



Republic of Rwanda  
Ministry of Agriculture  
and Animal Resources



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### Concept Note

## Youth Employment in Agriculture as a Solid Solution to ending Hunger and Poverty in Africa: *Engaging through Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and Entrepreneurship*

*Kigali, Rwanda*  
*August 20<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018*

### 1. Introduction

Over sixty percent of Africa's estimated 1.2 billion people are under the age of 25; yet with little job creation currently in the rural areas where the majority of the population resides, there is a growing uncertainty over the continent's preparedness to tap this resource. Tens of millions of jobs will have to be created each year in rural areas for Africa to harness the dividends of this youthful population.

In the African context, the key to shared prosperity and poverty eradication is to be found through creation and expansion of decent jobs in rural and urban areas. Studies have shown that agricultural growth in Sub-Saharan Africa has a more positive impact on reducing poverty compared to growth in other sectors, implying that tapping into the reservoir of employment opportunities in agriculture is indispensable for poverty reduction. Despite the potential of agriculture to create employment, the growing youth population in Africa is turning away from agriculture and rural areas due to, among others, the drudgery and poor remuneration associated with low-productivity agriculture.

Furthermore, despite their significant contribution to the agricultural sector, young women in rural areas typically find themselves in disadvantaged positions compared with their male counterparts. They bear the burden of unpaid and household work and have unequal access to education and training and productive resources such as land, finance and technology.

Obviously, sustainable solutions for decent youth employment in agriculture in Africa must address the intertwined issues of minimizing drudgery while maximizing returns to effort, which could be achieved through harnessing opportunities in agribusiness entrepreneurship, and innovations to enhance productivity and competitiveness. According to estimates by the World Bank, the agribusiness and logistics sector in Africa are set to mobilize about a trillion dollar business by 2030. These are also playing key roles in agricultural transformation through agricultural value-chain development. It is crucial that the youth, and particularly young women, be empowered to take active part and benefit from such big and growing business opportunities.

Continental Frameworks exist that made commitments to creating enabling conditions for the transformation of the agricultural sector and for empowering the youth to actively participate and benefit from emerging opportunities. The Malabo Declaration, adopted by African Heads of State and Government in June 2014, on "Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods" seeks to pursue an inclusive agricultural growth and transformation process; and to this end commits to create job opportunities for the youth in agricultural value chains, and to support and facilitate preferential entry and participation for the youth in gainful and attractive agri-business opportunities. It reaffirms the political leadership resolve towards ensuring, through deliberate and targeted public support, that all segments of the population, particularly women and the youth, must participate and directly benefit from the growth and transformation opportunities to improve their lives and livelihoods.



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Considering agriculture as an essential driver of economic development and an area of great opportunities for young people in Africa, harnessing opportunities in agribusiness entrepreneurship and innovations, including in ICT innovations, along the value chains, contributes to improving the sector's image, increases productivity and returns to investment and provides new employment opportunities, hence attracting more young people. Access to cheaper and more reliable ICT devices, particularly mobile phones, and increased connectivity in Africa is already an opportunity for adoption. It remains an open and clear avenue to support networking among youth, thus reducing their physical isolation in remote rural areas and facilitating access to information, employment and agribusiness services. In this context, the Government of Rwanda, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the African Union in partnership with other organizations are organizing a regional conference on the theme: **Youth Employment in Agriculture as a Solid Solution to ending Hunger and Poverty in Africa: Engaging through Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and Entrepreneurship**, to be held from 20 to 21 August 2018 in Kigali, Rwanda.

## 2. Purpose and Approach of the Conference

The conference aims to foster an exchange among stakeholders (policy makers, development partners, the private sector, youth and women organizations, civil society organizations, research and academia) on knowledge and best practices regarding the interfaces between agriculture, youth employment, entrepreneurship, ICT innovations in agriculture and rural development, leading to prioritizing interventions going forward.

The conference will feature a high-Level interactive panel involving Policy Makers, Youth Leaders, Business and Innovation Leaders, as well as key partners. Specifically, stakeholders will discuss the relative importance of known drivers of youth-centered entrepreneurship and innovations in agriculture and agribusiness along the following major themes:

- *Youth and entrepreneurship*: Will focus on solutions that offer new opportunities for youth entrepreneurship, including on-farm and beyond, along the agricultural value chains. This theme will look at policy, financial and leading examples of incentives to foster youth-led or youth-focused business services.
- *Digital innovations to overcome agriculture value-chain related constraints*: Will focus on technological solutions that support youth-related innovation and modern production technologies in agriculture; solutions to foster youth-led or youth-focused networking.
- *Future of work in the rural economy*: The conference will culminate with a dialogue on a framework and roadmap that will transform work for youth in agriculture and share the future of work we want in Africa's rural areas. This lays a broad framework and course of action towards steering the course of future interventions.

### Side Events

Parallel to the main conference, will be four main side events:

- *Digital Innovation track*: Boot camp events to engage youth on new innovations, elevate innovation and deliver a results-oriented approach. Three complementary innovation teams - **#HackAgainstHunger**,



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**#AgriBootCamp, #AgriPitch-** will be launched prior to the conference to inspire young innovators. The camps will harness new technologies, mentor young entrepreneurs, explore and accelerate innovative ideas and spark conversations between young innovators, market experts, and potential investors. The Hacker teams will present their pitches and the top three will be given prizes.

- ii. *Virtual consultations:* Prior to and during the conference, to ultimately involve more youth, a virtual consultation will be set up through a youth employment in agriculture platform. The youth will provide inputs and views on the virtual consultation in the thematic areas and be engaged in the interactive sessions. Videos will also be streamed; post-conference interviews and other types of media coverage will be considered.
- iii. *Exhibition of innovative products and services:* an exhibition of innovative products and services for agriculture and rural development by youth and youth-led organizations from across Africa will be organised, as well as a networking/match making space for the youth and potential investors.
- iv. *Side event jointly organised by the NEPAD Agency and FAO on a project being implemented under the Africa Solidarity Trust Fund aimed at promoting decent rural youth employment and entrepreneurship in Agriculture.* The overall purpose of the side event is to exchange lessons & experiences on the project, how to strengthen it and increase its impact in beneficiary countries, and how to possibly replicate it in other countries.

### 3. Expected Outcome

The main Outcome of the Conference will be a framework document and road-map to boost youth engagement and interest in agriculture as a solid foundation towards eradicating poverty through decent youth employment as an integral part of the agenda of wealth creation and shared prosperity in Africa, consistent with AU Agenda 2063 and SDGs.

In particular, the framework document will be expected to build some consensus on success factors and their adaptability to different contexts, as well as on concrete options for partnerships and resource mobilization towards regional upscaling and replicability. The proceedings and key lessons from the conference will be published in a document as the conference's result.

This discussion will be expected to continue at country level, in order to influence important policy reforms that will result into better environments for ICT in agriculture and food systems, especially for youth centred solutions.

For the youth in attendance, the aim will be for each to leave with a much better sense of the available resources, such as technical assistance, finance, training and education, to support their interest and activity in the agricultural sector. They are expected to have significantly expanded their regional and continental networks in regard to both key program managers, projects supporting youth in agriculture, other young agripreneurs and professionals continent-wide who are active in the agricultural sector.



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## Annex: Provisional Annotated Programme

### Youth Employment in Agriculture as a Solid Solution to ending Hunger and Poverty in Africa: *Engaging through Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and Entrepreneurship*

Kigali, Rwanda  
20th – 21st August 2018

<b>Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> August 2018</b>	
08:30 – 09:30	Arrival and registration of participants
09:30 – 10:30	<p><b>Opening session</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Welcome Remarks <b>Hon. Geraldine Mukeshimana</b>, Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Rwanda</li> <li>● Statement <b>Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko</b>, African Union Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture</li> <li>● Statement <b>Li Yong</b>, Director General, United Nations Industrial Development Organisation</li> <li>● Statement <b>José Graziano da Silva</b>, Director General, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations</li> <li>● Keynote Speech <b>H.E Paul Kagame</b>, President of the Republic of Rwanda (TBC)</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Novella Nikwigize</p>
10:30 – 11:30	<p><b>“Entrepreneurship and ICT innovations in agri-food systems – Opportunities for the Youth” High-level panel discussion</b></p> <p>Youth engagement is vital for the sustainability of agri-food systems. African agriculture and agribusiness markets are projected to more than triple from USD 313 billion today to about USD 1 trillion in 2030, which represents a major opportunity for (youth) employment generation. Governments and development partners should create enabling environments to enable youths to take advantage of these enormous opportunities.</p> <p><b>Introductory Statement by:</b> <b>Petteri Taalas</b>, Secretary-General, World Meteorological Organization</p> <p><b>Panellists:</b> <b>Video Message by Guy Ryder</b>, Director General, International Labour Organization (ILO) <b>Jean de Dieu Rurangirwa</b>, Minister of Information Technology and Communications (MiTEC), Rwanda</p>



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	<p><b>Ibrahim Hassane Mayaki</b>, Chief Executive Officer, New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) (TBC)</p> <p><b>Agnes Kalibata</b>, President, Alliance for Green Revolution Africa (AGRA)</p> <p><b>Dr Charles Agwanda</b>, Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International (CABI)</p> <p><b>Antonio Correa Do Prado</b>, Deputy Director, Social Policies and Rural Institutions, FAO</p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Novella Nikwigize</p>
11:30 – 12:00	Coffee break; Group photo; Press conference; Exhibition touring by Senior Officials;
12:00 – 13:00	<p><b>“Voice of the Youth” Special session on youth entrepreneurship</b></p> <p>Several youths have successfully entered into agriculture, and serve as role models to fellow youths. The speakers will share their motivations, experiences, challenges and successes in engaging in the sector. Insights will also be shared on how successful young entrepreneurs can be better supported to act as role models for their peers.</p> <p><b>Introductory remark by Hon. Geraldine Mukeshimana</b>, Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Rwanda/ Introduction of Ministers in attendance</p> <p><b>Panellists:</b></p> <p><b>Dieudonne Twahirwa</b>, Founder, Gashora Farm Ltd, Rwanda</p> <p><b>Steve Ngunyi</b>, Managing partner, icon (be one) Ltd, Kenya</p> <p><b>Lam Shumei</b>, Founder, Poultry East Africa Ltd, Singapore</p> <p><b>Ruramiso Mashumba</b>, Chairperson, Youth wing of Zimbabwe Farmers Union, Zimbabwe</p> <p><b>Flavien Kouatcha</b>, Founder, Save our Agriculture, Cameroun</p> <p><b>Awa Caba</b>, Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer, Sooretul, Senegal</p> <p><b>Olawale Rotimi Opeyemi</b>, Founder, JR Farms Limited, Nigeria</p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Eugene Anangwe</p>
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:30	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Parallel thematic sessions</b></p> <p><b>1. Digital innovations to overcome agriculture value chain-related constraints</b></p> <p>This session will focus primarily on the link between ICTs for agriculture and youth entrepreneurship to assess the solutions that support youth-related digital innovation and modern production technologies in agriculture and exploring the environments and solutions to foster youth-led or youth-focused networking and engagement around entrepreneurship, innovation and agriculture.</p> <p><b>Introductory presentation by</b> Centre for Agriculture and Bioscience International (CABI)</p> <p><b>Panellists:</b></p> <p><b>Jean-Claude Kayisinga</b>, Permanent Secretary Ministry of Agriculture &amp; Animal Resources, Rwanda</p>



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**Andrew Rugege**, Regional Director for Africa, International Telecommunications Union  
**Jean Philbert Nsengimana**, Special Advisor, Smart Africa  
**John Kimani**, Developers Ecosystem, Google  
**Henry Burgsteden**, IT Officer – Digital Innovations, FAO  
**Worlali Senyo**, Representative, Farmerline, Ghana

**Moderator:** Eugene Anangwe

**Discussion questions:**

1. How can the 4 barriers of digital inclusion (incentives, low incomes and affordability, user capability and infrastructure) be overcome? In addition, what is the role of the UN system in achieving this?
2. What is the role of National Governments and UN agencies in providing digital value added services in the agriculture value chains?
3. How can national governments increase access to more relevant data, information and knowledge, so that young entrepreneurs can develop new digital value added services and grow their enterprises?
4. How can the public and private sectors contribute to creating an enabling environment for women-led tech start-ups in Africa and digital inclusion more widely?

**2. Access to finance and markets for an effective, profitable and viable agro-entrepreneurship**

Limited access to finance and markets are two of the key challenges that young people face in starting and growing their enterprises. Access to a range of financial services can be an important enabling factor for the expansion of youth-led micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSME) in rural contexts, and in particular, in the agricultural sector. However, few African youth have sustained access to the appropriate mix of cost-effective, demand-driven and tailored financial products and related non-financial advisory services that would allow them to engage in the sector in a productive, profitable and rewarding manner.

**Introductory presentation by:**

**Saleh Usman Gashua**, Secretary General, Association Africaine de Crédit Rural et Agricole (AFRACA)

**Panellists:**

**Mahali Phamotse**, Minister of Gender and Youth, Lesotho

**Paul Winters**, Associate Vice-President, Strategy and Knowledge Department, International Fund for Agricultural Development

**Dr Martin Fregene**, Director of Agriculture & Agro-Industry, African Development Bank

**Mr Fodé Ndiaye**, UN Resident Coordinator, Rwanda

**Hannington Namara**, Managing Director, Equity Bank, Rwanda

**Nene Cisse**, Founder and Managing Director, Albou Confiture, Guinea





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**Moderator: David Phiri**, Subregional Coordinator for Eastern Africa, FAO

**Discussion questions:**

1. Which specific ICT applications appear to hold the greatest potential for fostering youth-focused financial access and employment generation?
2. How do we capacitate formal Financial Service Providers to make them better able to design and commercialize financial services that are tailored to the specific needs, strengths and constraints of rural young entrepreneurs?
3. What are the complementary, non-financial services (such as technical assistance, financial education, business management training) that could be bundled within the offer of a range of youth-tailored financial services, to foster the uptake and success of these products
4. How can young agripreneurs be better supported to be more competitive in local, regional and international markets? What role can the ICT sector play?

**3. Skills development**

Key capacities are required to enable youth to participate effectively in competitive agricultural value chains. For example, skills in certification schemes, which regulate some important markets are needed. Training entities and universities may consider setting up an advisory consulting service to provide entrepreneurs with the right information at the right time, particularly for youth who may not have a background in agriculture or business. Equally, Governments must establish and support well-designed and affordable training and mentorship to build the entrepreneurial skills of youth.

**Introductory presentation by Simunza Muyangana**, representing the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Co-operation (CTA)

**Panellists:**

**Teodorico Campos**, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Sao Tomé & Principe

**Kwesi Atta-Krah**, Director for Country Alignment and Systems Integration, IITA

**Alemayehu Konde Koira**, Rwanda Representative, MasterCard Foundation

**Beryl Agengo**, Executive Coordinator, Global African Agribusiness Accelerator Platform

**Alex Ariho**, Chief Executive Officer, Africa Agribusiness Incubation Network

**Rouffahi Koabo**, Chief Executive Officer, Centre Incubateur des PME, Niger

**Octave Semwaga**, Director General, Strategic Planning & Programme coordination, MINAGRI, Rwanda

**Moderator: Ernest Ruzindaza**, CAADP Team Leader and Senior Advisor, African Union Commission Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture

**Discussion questions:**

1. What skills are most needed by youth in agriculture and how could they be best improved?



	<p>2. The youth are not a homogenous group; the specific needs of urban, rural, isolated, unskilled youth differ. Which types of interventions work better for the different categories of youth, taking entrepreneurship and ICTs in the agricultural sector, into consideration?</p> <p>3. What critical elements are missing in current capacity development interventions targeting youth entrepreneurship in agriculture?</p> <p>4. What are some of the challenges and potential solutions to scaling up successful approaches</p>
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee break
16:00 – 16:30	<p><b>Report in plenary</b></p> <p>The key discussion points and outcomes from the parallel sessions will be shared and briefly discussed in plenary.</p>
19:00	Networking cocktail
<b>Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> August 2018</b>	
08:00 – 08:30	Arrival of participants
08:30 – 09:00	<b>Recap of previous day</b>
09:00 – 10:30	<p><b>The future of work in the rural economy</b></p> <p>The world of work is undergoing major changes caused by globalization, technological innovation, demographic shifts, but also by rising inequality, climate change, and migration, among other megatrends. Unleashing the potential of decent jobs in the rural economy is essential to shaping the future of work we want. In this respect, young women and men in rural economies can be powerful catalysts for positive change, inclusive growth and sustainable development. The session will explore major policy issues that will shape the future of work in rural areas including the role of ICTs as the cornerstone to transforming agriculture and other rural sectors, the importance of rural economic diversification and investments in agricultural development to promote more and better jobs for young people and the need to empower and give voice to young workers in the rural economy, particularly young women.</p> <p><b>Introductory presentation:</b></p> <p><b>Cynthia Samuel-Olonjuwon</b>, Regional Director for Africa, International Labor Organisation (ILO)</p> <p><b>Panellists:</b></p> <p><b>Uzziel Ndagijimana</b>, Minister of Finance and Economic Planning, Rwanda <b>Paul Winters</b>, Associate Vice-President, Strategy and Knowledge Department, International Fund for Agricultural Development</p>





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	<p><b>Bukar Tijani</b>, Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.</p> <p><b>Rhoda Boateng</b>, Africa Coordinator, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)</p> <p><b>Tarek Tawfik</b>, Vice-Chairman of the Egyptian Federation of Industries</p> <p><b>Moderator: Mariangels Fortuny</b>, Head of Unit, Agriculture, Forestry, Tourism and Construction Unit, International Labour Organization</p>
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee break
11:00 – 13:00	<p><b>Side event on a joint NEPAD – FAO Project aimed at promoting decent rural youth employment and entrepreneurship in Agriculture &amp; Agribusiness.</b></p> <p>The overall purpose of the event is to exchange lessons &amp; experiences on the project since inception in 2016, how to strengthen it and increase its impact in beneficiary countries, and how to possibly replicate it in other countries.</p> <p><b>Moderator &amp; Overview of the Event:</b></p> <p><b>Fati N’zi Hassane</b>, Head of Skills &amp; Employment for Youth Program, NEPAD Agency</p> <p>Key note address: <b>FAO</b></p> <p><b>Panellists:</b></p> <p><b>Mr. Rouffahi Koabo</b>, Chief Executive Officer, CIPMEN, Niger</p> <p><b>Mrs. Hannah Enanga Ewoke</b>, Director, Regional Multipurpose Youth Training Centre, Cameroon</p> <p><b>Mr. Pearson Soko</b>, Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development, Malawi</p> <p><b>Mr. Tobie Manga Ondoa</b>, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Cameroon</p> <p><b>Mr. Vincent Oparah</b>, Project Manager, NEPAD Agency</p> <p><b>Female Youth (TBD)</b></p> <p><b>Male Youth (TBD)</b></p> <p><b>Synthesis - Mrs. Estherine Fotabong</b>, Director PICD, NEPAD Agency</p> <p><b>Continental Youth in Agriculture Resource Networking Session</b></p> <p>This interactive networking session is intended to afford attending youth participants the opportunity to engage with representatives of leading technical and financial resource institutions active across the continent. The session will commence with a mapping presentation, followed by interactive discussions with representatives in attendance.</p> <p><b>Moderator: Michael Sudarkasa</b>, Chief Executive Officer, Africa Business Group/Founder, Global African Agribusiness Accelerator Platform</p>
11:00 – 13:00	



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13:00 – 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 – 15:00	<p><b>Youth Innovation Technical Assistance Facility (Yi-TAF)</b> FAO will use this occasion to discuss a multi-donor, grant-funded <b>Youth Innovation Technical Assistance Facility (Yi-TAF)</b> that will deliver FAO’s specialized and cross-cutting knowledge, technical expertise, tools – with a particular focus on the role of ICTs and youth employment - across the investment cycle, to investees that are linked to various sources of capital.</p> <p><b>Recognition of Youth-champions representing the East African Community</b> As part of the FAO/EAC Youth Project on Promoting Youth Employment in the Agricultural Sector in EAC Partner States, six Youth Champions-in-Agriculture were selected out of many more youth involved in the sector and will be recognised during the Conference. Some of their products will also be showcased. Equipped with improved farming techniques and a new vision of agribusiness, their successful business models could be replicated in grooming a critical mass of youth in transforming Africa’s agricultural sector.</p> <p><b>Presenters:</b> FAO and EAC Secretariat</p>
15:00 – 16:00	<p><b>Hackathon: Presentation of results</b> The hackathon “HackAgainstHunger” will be taking place parallel to the conference to challenge young innovators, with different levels of expertise in agriculture and digital innovation, to improve digital services to find innovative ways to unlock data, information and knowledge for small-scale farmers. The hacker teams will present their pitches during this session and the top 3 will be given prizes.</p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> FAO</p>
16:00 – 16:30	Coffee break
16:30 – 17:30	<p><b>Closing Session</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summary of the Conference, Conference Communique and Commitments <b>Bukar Tijani</b>, Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa, FAO. <b>Jean Claude kayisinga</b>, Permanent Secretary, Rwanda Ministry of Agriculture &amp; Animal Resources, Rwanda.</li> <li>• Announcement of Hackathon winner(s)</li> <li>• Closing Remarks <b>Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko</b>, African Union Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture <b>José Graziano da Silva</b>, Director General, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations <b>Hon. Geraldine Mukeshimana</b>, Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Rwanda</li> </ul>



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