD

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE OF THE AGRIFOOD SECTOR IN AFRICA

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Exploring opportunities and constraints for young agro entrepreneurs in Africa

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Brief Africa Outlook

- *positive trends* -

- 5.5% GDP growth for 2011 (*up from 4.5% in 2010*)
- Africa has the world youngest population with 200 million people aged between 15 – 24
- 2.7% working age population growth per year (13 million)
- By 2040 (*if growth continues*) Africa's labour force will be of 1 billion (*surpassing emerging economies like China and India*)
- By 2030 59% of youth aged between 20 – 24 will access secondary education (*presently 42%*)
 - 137 million with secondary education
 - 12 million with tertiary education
- The agriculture sector (*farming, fishery, forestry and agro industries*) provides employment opportunities to up to 80% of the working age population in some African countries (*for example in Tanzania, Malawi etc*)

Brief Africa Outlook

- trends to address -

- Africa created 73 million jobs (2000 - 2008) but only 16 million for youth 15 – 24
- 60% of unemployed are youth
- In most African countries youth unemployment rates are double than adult ones (*the problem is very intense in most middle income countries*)
 - In North Africa youth unemployment rate (*pre-revolution, 2010*) was 23.4%, adult was 3.8%
 - In South Africa youth unemployment rate was 48%, adult was 2.5% (2010-2011)
- 72% of Africa's youth population live with less than \$2.00 a day (*with rates surpassing 80% in countries like Nigeria, Ethiopia, Uganda, Zambia and Burundi*)
- The informal sector employs up to 90% of the working age population in Africa's poorest countries
- 38% of Africa's working youth is presently working in agriculture (*adequately addressed, the sector can provide a much higher rate of employment opportunities for young people*)

Youth and young agriculture graduates access in the agriculture sector and potential positive results

Increase in the employment rate	Increase in food security and income of rural HH As observed in impact assessment in various African countries, younger HH heads when compared to adult ones derived an higher income from their agricultural activities (<i>Davis et All 2007, Dalla Valle appraisals 2008-2011</i>)	Propagation of post-harvest value addition As before, younger HH heads have been assessed in being more involved in appropriate storage and processing	Innovation in labour saving technologies Young people are more keen and active in using any kind of new technologies
<u>LEADING TO</u>			
Contribution to poverty alleviation in rural areas			
Rejunification of the agro sector			
Newly equipped extension system			

How to better address the multidimensional needs of youth while enhancing and facilitating their entrance in the agriculture sector?



Education and vocational training

- Many poor rural households understand the need of keeping children in school but do not have the means to do so
 - Abolition of primary school tuition fees and support rural HH with incentives, protection schemes and safety nets programmes to keep children in school. This will also prevent child labour in the agriculture sector
- The MDGs and governments have majorly focused on universal literacy
 - Strengthen focus on universal literacy along with a good quality of education towards an “employable” generation
- Present curricula in rural areas do not reflect the needs of the context
 - Revision of the curricula of both formal education and vocational training to reflect the agricultural sector needs and opportunities
- Apprenticeships in the agro sector
 - Foster partnerships with the private sector and national rural institutions in order to provide young people with a period of practical experience (apprenticeships) in the sector when finishing their education



Access to land

- Youth and women and access to land
 - Foster youth and women representatives' participation in land tenure policy debates while promoting an equal environment to access to land in terms of age, gender, religion, ethnicity
- In rural communities and through customary laws the leaders and elderly decide on access to land and distribution
 - Empower and sensitize community leaders, elderly, communities, producers' federations and unions etc, in the positives of having young people in rural areas to whom to transfer knowledge and skills for a future sustainable production for all, if one has no land is less likely to remain in rural areas or to invest in improved farm production
- Youth are still not adequately and specifically addressed in most land tenure policies and they are not aware of their rights
 - Strengthen youth land rights, youth responsive land laws and policies are needed along with youth and communities leaders and unions knowledge, awareness and empowerment, through economic incentives and capacity building



Access to finance

- Financial access is still very much limited to youth and young people are still regarded by financial and micro finance managers and schemes as “risky” clients
 - Promote/develop specific youth friendly financial products combining credit with thorough training, financial literacy and capacity development
- The microfinance sector in certain Africa countries (*for example in Malawi*) has been debate of major discussions on transparency
 - The MFI sector has the potential to address poor clients that cannot access commercial banks services although there is a need to foster an appropriately regulated environment with appropriate policies and legal frameworks with repayment rates that help poor people and youth instead of keeping them in a poverty cycle
- Young farmers are not exposed in major trade regional/international fairs that may lead to private sector visibility and encouragement to invest in youth producers
 - Promote young farmers presence in trade fairs to increase their exposure to the markets as well as to major players/contributors in the agriculture investments’ sector



Information and telecommunication technology (ICT) in the rural sector and social media

- In many African countries internet is used by less than 1% of the rural population (*for example Burkina Faso, Rwanda, Mozambique and Ethiopia*)
 - Strengthen youth capacities on ICTs in schools and training centres
- Rural radio had successful examples in countries like DRC improving the sharing of information
 - Best practices of examples of information sharing that can adequately be accessed by rural youth should be upscaled
- Rural finance institutions are less present in remote areas
 - Promote the simplification of money access in rural areas where finance institutions are less present while also improving internet and mobile lines access
- Social media has proven to be a powerful tool for young people to communicate / organize / exchange ideas
 - Support the communications among youth how they feel most at ease, FAO facebook groups dedicated to youth in agriculture are now majorly run by the youth themselves and use it as a platform to exchange their experiences and supporting each other



Youth and climate-smart agriculture

- Climate change adaptation and mitigation and conservation agriculture is still not adequately addressed
 - Start or enhance adequate retraining and capacity development programmes for both producers and extension services
- A green rural transformation ?
 - A green rural transformation is beneficially for all and an adequate promotion of active labor market policies and broad social protection schemes to ensure a fair and just transition for producers, young producers and their communities to step into a green rural transformation should be addressed
- Provide incentives for producers and young producers adopting conservation or organic value chains (while adequately monitoring the progress)
- Develop and implement evidence based policies and programmes that respond to local realities and priorities
- Engage young agriculture and environmental researchers in data collection and dissemination on climate-smart agriculture practices



Youth associations and rural development

- Youth are inadequately represented in producers' organizations / federations and unions
 - Youth committees / sections are formed in producers' / farmers' organizations to address and enhance youth participation in the sector
- Youth associations representatives are majorly “ad-hoc” invited participants (*for example in conferences dedicated to young people specifically*)
 - Enhance and support the creation of rural youth and young farmers' councils / platforms to address and facilitate rural youth participation in agricultural and rural development policies, design of programmes and projects and M&E while enhancing their participation in all kind of policy debates
- Most disadvantaged rural youth and rural youth associations are still out of reach
 - Support and stress the need to rural youth associations representatives invited in policy debates to speak also for their out-of reach peers leaving in remote rural areas that cannot easily access information and didn't have the opportunity to be in such debates



Conclusions

- Foster an equal and enabling environment in terms of gender, age, religion and ethnicity and youth participation in policy debates
- Establish partnerships among governments, farmers' federations and unions and youth organizations
- Develop or revise national youth employment plan of actions taking into account the specific needs of rural youth
- Enhance and support the inclusiveness of youth in local economic development efforts and initiatives (*for example the CAADP, SAGCOT, BAGC, economic corridor development initiatives, territorial development etc*)
- Improve the quality and occupational and health safety standards of jobs in the informal sector and minimum wages in the agriculture sector
- Promote, institutionalize and invest in holistic approaches (*for example the Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools, the Songhai model etc*) that strengthen both youth' skills and encourage their participation in the agro sector
- Foster adequate means and opportunities for youth to be able to remain in rural areas (*therefore managing migration to cities or else*)

Thank you

For further info:

Youth employment programmes / initiatives

<http://www.fao-ilo.org/fao-ilo-youth/en/>

Youth and climate-smart initiatives

<http://www.yunga.org/>

Holistic approaches

<http://www.fao-ilo.org/fao-ilo-youth/fao-ilo-jffls/en/>

Ongoing regional initiatives

The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) <http://www.nepad-caadp.net/>

The Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania (SAGCOT) <http://www.africacorridors.com/sagcot/>

The Beira Agricultural Growth Corridor (BAGC) <http://www.beiracorridor.com/>