**Sustaining the Impact of Capacity Development Initiatives for African Youth in Agriculture**

**Collection of contributions received**

Contents

Topic note 6

Contributions received 10

1. Launch message by Abebe Haile Gabriel, Regional Programme Leader, FAO Regional Office for Africa 10

2. Gerwin Jansen, BoP Innovation Center, Netherlands 11

3. Waheed Waheed, International Institute of Tropical Agriculture Yough Agripreneurs (IYA), Nigeria 12

4. Thomas Wenceslas Ottou, Financial House S.A., Cameroon 12

5. Ebrima Saidyleigh, GOGREEN, Gambia 14

6. Atsu Sename, Entreprises Territories et Développement, Togo [1st contribution] 14

7. Musa Usman Musa, Kano State agricultural and rural development authority, Nigeria [1st contribution] 16

8. Ololade Adesola, L.A. Consult Limited, Nigeria [1st contribution] 17

9. Ndubuisi Idejiora-Kalu, African Youth Union Commission, Nigeria 18

10. Aruna Adam, Partners in Rural Empowerment and Development (PARED), Ghana 19

11. Rachel Ghanson Dwamena, Green WaterHut, Ghana 19

12. Agape Ishabakaki, Freelancer, United Republic of Tanzania 20

13. Dele Raheem, Arctic Centre / University of Lapland, Finland 21

14. Milly Monkhei, Botswana University of Agriculture and Natural resources (BUAN), Botswana 21

15. Philip Ifejika, National Institute for Freshwater Fisheries Research, Nigeria [1st contribution] 22

16. Garba Saleh, Federal College of Education (Tech) Bichi, Nigeria [1st contribution] 22

17. Meidimi Sokoto, Dimjim Mushrooms, Kenya 23

18. Arman Kiniso, Ethiopia 23

19. Kafui Agbe, YPARD, Ghana 24

20. Chigozie Abuta, University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria 24

21. Precillia Ijang Tata Ngome, Institute of Agricultural Research for Development, Cameroon 25

22. Titus Gakwaya, TK-Engineering & Agro-Technology Ltd, Rwanda 25

23. Tang Erasmus Nchuaji, The University of Younde, Cameroon 26

24. Pauline Ngari, Youth Talent and Enterprise Developmen Centre (YTEDC), Kenya 27

25. Tanyaradzwa Dembetembe, Zimbabwe 28

26. James Aucha, African Agribusiness Incubators Network (AAIN), Kenya 28

27. Nkafu Therese, Ghana 29

28. Phanoel Madjita Djoumountanan, Ferme Perseverence, Chad [1st contribution] 30

29. Justin Chisenga, FAO, Italy - facilitator of the discussion 32

30. Phanoel Madjita Djoumountanan, Ferme Perseverence, Chad [2nd contribution] 34

31. Maina Karuiru, Food Quality and Safety Services Ltd, Kenya 36

32. Muhammad Mehmood-Ul-Hassan, World Agroforestry Centre, Kenya [1st contribution] 36

33. Muhammad Mehmood-Ul-Hassan, World Agroforestry Centre, Kenya [2nd contribution] 37

34. Hillary Maket, Agriterra, Kenya 37

35. Lahcen Daali, Morocco 38

36. Haruna Adam, Partners in Rural Empowering and Development (PARED), Ghana 38

37. Aklilu Nigussie, Ethiopian Institutes of Agricultural Research, Ehtiopia 39

38. Michael Ige, Concerned Africans Youth Forum – CAYF, Ghana 39

39. Musa Usman Musa, Kano State agricultural and rural development authority, Nigeria [2nd contribution] 40

40. Musa Usman Musa, Kano State agricultural and rural development authority, Nigeria [3rd contribution] 40

41. Maina Karuiru, Food Quality and Safety Services Ltd, Kenya 41

42. Peter Stele, Independent consultant, Australia 43

43. Eileen Omosa, We Grow Ideas, Kenya 45

44. Justin Chisenga, FAO, Italy – Facilitator of the discussion 47

45. Shadrack Agaki, Africa Youth Employment Initiative, Kenya 50

46. Halimatou Baldeh, Food Safety and Quality Authority of the Gambia, Gambia [1st contribution] 50

47. Musa Usman Musa, Kano state agricultural and rural development authority, Nigeria [4th contribution] 50

48. Yves Stephane Ngaleu, Ministère de l'agriculture et du développement rural, Cameroon 51

49. Ololade Adesola, L.A. Consult Limited, Nigeria [2nd contribution] 51

50. Nawsheen Hosenally, Agribusiness TV, Burkina Faso – expert supporting the discussion 52

51. Atsu Sename, Entreprises Territoire et Développement, Togo [2nd contribution] 54

52. Atsu Sename, Entreprises Territoire et Développement, Togo [3rd contribution] 56

53. Kafui Agbe, YPARD, Ghana [1st contribution] 56

54. Stephen Adejoro Adejoro, Livestock Industry Foundation For Africa, Nigeria 57

55. Garba Saleh, Federal College of Education (Tech) Bichi, Nigeria [2nd contribution] 57

56. Philip Ifejika, National Institute for Freshwater Fisheries Research, Nigeria [2nd contribution] 58

57. Atsu Sename, Entreprises Territoire et Développement, Togo [4rt contribution] 59

58. Halimatou Baldeh, Food Safety and Quality Authority of the Gambia, Gambia [2nd contribution] 59

59. Justin Chisenga, FAO, Italy - facilitator of the discussion 61

60. Kafui Agbe, YPARD, Ghana [2nd contribution] 63

61. Inza Fanny, Association des riziculteurs de Touredougou, Côte d'Ivoire 63

62. Julian Akinremi, Fourteen farms, Nigeria 64

63. Daramola Tolu, Nigeria 66

64. Theodore Mulumeoderhwa Lushombo, Action For Improvement of Food Child and Mother, Democratic Republic of the Congo 67

65. Salahuddeen Mohammed Shitu, SALAKNIGHT LTD, Nigeria 68

66. Youssoupha Diouf, CNAAS, Senegal 68

67. Tony Nsanganira, FAO, Ghana – expert supporting the discussion 68

68. Innocent Chamisa, FAO, Italy 69

69. Toyin Otitoju, Africa Leadership forum, Nigeria 71

70. Ken Lohento, CTA, Netherlands – expert supporting the discussion [1st contribution] 72

71. Alex Ariho, African Agribusiness Incubators Network (AAIN), Ghana – expert supporting the discussion 73

72. Hazeez Durosomo, Biofinderplus, Nigeria 75

73. Gbadebo Odularu, CREPOL, Senegal 75

74. Justin Chisenga, FAO, Italy - Facilitator of the discussion 76

75. Nyawira Gitaka, Kenya 77

76. Kafui Agbe Young, Professionals for Agricultural Development, Ghana 77

77. JEAN DE DIEU HARERIMANA, Kenya 78

78. Atsu SENAME, Entreprises Territoires et Développement, Togo 78

79. Belinda Kiraya, ecom, Kenya 81

80. Agbessi KENYEKU Nardy, Green Planet, Togo 82

81. Jacques DIOUF, Senegal 83

82. Aklilu Nigussie, Ethiopian Institutes of Agricultural Research, Ethiopia 86

83. April Dodd, International Agri-Food Network, United States of America 87

84. Girmay Tesfay Belay, Mekelle University, Ethiopia 88

85. Constantino Nguivoum THEAGIZ, Cameroon 89

86. Justin Chisenga, FAO, Italy - facilitator 91

87. Eyawassou Baya, Songhaï Centre, Benin – expert supporting the discussion 92

88. Edward Tanyima, FAO Uganda 96

89. Taibat Moji Yusuf, Kwara State University, Malete, Nigeria 98

90. Paul Emuria, FAO Uganda 99

91. Denye Ronald, Agro-Tourism Association, Uganda 100

92. Aminata Fatmata KandehAgro Fish farm, Sierra Leone 102

93. Gbadebo Odularu, CREPOL, Senegal 103

94. Ken Lohento, CTA, Netherlands – expert supporting the discussion [2nd contribution] 104

95. Dahan Kueshi Semanou, Oxfam Youth Program, Benin 105

96. Abigail Iyilade, Agricultural and Rural Management Training Institute (ARMTI), Nigeria 106

97. Aklilu Nigussie, Ethiopian Institutes of Agricultural Reseach, Ethiopia 107

# Topic note

**English**

Africa is a youthful continent, with youth - defined by the African Union as every person between the age of 15 and 35 - currently constituting 35 percent of its population. By 2050, this number is expected to double, reaching over 830 million meaning that 29 percent of the total world youth population will reside in Africa.

The increase in youth population will result in a rising number of people of working age, which could exacerbate youth unemployment on the continent. However, at the same time it will give Africa an opportunity to increase agricultural development. Engaging youth in agriculture and retaining them in the sector is a strategy that could both contribute to increasing agricultural productivity and addressing youth unemployment.

Although agriculture is the mainstay of most African economies, the number of youth engaged in the sector as either wage earners or entrepreneurs is very low. Young people, and in particular female youth, lack access to finance, land, markets, technologies and practical skills, and have limited interest in agriculture. This, coupled with lack of decent jobs in both rural and urban areas, is among the factors forcing youth to migrate to urban areas and abroad to seek employment mostly in sectors other than agriculture. According to ILO (2016), about 38 percent of youth between 15 and 29 years old in sub-Sahara Africa are willing to move permanently to another country.

African governments, NGOs and international organizations, including FAO, are increasingly implementing youth-specific capacity development (CD) initiatives in support of youth involvement in agriculture. Most initiatives combine agriculture and entrepreneurship as one of the strategies to attract youth (graduates and non-graduates; rural, urban and/or peri-urban, young women, etc.) to agriculture and address rural-urban-abroad migration and Africa's growing youth unemployment.

**What should be the nature of post-capacity development support to these youth in order to retain them in agriculture, and to ensure the sustainability and long-term impact of youth-specific CD initiatives?**

This online discussion aims at opening an exchange of ideas, good practices and lessons learned on how to sustain the impact of interventions that develop capacities and engage youth in agriculture.

Specifically, we invite you to share your views on how best to support African youth in agriculture after they have gone through youth-specific capacity development initiatives. You may contribute by responding to any of the following questions:

* **What are the biggest challenges youth in Africa face after going through youth-specific capacity development initiatives in agriculture?**
* **What are the examples of existing post-capacity development sustainability initiatives for youth in agriculture in Africa? What works and what does not? Are there any success stories and good practices that can be shared?**
* **What post-capacity development support do the youth need? What can the youth do to support each other in developing their skills and capacities?**
* **What enabling environment is needed to ensure sustainability of youth in agriculture capacity development initiatives?**
* **Is there a role for modern technologies, including Information and Communication Technologies, in sustaining capacity development initiatives?**

Please do not hesitate to share your experiences and knowledge on this topic.

Outcomes will help identify new capacity development needs and improve interventions; success stories shared by participants will be used for communication products. The discussion will also support the development of a network of young agripreneurs connected to FAO platforms.

We look forward to your contributions and to support African youth entering or already engaged in agriculture.

*Justin Chisenga*

*Facilitator of the discussion*

**\*\*\***

**French**

L’Afrique est un continent peuplé de jeunes, ceux-ci étant définis par l’Union africaine comme toute personne âgée de 15 à 35 ans, qui représentent actuellement 35 pour cent de sa population. D’ici 2050, ce nombre devrait doubler et atteindre plus de 830 millions de personnes, c’est-à-dire que 29 pour cent de l’ensemble de la population mondiale de jeunes résidera en Afrique.

L’augmentation de la population de jeunes va entraîner une hausse du nombre de personnes en âge de travailler, ce qui risque d’exacerber le chômage des jeunes sur le continent. Mais dans le même temps, cette situation va donner à l’Afrique la possibilité d’intensifier son développement agricole. Le fait d’assurer la participation des jeunes dans l’agriculture et de les retenir dans ce secteur est une stratégie qui pourrait contribuer à la fois à accroître la productivité agricole et à résoudre le problème du chômage des jeunes.

L’agriculture est le pilier de la plupart des économies africaines; toutefois, le nombre de jeunes qui travaillent dans ce secteur, en qualité de salariés ou d’entrepreneurs, reste très faible. Les jeunes, en particulier les jeunes femmes, n’ont pas accès au financement, à la terre, aux marchés, aux technologies et aux compétences pratiques, et ne sont pas très attirés par l’agriculture. Cet état de choses, conjugué au manque d’emplois décents dans les zones rurales et urbaines, est un des facteurs qui obligent les jeunes à émigrer vers des zones rurales et à l’étranger en quête d’un emploi, essentiellement dans des secteurs autres que l’agriculture. Selon les calculs de l’OIT (2016), 38 pour cent environ des jeunes de 15 à 29 ans vivant en Afrique subsaharienne sont disposés à aller s’installer définitivement dans un autre pays[3].

Les gouvernements africains, les ONG et les organisations internationales, y compris la FAO, mènent de plus en plus souvent des initiatives de développement des capacités s’adressant spécifiquement aux jeunes, afin de favoriser leur participation à l’agriculture. La plupart de ces initiatives conjuguent l’agriculture et l’entreprenariat comme stratégie pour attirer les jeunes (diplômés et non diplômés, ruraux, urbains et/ou périurbains, jeunes femmes, etc.) dans le secteur agricole, ainsi que pour lutter contre la migration rurale, urbaine, vers l’étranger et le chômage croissant des jeunes africains.

**Quel type de soutien devrait être accordé à ces jeunes, après le renforcement des capacités, afin de les retenir dans l’agriculture et d’assurer un impact durable et à long terme de ces initiatives de renforcement des capacités axées sur les jeunes?**

Cette discussion en ligne a pour but d’ouvrir un échange d’idées, de bonnes pratiques et de leçons apprises sur la manière d’assurer un impact soutenu des interventions de développement des capacités et de participation des jeunes dans l’agriculture.

Nous vous invitons plus particulièrement à nous faire part de vos points de vue sur la meilleure façon d’apporter au soutien aux jeunes africains dans le domaine de l’agriculture à l’issue des initiatives de développement de capacités axées sur les jeunes. Vous pouvez nous envoyer vos contributions sur la base des questions suivantes:

* **Quels sont les principaux défis rencontrés par les jeunes africains à l’issue des initiatives de développement de capacités axées sur les jeunes dans le secteur agricole?**
* **Connaissez-vous des exemples d’initiatives actuelles visant à assurer la pérennité de renforcement des capacités pour les jeunes africains dans le domaine agricole? Qu’est-ce qui fonctionne et qu’est-ce qui ne fonctionne pas? Y a-t-il des exemples d’initiatives réussies et de bonnes pratiques à partager?**
* **De quel type de soutien les jeunes ont-ils besoin dans la phase postérieure au renforcement des capacités? Que peuvent faire les jeunes pour s’entraider et renforcer ainsi leurs compétences et leurs capacités?**
* **Quel environnement favorable faut-il assurer pour garantir la permanence des jeunes dans les initiatives de renforcement des capacités dans le secteur agricole?**
* **Les technologies modernes, notamment les technologies de l’information et des communications, ont-elles un rôle à jouer pour assurer la durabilité des initiatives de renforcement des capacités?**

N’hésitez pas à nous faire part de vos expériences et de vos connaissances sur ce sujet.

Les résultats de cette consultation serviront à détecter de nouveaux besoins en matière de renforcement des capacités et à améliorer les interventions; les exemples d’initiatives réussies citées par les participants serviront de base à l’élaboration de produits de communication. La discussion permettra également d’étayer le développement d’un réseau de jeunes entrepreneurs agricoles connectés aux plates-formes de la FAO.

Nous attendons impatiemment vos contributions et votre soutien aux jeunes africains qui se lancent ou qui travaillent déjà dans l’agriculture.

*Justin Chisenga*

*Facilitateur de la discussion*

# Contributions received

## Launch message by Abebe Haile Gabriel, Regional Programme Leader, FAO Regional Office for Africa

Dear Colleagues,

We would like to invite you to an online discussion on post-capacity development interventions to support African youth entering or already engaged in agriculture.

The aim of the discussion is to identify challenges and opportunities related to sustaining the impact of interventions (existing and future ones) aimed at developing capacities and engaging youth in agriculture. More specifically, the discussion will focus on existing good practices and lessons learned in this regard.

The discussion will also support the development of a network of young agripreneurs connected to FAO platforms and initiatives.

The following are the questions for the discussion:

* **What are the biggest challenges youth in Africa face after going through youth-specific capacity development initiatives in agriculture?**
* **What are the examples of existing post-capacity development sustainability initiatives for youth in agriculture in Africa? What works and what does not? Are there any success stories and good practices that can be shared?**
* **What post-capacity development support do the youth need? What can the youth do to support each other in developing their skills and capacities?**
* **What enabling environment is needed to ensure sustainability of youth in agriculture capacity development initiatives?**
* **Is there a role for modern technologies, including Information and Communication Technologies, in sustaining capacity development initiatives?**

Please find the full introduction to this consultation on the discussion webpage (<http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/fr/africa/discussions/youth-in-agriculture>), where you will also find additional information and resources.

The consultation is facilitated by Justin Chisenga, Capacity Development Officer at FAO Headquarters. He will be supported by the following subject experts:

* Nawsheen Hosenally, Co-Founder of Agribusiness TV, Burkina Faso
* Msekiwa Matsimbe, YPARD Malawi Country Representative, Malawi
* Eyawassou Baya, Training Programs Officer, The Songhai Centre, Benin
* Tony Nsanganira, Coordinator: Youth Employment Programme, FAO/RAF, Ghana
* Alex Ariho, Chief Executive Officer, African Agribusiness Incubators Network (AAIN), Ghana

The discussion page is available in English and French and your comments are welcome in either of the two languages.

To send your input, you can:

Either respond directly to this email ([FSN-moderator@fao.org](mailto:FSN-moderator@fao.org))

Or register to the FSN Forum platform and comment online ([www.fao.org/fsnforum/user/register](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/user/register))

All comments received will be published on the discussion webpage. For any further information, please contact [FSN-moderator@fao.org](mailto:FSN-moderator@fao.org).

We look forward to your active participation.

Abebe Haile Gabriel   
Regional Programme Leader (RPL)  
Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO)/Regional Office for Africa

## Gerwin Jansen, BoP Innovation Center, Netherlands

Hi Abebe Haile Gabriel and others, this is a great initiative and we'd love to join the conversation.

At [BoP Innovation Center](http://www.bopinc.org/) we're working on several integral approaches that aim to (1) improve food & nutrition security in Africa and (2) accelerate impactful entrepreneurship across the agro food value chain. [2Scale](http://2scale.org/) is one of "our" larger programs on this.

Personally, I'd like to discuss 2 intervention areas related to the questions posted by the moderator.

1. **How might modern ICT innovations sustain capacity development initiatives for youth in Agriculture?**We believe there's great potential for this. To give an example, in the [Geopotato](http://www.bopinc.org/updates/using-digital-channels-to-change-farmer-behavior) project we're supporting the development an accurate location-specific SMS alert system for potato diseases in Bangladesh. Are there other examples and do we know to what extend these technological innovations in the agro sector lead to a stronger interest and engagement of younger people in farming.

2. **How might we "move" with the youth and create farming opportunities in urban areas?**There's no doubt that the younger people will keep moving to cities. At BoPInc we're looking at smart urban farming solutions such as vertical farming and [hydroponics](http://hydroponicskenya.com/) that could lead to jobs for young entrepreneurs and at the same time address the increasing stress on food supplies in cities.

Best,

Gerwin (Innovation Program Manager at [BoP Innovation Center](http://www.bopinc.org/))

## Waheed Waheed, International Institute of Tropical Agriculture Yough Agripreneurs (IYA), Nigeria

Training and capacity development is an essential ingredient in the engagement of youth in Agribusiness. However, more attention is needed on mindset change, re-orientation, and provision of necessary resources (start-up Capital or starter pack).

The propensity of fund diversion is high if raw cash is given to young people to start their business. It is better to provide starter pack in the form of machineries, equipment and running cost.

There must be adequate follow up in terms of technical backstopping, coaching and mentoring by successful business owner, if possible those in there age bracket.  Youth to youth (Y2Y) approach seems effective in delivering youth work.

I will like to share my experience as a youth development worker and also as a project manager.

There is a project am current managing tag "**Engaging Youth in Agribusiness: Mechanization**". The overall objective is to training 100 youth in the space of years on the business of owning and maintaining a fleet of smart tractors.

After successful completion of the first year training we facilitate their formation into cooperative.

After successful completion of the training, the price of the tractor increased due to forex couple unfriendly loan condition (e.g. High interest rate, equity contribution etc.). The trainees could not withstand the entire situation and hence resulted to some drop out and group protest.

Presently, I have been working extra hard to identify investors that will purchase the tractor while the trainees manage the business.

## Thomas Wenceslas Ottou, Financial House S.A., Cameroon

**French version**

**Quels sont les principaux défis rencontrés par les jeunes africains à l’issue des initiatives de développement de capacités axées sur les jeunes dans le secteur agricole?**

A l'issue des initiatives du renforcement des capacités, les principaux défis reposent principalement sur trois plans en notre sens: le défi de l'initiative, le défi de l'engagement et le défis de la continuité.

Le défi de l'initiative

En effet, on constate que nombreux sont les jeunes qui veulent entreprendre dans l'agriculture mais commence par la recherche des financements avant de se lancer. Cette démarche n'est pas conseillée pour au moins deux raisons. La première réside dans le fait du découragement. En effet, après deux ou trois rejets du business plan par les banques ou microfinances, ils se lassent. Quelle institution voudrait donner des fonds à une personne n'ayant aucune expérience ni dans le domaine agricole, ni dans les affaires? La deuxième raison tient dans le faite que le jeune doit déjà expérimenter la culture dans laquelle il voudrait s'investir. Ce qui lui permettra de gagner une première expérience, comprendre les cycles de la culture, les saisons, les contraintes les risques etc. L'initiative en question suppose donc d'accumuler un capital expérience après le renforcement des capacités. A cet effet, ils peuvent entre autre faire des séjour dans des plantations pour apporter leur forces de travail et leur industrie. Attention, ces séjours doivent être ciblés au regard de leur idée d'entrepreneuriat.

Le défi de l'engagement

Les cycles des cultures ont généralement des durées importantes avant la production; 3 mois, 6 mois, 9 mois parfois des années. Or, ce n'est que l'engagement qui peut autoriser tout succès dans ce contexte. Quoique capacité, un jeune sans engagement réel ne produira rien. La mobilisation de l'engagement est également importante dans un contexte de manque d'infrastructure de transports, d'enclavement, d'éloignement des bassins de production avec les débouchés (à l'origine de la carence de financement et de la montée du gaspillage postproduction ou post récolte).

Le défi de la continuité

En effet, après un cycle de production, l'engagement peut connaitre un coup tant la mobilisation des ressources a été importante pour un résultat parfois mitigé. Or la continuité ici est le relais de l'engagement. En effet, les différentes expérience capitalisées peuvent aider l'entrepreneur agricole à parfaire sa connaissance du secteur et a obtenir de meilleure résultat, à se faire un carnet d'adresse etc. c'est dès cet instant que la recherche de financement peut facilement aboutir. La notion d'existant participant en grande partie à la continuité. L'intégration de la notion de coaching par les grandes plantations dans lesquels ils ont passés des séjours d'apprentissage.

Il s'agit là des valeurs dont doit s'armer l'entrepreneur agricole à l'issue du renforcement des capacités qui doit lui-même non pas être théorique mais pratique, touchant tous les domaine possible, mais davantage en étroite ligne avec la culture d'intérêt du futur entrepreneur agricole. Comme on dit, pas d'intérêt pas d'action.

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**English translation**

On the subject of **youth-specific capacity development initiatives,** the main challenges rest on three levels, as we see it: initiative, commitment and perseverance

The initiative challenge

In practice, one can see that the number of young people willing to go into business in agriculture is high, but they begin with the search for funds before starting. This approach is not recommended for at least two reasons. The first is the fact of becoming discouraged. Indeed, after two or three rejections of a business plan by the banks or microfinance institutions, the young get fed up. Which institution would accept to give funds to a person without any experience neither in the agricultural sector or business? The second reason relates to the fact that the young ought to try out the kind of cultivation in which he/she would like to invest. This would allow him/her to have a first experience, understand the crop cycles, the seasons, the restrictions, the risks, etc. The initiative in question therefore assumes the accumulation of a wealth of experience after the development of capacities. In this respect, they could, among other things, spend time in plantations to contribute their practical work and their industriousness. Careful, these work experiences should be tailored to their business projects.

The commitment challenge

The crop cycles generally have significant intervals before production: 3 months, 6 months, 9 months, sometimes years. Indeed, it is only commitment that can bring any success in this context. Even though a young person has received training, if they do not have real commitment they will not produce anything. Building commitment is also important in a context of lack of transport infrastructure, of isolation, of the remoteness of the production regions from markets (the cause of lack of funds and the amount of waste post production or after the harvest).

The perseverance challenge

Indeed, following a production cycle, commitment can experience a setback given that the mobilization of resources has been such an effort for a sometimes indifferent result. Yet, perseverance here is the connection with commitment. Actually, the different experiences gained can help the agricultural entrepreneur to refine their knowledge of the sector and get a better result, to build up their contacts, etc. it is from this circumstance that the search for funding could easily come good. The notion of real participation is due mainly to perseverance. The integration of what has been learned from the coaching by big plantations in which they have spent their apprenticeship.

This is about the values with which the agricultural entrepreneur needs to arm himself when he finishes the development of its capacities which should itself not be theoretical but practical, covering all possible areas, but preferably in direct line with the crops of concern to the future agricultural entrepreneur. As we say, if there is not interest, there will be no action.

## Ebrima Saidyleigh, GOGREEN, Gambia

Thank you very, much and am happy to be part this great forum.

One of the biggest challenge that the youth in our country are facing when it comes to Agriculture Entrepreneurship, is lack of finance to start their business. They are interested in Agriculture Business the youths will be involving themselves in various training and capacity building and they will equipped on Agriculture business. But to start it is always a big problem for them because of financial issues.

The youth needs financial support from the either Government body or NGOs or any other body to help them to start their own business.

## 

## Atsu Sename, Entreprises Territories et Développement, Togo [1st contribution]

**French version**

L'un des principaux défis rencontrés par les jeunes africains à l’issue des initiatives de développement de capacités axées sur les jeunes dans le secteur agricole est le manque financement pour s'installer et développer leurs activités. Un autre problème est l'inexistence de centres d’incubation et de promotion d’entreprises agricoles pour les jeunes.

Exemples d’initiatives actuelles visant à assurer la pérennité de renforcement des capacités pour les jeunes africains dans le domaine agricole au Togo.

Au Togo l'ONG Entreprises Territoires et Développement (ETD [www.etd-ong.org](http://www.etd-ong.org/)) a mis en place un fonds de soutien au développement d’entreprises agroalimentaires appelé CIDEA et un centre d’incubation et de promotion d’entreprises pour les jeunes dans le domaine agroalimentaire.

- Promouvoir un fonds de soutien au développement d’entreprises agroalimentaires

Bien des entrepreneurs africains éprouvent des difficultés à financer le démarrage de leurs entreprises faute de fonds propres. Pour d’autres, pour accroître leurs fonds propres et développer leur entreprise, ils ont un mal fou à mobiliser du capital nouveau ; les financements des banques et des institutions de micro finance n’étant toujours pas adaptés au besoin de ces entreprises. Le développement d’un dispositif de financement du démarrage et du développement d’entreprises permettra aux jeunes entrepreneurs de disposer d’un capital initial nécessaire au démarrage de leur entreprise. Il leur facilitera l’accès à des financements additionnels des banques commerciales et institutions de microfinance. ETD en développant ce fonds appelé CIDEA (Capital Investissement pour le Développement d’Entreprises dans le secteur Agricole), apportera des appuis techniques aux entreprises soutenues en matière de sécurisation de leur approvisionnement, de développement de leurs marchés et de gestion d’entreprises.

- Mettre en place un centre d’incubation et de promotion d’entreprises pour les jeunes

La question de l’emploi surtout pour les jeunes est une préoccupation majeure des politiques et des gouvernants : elle s’est dégradée ces dernières années. Le chômage des jeunes reste l’un des problèmes majeurs de nos sociétés[.](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/node/4510?page=1#_ftn1)Bien des jeunes ont envie d’entreprendre mais n’ont pas de structure adaptée pour les accompagner. La mise en place d’un centre d’incubation favorisera l’éclosion d’entreprises dans un premier temps dans le secteur agricole puis dans d’autres secteurs présentant un potentiel d’emplois et de richesse.

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**English translation**

One of the biggest challenges faced by the youth in Africa after going through youth-specific capacity development initiatives in agriculture is the lack of funding to set up and develop their activities. Another problem is the lack of support and promotion centers for agricultural enterprises for the young.

Examples of present initiatives aiming at ensuring continuance of youth-specific capacity development initiatives for young Africans in the agricultural sector in Togo.

In Togo, the NGO Entreprises Territoires et Développement (ETD [www.etd-ong.org](http://www.etd-ong.org/)) [Enterprise, land and development] has introduced a support fund for the development of agro-food enterprises called CIDEA and a business incubation and promotion centre for young people in the agri-food sector.

- To promote funds for supporting the development of agri-food businesses

Many African businessmen experience difficulties in funding the launching of their businesses for lack of their own capital. For some, in order to increase their own funds and develop their businesses, it is very difficult to mobilize additional capital; banks and micro finance institutions’ funding is not always adapted to the needs of these businesses. The development of a funding arrangement for the launching and development of businesses would allow the young entrepreneurs to have at their disposal the necessary starting capital for launching their enterprises. It would facilitate access to additional funding from commercial banks and micro finance institutions.

ETD, while developing these funds called CIDEA (Capital Investissement pour le Développement d´Entreprises dans le secteur Agricole, [Investment capital for the development of business in the agricultural sector]) will also contribute with technical inputs to the supported businesses in terms of ensuring their supplies, developing their markets and business management.

- Implement a business incubation and promotion center for the youth.

The question of employment, in particular for the young, is a principal concern of policies and governments: it has become worse in recent years. Youth unemployment continues to be a major problem in our societies.  Many of the young want to go into business but there is no structure adapted to support them. The implementation of a development center will encourage the blossoming of businesses initially in the agricultural sector and later in other sectors offering potential employment and wealth.

## Musa Usman Musa, Kano State agricultural and rural development authority, Nigeria [1st contribution]

I am glad for having the privilege to express myself on this forum.

In my country Nigeria, farmers, particularly youth, find it difficult to engage in agriculture due to financial weaknesses. It is believed that farming is no longer a tradition, but rather a business. For any business to ignite, one has to ensure that money is adequately setup for the business. In Nigeria most of our youth are well capacitated with agricultural skills but unfortunately money is becoming a barrier. Most of our youth received series of trainings on how to run their agricultural businesses, but they lack financial cover for the business. I'm saying this based on experience as an extension agent. Currently in Nigeria, there is an ongoing project called "TRIMING PROJECT". This project is aiming at building the capacity of the farmers particularly youth and women in order to change their mindset and increase productivity. This project employs 'Farmer field and business school (FFBS)' extension strategy to train farmers and address their problems in a participatory web. I'm one of the FFBS facilitators, and we are in the second year but this project gained audience and many farmers became experts in agricultural production. Now that they became experts, they need financial support to take off. And make sure the support follows the appropriate channels to reach farmers. I am sure that if our FFBS Farmers obtained financial support, the next generation of millionaires in Nigeria will be farmers. We have the land, labor, management, but we lack finance which is the most fundamental factor of production as far as agribusiness is concerned.

## Ololade Adesola, L.A. Consult Limited, Nigeria [1st contribution]

**A CASE FOR BUSINESS EDUCATION FOR YOUTH AGRIPRENEURS**

AGRIBUSINESS

A combination of 2 words – Agriculture and Business

There's a need to ensure that Youth Agripreneurs have sound knowledge of the Technicalities of Agriculture Production

Equally important is the Development of Business Management Skills

WHY BUSINESS SKILLS?

Majority of Agribusiness failures are direct results of the failure of Business Skills and NOT Agriculture Skills

The Apathy of Banks to Agriculture is primarily based on their Lack of Faith in the Business Skills of the Agriprenuer.

We have invested in Agriculture Capacity Development for many years but we have not seen commensurate Growth in Production

Many Small Agriculture Loans are unpaid – further strengthening the Bankers’ apathy and Reluctance to finance New Agripreneurs

Capacity Building for Youth Agripreneurs must include Business School Curriculum

CURRENT SITUATION

Capacity Development has focused majorly on Production and Operational Topics to the Disadvantage of Business Management Skills

The result is that whilst the Youth have the Technical Know-how to run their Agribusinesses, they fail when it comes to Business Management Skills like Financial Planning & Budgeting, Marketing, Negotiation, Organizational Discipline, Sales, and Supply Chain Management etc.

This situation is not limited to Agribusinesses; we have seen global examples of Google etc. which would have failed if they had not brought in Business Managers to manage the Business side of things.

Since Young Entrepreneurs cannot afford to recruit Business Managers, it is very essential that all Capacity Development Initiatives directed at them have a Significant Amount of Business Management Curriculum.

ESSENTIAL BUSINESS SKILLS

Vital Business Management Skills Fundamental to the Success of ANY Business Irrespective of its Activity or Size include:

1. Strategic Planning and Forecasting
2. Human Resources Management
3. Sales and Marketing
4. Financial Management and Building BANKABLE Businesses
5. Basic Accounting
6. Operations and Supply Chain Management
7. Enterprise Risks Management
8. Self-Management and Leadership

EFFORTS SO FAR

I have spent a number of years working with the IITA Youth Agripreneurs in Ibadan, Nigeria.

IITA taught them the Production Processes, whilst we taught Business Management.

We have been able to translate them from Idealist Technocrats to Savvy Business People who understand how the Real Business World operates and how they should maneuver their businesses profitably.

They have learnt how to deal with HR issues and Improve Individual Productivity and Organizational Discipline.

They have become Prudent Managers of Financial Resources and understand HOW TO Achieve Financial Success.

WAY FORWARD

Upgrade the Quality of Business Education in Capacity Development Initiatives.

Introduce Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship Education at Secondary and Tertiary School Levels.

Encourage Banks and Fund Providers to get “Agriculture Literacy” - in order to understand the Industry better and consequently be able to Structure Agriculture Loans well.

THANK YOU

## Ndubuisi Idejiora-Kalu, African Youth Union Commission, Nigeria

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am reacting to the discussion on the FAO Group on the participation of African Youth in Agriculture. Due to the very high unemployment rate in Africa, the job market does not seem lucrative again for African Youth. What is lucrative today for the African youth is independent empowerment and Agriculture provides a viable sector for enabling this.

The future of young African agripreneurs is very bright but for this to be possible, the FAO has to compel the public and private sectors in African states (as well as the international committee) to invest in the Agricultural sector and provide incentives that will help young African agripreneurs succeed in this sector. Much of these incentives should be in the form of soft loans that can help they embark on their agripreneurs projects. Legislation should also be made at state and regional level to allow and sustain this effort. Without such a strategy, the agripreneurs plan for young Africans will fail just as the employment plan has continued to be a lame sector in African states.

The FAO mandate in the need to enable African youth participate in Agriculture as an alternative socio-economic empowerment methodology for African youth is in line with the expectancies of the African Union Commission Agenda 2063. Hence, the policy division of the African Youth Union Commission is interested in collaborating with the FAO and other organizations to making this strategy work for African youth. We look forward to such collaborations.

Thanking you again.

Best regards

Amb. Perry Ndubuisi Idejiora-Kalu  
Head of Policy Division  
African Youth Union Commission

## Aruna Adam, Partners in Rural Empowerment and Development (PARED), Ghana

It is a great opportunity to be part of this forum and to share to the word the issues of agriculture and the youth. Yes it is true that Africa is naturally endowed with abundant land yet its youth are crying over unemployment. Before venturing into any business, the issue of job security and sustainability needs to be assessed and guaranteed. In Africa in general and Ghana in particular, many of the youth have the knowledge and skills in going into agribusinesses but the problem of ready market to farm produce and prices of produce is one key factor that scare many away. The youth look at the peasant farmers, the stress they undergo and the price of goods sold out and that alone demoralizes them. So for the youth to engage in active agricultural activities, there should be a ready market for produce with its accompanying good price. Youth interested in agriculture activities should also be supported financially with accompanying monitoring and supervision on the use of funds.

## Rachel Ghanson Dwamena, Green WaterHut, Ghana

1. **What are the biggest challenges youth in Africa face after going through youth-specific capacity development initiatives in agriculture?**

I am pleased for being privilege to express my views on this forum. One of the biggest challenge youth in Africa face is the issues on access to LAND. Any farming activity require space (land) to operate be it Crop farming, Livestock, Aquaculture, the first asset to acquire as a farmer is land. Since all agricultural systems depend on land, the ownership or access to agricultural lands becomes crucial especially for the youth. Gaining Land in Ghana as a youth for agricultural purpose is a difficult task. One of the challenges faced by the youth is to know which land is available for rent because there is no public advertisement about renting lands. Most times land owners check the readiness to rent or through familiarity and all this comes with payments of money of which most youth cannot afford. Access to finance through banking system is also challenging as all of them requires collateral in a form of immobile property such as house of which the youth do not have to back up application. Also most agricultural loans, if available are for short term which does not favor crops and ruminants that takes more than 3 years to mature.

## Agape Ishabakaki, Freelancer, United Republic of Tanzania

Dear Moderator,

I take this opportunity to participate in the forum so as to make sure there is sustainability of capacity development initiative for us youth in agriculture sector. I will begin by answering raised questions according to my understanding and experiences from various research I participated in.

**1. What are the biggest challenges youth in Africa face after going through youth-specific capacity development initiatives in agriculture?**

Access to Markets- Most African countries especially Sub-Saharan countries experience market problem linkage. An issue of markets has discouraged many youth to participate in agriculture activities since efforts put are not worth to expected outcome sales. You can find that after youth have finished getting practices they are not attached to the specific organizations that demand output at the end of production. Or maybe they are promised to be connected to traders but when time arrives no traders seen.

**2. What post-capacity development support do the youth need? What can the youth do to support each other in developing their skills and capacities?**

- Connection to markets- There needs to be connection of youth with big markets to sell their outputs/produce.

- Good prices- There should be good prices set so as to motivate more youth to be involved in agriculture.

-Hear the voice of youth- The youth in agriculture sector should be heard explaining their setbacks so as to be solved leading to expansion of produce.

I would like to stop here to let other share their views too. Would love to hear from others and understand more issues related to Agriculture since am very passionate with farming and looking forward to be among the candidate on capacity development initiatives next time.

Thanks and looking forward to be part of the discussion.

Agape Ishabakaki.

## Dele Raheem, Arctic Centre / University of Lapland, Finland

The positive impacts that will result from engaging the African youth in agriculture has to be radically pursued! Stakeholders, especially the government, has a big role to play through the formulation of policies that not only support the supply of food from agriculture but also value addition to these food crops.

Nowadays, the awareness is already there in many African countries on the important role of agriculture as a good business investment. As mentioned earlier by previous contributors, the issue of **finance** is paramount in translating these government policies into realities. The trainings need to incorporate the modern aspects of technology. Research institutions need to be properly supported financially and work in tandem with the youth to be engaged in entrepreneurship.

Infrastructure that supports the movement of harvested / finished food products has to be well articulated to cope with the African circumstances (hot climate) to reduce waste from pests and enhance quality. ICT that supports capacity development as a tool is very relevant in the African foods system especially in farming and fishing. Africa also needs to look inward and cooperate more on regional basis, to share and learn best practices on getting the youth involved in agripreneurs.

## Milly Monkhei, Botswana University of Agriculture and Natural resources (BUAN), Botswana

Inevitably the Youth are the future of every nation and the bright future of every nation is born in today's Youth hence the urgent critical need to address Youth issues. Youth in Africa face challenges even after going through youth specific capacity development initiatives in agriculture, paramount to these challenges is sustainability. Initiatives or interventions are supposed to be time bound or be for a specific period with the believe and hope that after the intervention the intended will hold on sustainably. Most of the time it is not the case as the intended objective is often short lived because of various reasons. Success stories do exist or have happened but some have dimmed out usurping the blazing hope of success and sustainability that was the initial objective of specific interventions. Depending on the time it took to observe the good practices that added life to the interventions for the period of their existence, yes good practices have been learnt and successes have been experienced and hence can be shared even though they have their expiry dates dictated by new challenges that wared and defeated against them. This says to us interventions, specific and targeted as they may be are necessary but are not in any way adequate, therefore to stop at intervention and expect sustainability is not astute policy decision as it has proven to be inadequate by the many interventions that failed especially those that had only intervention (a short term take on) as an objective with no subsequent processes to ensure the desired sustainability (a long haul phenomenon).

The Youth need to collaborate, engage, link up, commit to growth/sustainability, and passionately believe that whatever they lay their hands to and work out will work out. There is huge potential for modern technologies in sustaining capacity development initiatives in agriculture, if they will be planned well, scoped well, resourced well, targeted well, implemented well, monitored and evaluated well. Surely it can be achieved.

## Philip Ifejika, National Institute for Freshwater Fisheries Research, Nigeria [1st contribution]

Youth capacity building for agripreneurs is aimed at empowerment with knowledge, skills and attitudinal change. Capacity building is a solid foundation to groom youths with practical demonstration. We have done this successfully with good results for government and private sector. Ongoing is an under graduate trainee program called "students industrial work experience scheme” (SIWES) where over 2 500 have been trained in Aquaculture & fishery. Most students confessed that the work experience changed their perspective and give them confidence in the course the are studying as lucrative.

However, past experience in one of the youth program was sad because after the training, they youths were not empowered to establish the enterprise. So, youth capacity building should be a complete package comprising of knowledge, skills, financial and inputs to put knowledge into practice.

Thanks

*Please find below a photo of students on SIWES training in Aquaculture in private fish farm in New Bussa, Niger State, Nigeria*



## Garba Saleh, Federal College of Education (Tech) Bichi, Nigeria [1st contribution]

I am delighted for having opportunity to discuss on this platform in order to discuss issues related to agriculture and food production.

My contribution is about this question:

**What are the biggest challenges youth in Africa face after going through youth-specific capacity development initiatives in agriculture?**

The biggest challenges youth in Africa especially in Kano Nigeria are facing after going through capacity development especially on animal production are as follows:

1. Lack of interest in agriculture by the youth especially urban dwellers:

Most of the youth that are enrolled into this entrepreneurship lack interest in animal rearing and production. Therefore, after the training they cannot put it into practice.

2. Lack practical skills from the youth: Most of capacities for youth empowerment take few weeks, therefore, the participants are graduated without basic skills, therefore when they were empowered with take-up grants they will not engage on the business rather than to sell out the inputs.

3. Lack of good markets for the commodities: Market is the key factor to animal production. After capacities majority of the youth cannot continue with their production due to improper marketing channels, sometimes they prepare to sell the produce on lost or credit.

## Meidimi Sokoto, Dimjim Mushrooms, Kenya

Hi, Great to be a part of this conversation. I agree that Youth in Africa face several challenges even after going through youth specific capacity development initiatives in agriculture, the biggest ones include access to market and seed funding opportunities. If banks and lending institutions can understand how farming works like and come up with friendly loans that are tailored for different agricultural ventures. Lack of access to the market is also a huge problem. If the government and non-government organizations can help the youth find access to market their produce, I believe these problems being fixed will help the youth grow better and lasting business that empower them and provide employment and grow the country.

## Arman Kiniso, Ethiopia

I'm overjoyed for having the chance to talk about the partaking of African Youth in Agriculture on the FAO Group. I will start in on by answering raised questions according to the best of my knowledge.

* **What are the biggest challenges youth in Africa face after going through youth-specific capacity development initiatives in agriculture?**

The biggest challenge youth in Africa faces institutions. Limited access to land, inadequate access to financial services, and limited access to markets are the major challenges and situation that will pose potential danger on the viability and strategies of African countries’ youth participation in agriculture. Although access to land is fundamental to starting a farm, it can often be difficult for young people to attain. Inheritance laws and customs in developing countries often make the transfer of land to young women problematic, and so are in need of amendment. Loans to assist youth in acquiring land are also needed, while leasing arrangements through which youth gain access – though not ownership – to land may also prove effective. Inadequate access to financial services is principal challenge. Most financial service providers are reluctant to provide their services – including credit, savings and insurance – to rural youth due to their lack of collateral and financial literacy, among other reasons. Promoting financial products catered to youth, mentoring programmes and start-up funding opportunities can all help remedy this issue. The other principal challenge young people have limited access to markets. As without such access youth will not be able to engage in viable and sustainable agricultural ventures. Access to markets for youth is becoming even more difficult due to the growing international influence of supermarkets and the rigorous standards of their supply chains. Moreover, Youth have limited involvement in policy dialogue. Too often young people’s voices are not heard during the policy process, and so their complex and multifaceted needs are not met. Policies often fail to account for the heterogeneity of youth, and so do not provide them with effective support.

* **What enabling environment is needed to ensure sustainability of youth in agriculture capacity development initiatives?**

To remedy this, youth need the requisite skills and capacities for collective action institutions to ensure that their voices are heard. Various private and public sector market-supporting institutions and institutional arrangements been proposed to bridge market imperfections, reduce transaction costs, and enhance opportunities for the poor youths in agricultural markets and to make the market systems more inclusive and integrated.

## Kafui Agbe, YPARD, Ghana

* **What are the biggest challenges youth in Africa face after going through youth-specific capacity development initiatives in agriculture?**

The challenges that youth faces after going through capacity development (CD) initiatives include access to productive resource to establish themselves with the skills they acquired after CD initiatives. These resources include funds for establishment of agricultural enterprise, space or land for operations, business networks and market access. Youth requires initial funds to establish which is not readily available. Even where funds are available the interest rates on these funds are pegged at market rate that is unattractive.

Land or space required for operations are expensive or not available for youth since they do not have easy right of ownership. Youths are also lacking the required institutional networks to roll out the products and services into the market. Networks are required to link products and services generated to available market for profits to be made.

Authorities, boards and institutions in the agriculture space in many African countries are mostly to far away from the youth. They do not have easy access to these authorities and agencies to get their businesses operative and standardized.

## Chigozie Abuta, University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria

Youths face a lot of problems going through agricultural capacity development initiatives. Among these include: Lack of follow-up, proper mentoring after training and exposure to situations requiring the necessary knowledge so acquired.

Chigozie Abuta  
Graduate Student

## Precillia Ijang Tata Ngome, Institute of Agricultural Research for Development, Cameroon

In my opinion, looking at question 4 and 5 Youths need more incentives and motivation to be engaged in Agriculture. To this, I will suggest that:

1. We need to develop a regional curricula (simple principles, guidelines and indicators) for monitoring the involvement and evolution of Africa Youths in Agriculture. This curricular will be completed at individual, national and continental level by all youths that have received a capacity development support.

2. We need to organise Youth farmers in Agriculture contests portal or platform in which Youths farmers practicing agriculture will register their farming activities from land acquisition through marketing and experts will judge the coherence and consistency in the processes. Best farms will be selected for further visits by the experts to assess the level of efficiency and novelty demonstrated on the farms. While visiting the farms, participating youths will be advised on their practices and the most outstanding farms will be rewarded based on awards packages that will be determined by a commission. This process has three advantages

a. Motivated youths are given an opportunity to share their experience and to know that what they are doing is important;

b. The youth’s activities are linked to a team of experts who can provide them with advice and follow-up services

c. Innovative youths are rewarded to encourage them do better

d. The reward process stimulates internal competition to do better among the youths and therefore enhances more commitment on their part

## Titus Gakwaya, TK-Engineering & Agro-Technology Ltd, Rwanda

FSN- FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION IN AFRICA.

1. This year’s THEME of FAO FOOD DAY CELEBRATION is “Invest in Food Security and Rural Development”, could be the real and most touch first point or issue one can address on the Youth Specific Capacity Development , should be the main issue if the “ Food Security, Nutrition, and Rural Development”, have to be initiated. The youth are the most workforce of the agriculture, now or in future. If the traditional practice is maintained, the food security and nutrition will NOT be met.

2. The Post-capacity Development Initiatives that can be maintained, for sustainability of the their capacity, is assured market of their produce, and other farm inputs , because any moment, there are some challenges, their statuses, and earnings re-evaluation could disrupt their businesses.

What works – State Facilitation of Youths and Women / Guarantee-ships percentage to enable their take-offs.

What does not work or reduced performance – their performance and regulation of businesses may not be so perfect, but may be tolerated, and perfection may be attained.

Successes can be seen, and model practices learned from.

3. What can the Youth Do to support each other – Study Visits can be mounted, as LEARNING TRIPS, of MANAGEMENT, PRACTICES, SUCCESS AND FAILURES. They can learn from each other.

4. What enabling environment needed for sustainability –:

(i). Assured or protected market – Without markets this is a key weakening issue.

(ii). Access of Farm Inputs – Seeds, Fertilizers, herbicides/pesticides .

(iii). Better or Innovational Practices Access – Irrigation water access, tractor hire services, transport or evacuation of produce.

5. Information / Communication technologies are so essential for them, or else, their business may abort on take-off. The sources of the essential services listed above, they should have the details. Or the regular Radio Agriculture Extension, Commercial Radio and TV Services, and Promotional Programmes of Inputs etc. - Could play the MAJOR ROLE RELAYING WHAT THEY NEED!

## Tang Erasmus Nchuaji, The University of Younde, Cameroon

Season Greetings Everyone and Thanks for the Initiative.

1. In response to the question on challenges faced by youths in Africa after completion of specific capacity development programs, the following points can be summarized.

(i) Microfinance policies: most African youths do not approach microfinance structure with their projects. This may be because youths do not understand how microfinance structures operate and/or because microfinance policies do not attract youths (who in most cases lack colaterals).

(ii) Unemployment: The agricultural sector in most African countries is lagging because governments are not fully engaged in developing and promoting the sector. A consequence of this is the high importation rate of Agricultural products from Asia, North and South America and Europe. Trained youths in Agriculture because of lack of jobs are unable to exercise their expertise and most often are engaged in other revenue generating activities or are bound to operate small scale agriculture activities.

(iii) Governance: platforms to engage youths in community development activities are absent. Innovation platform is an effective mechanism for mobilizing key actors at local, district and national levels for negotiation on collective action and concerted decision-making to create a conduicive working environment. Key actors here include financial institutions, administrators, transporters, traders and agriculture value-chain actors. Innovation platform approach has been adopted in Benin (Glazoué community) initiated by the Africa Rice Center.

1. The uploaded document is titled "Innovation System: Towards effective strategies in support of smallholder farmers”. Success stories are shared there in and the offers tested methods for communities seeking active engagment in Agriculture <http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/sites/default/files/discussions/contributions/Sanyang%20et%20al%2C%202016.pdf>
2. The relevant post capacity development support Youths in Africa need is employment and project financing skills.

## Pauline Ngari, Youth Talent and Enterprise Developmen Centre (YTEDC), Kenya

Even after going through the youth-specific capacity development initiatives in agriculture, such youth need other supportive initiatives that would help them sustain their interest and focus. Such support should include mentoring them into identifying their *Talents and interest* in  agriculture before they are plunged into the sector. Those with talent and interest in farming are most likely to succeed since they are able to translate farming into an interesting job for themselves and eventually influence their peer into agriculture and act as their peer mentors.

A consistent mentorship, coaching and relevant supportive functions are critical to these young farmers in helping them remain focused and interested in Agriculture. Identifying mature successful mentors from within their localities with a success story will work wonders to the trained youth who can identify a good promise to excel in farming thus sustaining the interest. It is also necessary to group these trained youth into common interest groups based on their areas of focus (Livestock or Crops farming) to help create "accountability partners"  among themselves, on their joint journey in Agriculture. They will challenge, encourage support and consult each other as they grow together in Agriculture and subsequently love it and attract others to join them.

It’s necessary to note here that many financial institutions have none or limited youth based option on financial services. Again, with the continued land demarcations, occasioned by population increase, many young people have no or limited access to land for agriculture or for collateral. As such access to the necessary resources for Agricultural venture by youth remain at the training level. With access to financial and with a good support functions like credit guarantee program, youth can lease land for agricultural ventures and be successful. Thus financial institutions need to develop appropriate financial products for the youth in Agriculture. Agriculture in itself is exposed to many challenges that include the adverse effects of the climate change and other vagaries of nature and thus there is need to support the youth training with credit guarantee program, climate resilient and conservation agriculture training programs as well as with incubation programs to kick-start their start -up agricultural projects but with clear outcomes and targets for accountability on their part.

A one off training is not enough for the young potential farmers, an integrated sustainable training program is what the youth need given their high mobility and dynamism at their life stage. They tend to loose interest very rapidly and thus a consistent training program that aligns with their progressive farming needs will help them remain focussed to the course. These include regular training on; entrepreneurship that helps them see business  in agriculture, inculcating a savings culture as a means to wealth creation, Financial management for growing business in farming, agricultural value chain developments for high value product  for increased return on their investments, learning on new and trending farming approaches/products, networking opportunities for peer learning, sustainable market access for their products  among other sustaining training opportunities. Once the first batch of young farmers succeed in a particular area, they become the role models and mentors to others interested in agriculture. They are able to demonstrate that Agriculture is a valuable employer of choice and not employer of last resort as it is the case in most African Countries.

Otherwise youth and Agriculture holds the answer to the African growth & development and more so to the realisation of the Continent's prosperity.

## Tanyaradzwa Dembetembe, Zimbabwe

One of the major challenges faced with youths that have undergone youth-specific development programs is the lack of resources. This makes it difficult to implement the skills that may have be learnt. In some cases there are no opportunities for the youths to apply the knowledge gained from the development programs due to high unemployment rates.

## James Aucha, African Agribusiness Incubators Network (AAIN), Kenya

1. Greatest challenge youth face after going through youth in agriculture capacity building is finding a place to anchor their interventions. This goes beyond mentorship and access to capital as they need to have their interventions feed to and be fed from stable enterprises in a business context. This is a gap Greenfarm Agribusiness Incubation Network (GAIN) is working on with an equal measure of success and challenges (that are being converted to opportunities for accelerated growth).

2. Examples of post-capacity development initiatives include;

a) Greenfarm International contracts to buy Brachiaria fodder in Kenya at Ksh 250 (about USD2.5) per bale from farmers. Youth were empowered by Greenfarm International (a start-up member of GAIN) to develop contract farming to collect the fodder and sell it to Greenfarm International with a margin of Ksh 25 for each bale. Greenfarm International finances all purchases, transport and storage. This is an example of a success story as well working in Bungoma and Trans-Nzoia Counties of Kenya.

3. Post capacity support youth need is in 3 areas;

a) Refining the business model based on an anchor framework as defined in (1) above

b) Support in mapping business opportunities

c) Provision of business infrastructure so that one only directs money to the real business. GAIN has set up furnished work stations with internet, finance and HR services where a start-up pays Ksh 10,000 (USD 100) monthly and works with no other costs for power, internet, licenses etc. There are also sites for animal rearing such as pig pens and poultry units hence a youth can just buy stock and lease the units. When he/she is not interested in the business, they will not have funds sunk in buildings that they do not need at the time. This also addresses the issue of access to land that has been a challenge to youth, but with this arrangement, it is no longer a significant challenge.

4. Enabling environment to ensure sustainability of youth in agriculture is an incubation ecosystem that allows them access to research and staffing (through internships) without paying for directly. Research is expensive (in-affordable) by start-ups yet market research is indispensable at all times.

5. Absolutely, technology has a great role. Many youth do not want to get to rural areas hence use of CCTV attached to their mobile phones enables them to manage farm based enterprises from the comfort of their urban centres. The capital outlay is high, but the benefits by far outweigh the costs.

## Nkafu Therese, Ghana

Hi there, happy to be on this forum.

What are the biggest challenges youth in Africa face after going through youth-specific capacity development initiatives in agriculture?

Youths face many hurdles after attaining capacity development initiatives in Agriculture. The prerequisite for a production venture is to own a farm and many land tenure systems especially in Africa does not support land ownership by youth. Alternatively, the start-up land can be lease or rented but most microfinances and banks either give high interest rate on loans or refuse youths of loans because they often have little or no collateral.

Many youths are of the opinion that agriculture is a money making venture and therefore everybody wants to practice agriculture even without preliminary knowledge in order to be “rich”. One would really not expect anything fruitful if such persons go through capacity development trainings. I always say if you don’t like the colour green = plants, there’s no need wasting time attaining these initiatives. Capacity development is about the growth of the individual in knowledge, skills and experience and these programmes are often short duration such that the required knowledge and skills is not got by the end of these initiatives and therefore youths cannot make informed decisions.

Many agricultural policies often fail to account for the heterogeneity of youth, and so do not provide them with effective support. Policy makers must ensure that youths have a solid stand in their laws in order to increase youth’s participation and to curb the knowledge gap after capacity trainings.

Youths often engage in ventures without identifying their markets. In some instances, you find that many youths are skilled-equipped after capacity development initiatives but the sustainability of what they do is often lacking since they failed to consider the whole agricultural value chain, say, from selecting disease- free and improved seeds for planting to harvesting, and to the final consumers.

The way forward

Where serious and focused youths are identified, governments through youth capacity development mentors can allocate pieces of lands to these youths to engage and practice their acquired skills which will be monitored by their mentors for some years, say 5, the government later re-owns the land while the net returns be used by the youth for a venture that is solely his/hers. Similarly, Agricultural banks can give loans to youths through their capacity development mentors and the above explanation holds true.

Within and between youth groups, Mobile apps can be developed to constantly share agricultural information between themselves and link them to extension agents and plant doctors.

Agricultural value chain and not just a specific section, for example production, be considered and the risk evaluated with anticipated solutions before engaging in any programme.

Nkafu Therese

MPhil, agricultural entomology

University of Ghana.

From Cameroon

## Phanoel Madjita Djoumountanan, Ferme Perseverence, Chad [1st contribution]

*French version*

L’augmentation de la population de jeunes va entraîner une hausse du nombre de personnes en âge de travailler, ce qui risque d’exacerber le chômage des jeunes sur notre continent. ce Forum est un cadre idéal pour partager les points vues sur l'avenir de la jeunesse africaine.

Le changement climatique, le manque de soutien aux jeunes agriculteurs constituent les principaux défis rencontrés par les jeunes africains à l’issue des initiatives de développement de capacités axées sur les jeunes dans le secteur agricole. Exemples d’initiatives actuelles visant à assurer la pérennité de renforcement des capacités pour les jeunes africains dans le domaine agricole.

Les exemples d’initiatives actuelles visant à assurer la pérennité de renforcement des capacités pour les jeunes africains dans le domaine agricole que nous connaissons sont les contributions de l’organisations internationales à l'encadrement et à la formation des jeunes dans le domaine agricole. Au Tchad, nous avons la FAO, le GIZ et le COOPI qui contribuent aux initiatives visant à pérenniser l'agriculture. Mais beaucoup reste du coté de gouvernement du Tchad. Il faut reconnaitre que ces initiatives de ces organisations internationales cités ci-haut fonctionnent bien. Car les jeunes agriculteurs sont outillés des techniques modernes afin d'améliorer leur productivité. Quelques fois les jeunes agriculteurs sont abandonnés à leurs tristes sorts. L'exemple que nous avons vécu à la FERME PERSEVERENCE était l'achat des boutures de Manioc. La FAO par le biais de l'office Nationale pour le Développement Rurale(ONDR), secteur de la Grande Sido a commandé des boutures de Manioc avec la Ferme pour distribuer aux réfugiés Centrafricains installés à Maro. Au lieu que l'argent soit verser directement à la Ferme, elle a plutôt versé l'argent à l'ONDR n'a pas honoré l'engagement. Les initiatives réussies que nous aimons bien pratiques à partager les exemples de la FAO au côté des jeunes agriculteurs. J’ai bénéficié de deux formations de FAO et qui m'ont aider à plus produire le manioc.

Le jeunes ont besoins des soutiens financiers, des formations en agriculture, et aux changement climatiques. Initions les jeunes à la création des groupements et des associations pour s'entraider.

L'environnement favorable pour assurer la garantie et la permanence des jeunes dans les initiatives de renforcement des capacités dans le secteur agricole est l'amélioration des conditions de vie des agriculteurs en leurs octroyant des credits, des semences de qualités répondant aux changements climatiques. Il faut moderniser l'agriculture.

Le medias jouent un rôle très important dans le secteur agricole. A cet effet, il faut faire des campagnes de vulgarisations des produits agricoles, sensibiliser les agriculteurs aux nouvelles techniques agricoles.

*English translation*

The increase in the population of the youth will lead to a rise in the number of people of working age, with the danger of exacerbating youth unemployment on our continent. This forum is an ideal way of sharing points of view on the future of African youth.

Climate change and lack of support for young farmers are the main challenges encountered by young Africans in relation to youth-specific capacity development initiatives in agriculture.

Examples of existing post-capacity development sustainability initiatives for youth in agriculture in Africa.

Examples of existing post-capacity development initiatives intended to ensure the continuity of capacity development for youth in agriculture in Africa, with which we are acquainted, are the contributions of international organizations to the coaching and training of young people in the agricultural sector. In Chad, FAO, GIZ [German Corporation for International Cooperation GmbH] and COOPI [Italian International Cooperation] contribute to initiatives for sustainable agriculture. But a lot remains on the Chad government side. We should recognize that the initiatives of the international organizations named above are working well because the young farmers are familiarized with modern technology to improve their productivity. Sometimes young farmers are left to their sad fate. The example we have experienced at FERME PERSEVERENCE was the purchase of cassava cuttings. FAO, through the Office National pour le Développement Rural (ONDR) [National Office for Rural Development], in the Grande Sido region of Chad, ordered cassava cuttings from the farm for distribution to the Central African refugees settled in Maro [Grande Sido region]. Rather than making the payment directly to the Farm, the payment was sent directly to ONDR which did not honor the commitment. The successful initiatives that we much like practice the sharing of examples of FAO in respect of young farmers. I have benefitted from two training sessions given by FAO which have helped me to produce more cassava.

Young people need financial assistance, training in agriculture and on climate change. Let us introduce young people to the creation of organizations and associations to help them pull together.

The enabling environment for ensuring the commitment and permanence of young people in capacity development initiatives in the agricultural sector is to improve farmers' living conditions by granting them credits and quality seeds of a kind that respond to climate change.  It is necessary to modernize agriculture.

The media play a very important role in the agricultural sector. To this effect, it will be important to carry out extension campaigns about agricultural products, and make farmers aware of the new agricultural techniques.

## Justin Chisenga, FAO, Italy - facilitator of the discussion

*English version*

Dear All,

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the consultation so far.

Your contributions last week touched on almost all the questions under discussion. However, Question 1 got more contributions than the others. I therefore, encourage you all to revisit the questions on which you have not yet contributed and to further share your ideas, experiences and good practices.

In this post, I quickly look at what has been contributed on **Question 1**. I will look at Questions 2 and 3 later in the week.

The contributions revealed that there is general agreement that many capacity development (CD) initiatives targeting the African youth are not yielding sustainable impact due to several challenges the youth face after participating in the initiatives. Many of you mentioned the following “usual suspects” as being the biggest challenges: lack of or inadequate access to finance to setup and develop agribusinesses, lack of access to land, lack of access to markets, and poor prices for agricultural products.

Some of you also indicated the youth’s lack of preliminary knowledge of agriculture, inadequate business management skills, project management skills and knowledge of the markets as factors also contributing to the youth failing in their ventures after CD initiatives.

The nature or duration of some CD interventions targeting the youth is also raised as an issue as many are of them are of short duration to enable the youth to gain the required knowledge and skills. Lack of agricultural and business management skills is said to also contribute to financial institutions’ reluctance to finance youth agripreneurs.

Lack of interest and motivation to sustain the interest in agriculture was also raised as a challenge. Some youth who are being asked to go into agriculture/agribusiness lack interest for the sector and therefore get out very easily, especially when they fail to access finance for their ventures, even when they have taken part in appropriate CD initiatives.

The contributions also identified challenges such as lack of easy access to institutions (especially relevant government agencies) in the agriculture space that could help the youth in their agribusiness ventures, absence of platforms or associations to support the youth after the CD initiatives, absence of mentorship programmes, and inadequate opportunities for youth to put into practice the knowledge gained during the CD initiatives.

**Taking the above challenges into account, my question is: are capacity development interventions targeting the youth in agriculture being designed with exit and sustainability strategies in mind?**

Regards,

Justin

*French translation*

Chers tous,

Merci à tous ceux et celles qui ont contribué à la consultation jusqu'à présent.

La semaine dernière, vous avez abordé presque toutes les questions soumises à discussion. La question 1 a toutefois reçu plus de contributions que les autres. C’est pourquoi je vous invite tous à réexaminer les questions sur lesquelles vous ne vous êtes pas encore prononcés, et à échanger davantage vos idées, expérience et bonnes pratiques.

Dans ce post, je vais brièvement passer en revue les contributions apportées à la **question 1**. Je passerai aux questions 2 et 3 plus tard dans la semaine.

Les contributions font apparaître un consensus général sur le fait que de nombreuses initiatives de renforcement des capacités ciblées sur les jeunes africains n’ont pas d’impact durable en raison des nombreux défis auxquels les jeunes sont confrontés après avoir participé à ces initiatives. Beaucoup d’entre vous ont évoqué les « suspects habituels » comme étant les plus problématiques : le manque ou le caractère inadéquat de l’accès au financement pour créer et développer des agro-entreprises, le manque d’accès à la terre, le manque d’accès aux marchés et les bas prix des produits agricoles.

Certains d’entre vous ont également indiqué que les jeunes manquent de connaissances préliminaires en matière d’agriculture, que leurs compétences en gestion d’entreprises sont insuffisantes, de même que les compétences en gestion de projet et la connaissance des marchés, facteurs qui contribuent à l’échec des jeunes dans les entreprises à l’issue des initiatives de renforcement des capacités.

La nature ou la durée de certaines interventions de renforcement des capacités axées sur les jeunes est également remise en question ; en effet, beaucoup sont de trop courte durée pour permettre à ceux-ci d’acquérir les connaissances et les compétences requises. Le manque de compétences en gestion agricole et commerciale est également évoqué comme argument qui explique la réticence des institutions financières à financer les jeunes entrepreneurs agricoles.

Le manque d’intérêt et de motivation pour conserver l’intérêt pour l’agriculture est également considéré comme un défi. Certains jeunes sont invités à se lancer dans l’agriculture ou l’agro-industrie, alors qu’ils ne portent aucun intérêt au secteur en question et en sortent donc très facilement, d’autant plus qu’ils n’ont pas accès au financement des entreprises, même s’ils ont participé à des initiatives appropriées de renforcement des capacités.

Les contributions ont également fait ressortir plusieurs défis, comme le manque d’accès simplifié aux institutions (en particulier les organismes gouvernementaux compétents) dans l’espace agricole qui pourraient aider les jeunes dans leurs entreprises agro-industrielles, l’absence de plates-formes ou d’associations pour soutenir les jeunes à l’issue des initiatives de renforcement des capacités, le manque de programmes d’encadrement et des opportunités qui ne favorisent pas la mise en pratique des connaissances acquises par les jeunes durant le processus de renforcement des capacités.

**Au vu des défis mentionnés plus haut, ma question la suivante : les interventions de renforcement des capacités visant les jeunes en agriculture sont-elles conçues en prenant compte des stratégies de sortie et de durabilité ?**

Cordialement

Justin

## Phanoel Madjita Djoumountanan, Ferme Perseverence, Chad [2nd contribution]

*French version*

Bonjour à tous,

La question numéro 3 taraudait l'esprit de tout le monde et mérite des discussions approfondies afin de dégager les problèmes que rencontre les jeunes dans le domaine agricole. Je remercie le facilitateur de la discussion de ce rappel.

 Les jeunes ont besoin dans la phase postérieure au renforcement des capacités des soutiens allant des formations aux financements de leurs activités agricoles. Nous savons tous que les jeunes ne sont pas motivés dans la domaine agricole. Les causes de ces démotivations sont entre autres: l'infertilité des terres agricoles dû aux changements climatiques, le mauvais prix de vente sur les marché des produits agricoles. Pour que les jeunes  s’entraident et renforcent ainsi leurs compétences et leurs capacités dans le domaine de l'agriculture, il faut créer des centres de récyclages,des centres de formation. A cet effet, il faut renforcer des capacités dans le secteur public et au sein des communautés afin d'améliorer le développement des entreprises et l’amélioration de leur gestion en vue de promouvoir la commercialisation des produits agricoles. Le FAO devrait dispenser des formations dans les domaines de l’agro-industrie et de l’apport de valeur ajoutée au bénéfice des petits exploitants agricoles, la priorité doit être accordée à cet égard aux femmes, aux jeunes et aux personnes physiquement handicapées. La formation des entrepreneurs ruraux par comité, dont des entrepreneurs opérant dans la transformation et la commercialisation des produits agricoles, doit être au centre de cette philosophie faisant de l’agriculture une véritable aubaine(le cas d'arachide, le sésame, le niébé, le mil et le manioc). Les opérateurs du secteur privé doivent recevoir des informations  sur les stratégies de développement des marchés, ainsi que sur les possibilités d’investissement dans le secteur de l’agriculture, et notamment dans la commercialisation des intrants agricoles et la transformation des produits agricoles, la formation et la vente des produits agricoles.il faut aussi former les jeunes aux pratiques modernes de transformation des produits agricoles, et d’autres connaissances et compétences dans l’apport de valeur ajoutée. Les capacités des responsables et des membres des associations locales de commerçants doivent également être renforcées non seulement pour promouvoir l’esprit d’entreprise, mais aussi pour garantir la gestion efficace des marchés et des centres agro-industriels, favorisant ainsi la durabilité des avantages des produits agricole.

*English translation*

Good day to everyone

Question No.3 engages everyone’s interest and deserves to be discussed in depth in order to bring out the problems that confront the youth in the agricultural sector.  I give thanks to the facilitator of this discussion for this reminder.

During the post capacity reinforcement phase, young people need support when moving from training to funding their agricultural activities. We all know that young people are not motivated by the agricultural sector. The causes of this lack of motivation are among others: the infertility of agricultural land due to climate change, and the bad selling prices of agricultural products in the market. For the young to help each other and in this way improve their knowledge and ability in the agricultural sector, it will be necessary to create recycling and training centres.  For that, it will be necessary to improve public sector and community abilities in order to improve business development and management with the object of promoting the sale of agricultural products. FAO should provide training in the areas of agro-industry and adding value for the benefit of small farms, with priority being given in this respect to women, the young and handicapped people The training of rural business people in committees, formed of the entrepreneurs operating in the transformation and commercialization of agricultural products, should be at the centre of this philosophy, making agriculture a real opportunity (the case of peanuts, sesame, cowpea, millet and cassava). The operators in the private sector should receive information regarding market development strategies, as well as on investment possibilities in the agricultural sector, in particular in the commercialization and transformation of agricultural products, training and sales. It is also necessary to train the youth in the modern practices of agricultural products’ transformation and in other knowledge and competences in the adding of value. The capabilities of those responsible and of the members of the local retail associations must equally be reinforced not only for promoting commercial instincts, but also for guaranteeing the efficient management of the markets and agro-industrial centers, in favor of the continuity of the advantages of agricultural products.

## Maina Karuiru, Food Quality and Safety Services Ltd, Kenya

Africa continues to face food shortages and despite good arable land and conducive climate.

It is in public knowledge that Africa has the youngest population worldwide- ages between 15-35 years

So what are the problem and what are possible solutions?

The problems are many and some complex, however I can point to the following as key ones

1. Continuous reliance on rain fed agricultural farming- climate changes and unreliable rain.
2. Reducing yields per unit/Hectare in the last 20 years or so and growing costs increasing at the same time making farming a loss making venture.
3. Inadequate Government policies to address challenges in Agriculture.
4. Rapidly increasing population- leading to more food consumption.
5. Post-harvest losses in some cases up to 40% of the harvested produce.
6. Inability to practice good agricultural practices eg. adding manure or compost to farms, crop rotation
7. Poor linkages between Agricultural research a organizations and thier findings with the people involved in agricultural activities.
8. Subdivision of arable land as part of cultural practice of land inheritance and property development in arable areas....

Solutions to these challenges in the course of the week.

## Muhammad Mehmood-Ul-Hassan, World Agroforestry Centre, Kenya [1st contribution]

1. The biggest challenges youth in Africa face after going through youth-specific capacity development initiatives in agriculture is the employability with a reasonable level of compensation and availability of humane work conditions. Youth trained in agriculture looks at other fields, such as businesses, IT etc. and does not find agriculture very "glamorous". Part of the reason is that most agricultural raw materials are not truly costed, and hence the small margins, specifically at production stage.

3. In terms of post-capacity development support, there is a big scope for youth e-networks, communities of practice, innovation platforms, etc. that can keep them aware of emerging opportunities and sharing and co-learning  about how to solve such challenges through experience sharing. I think placing youth representation in agricultural policy and implementation fora can also provide country specific solutions by identifying and addressing barriers.

4. In Africa, like many other developing countries, policies alone remain inadequate. Availability of policy is no guarantee that the policies will get implemented in letter and spirit. Probably once idea could be encouraging large businesses to experiment with youth led initiatives, such as agribusiness incubator programs. Governments could, for example, provide tax rebate for business engaging youth.

5. There is a large untapped potential for universities, governments, development organizations,  and donors to work together to launch e-learning courses, Massive Open Online Courses, learning repositories, and providing space for virtual interactions. There is a large amount of knowledge on both successes and failures in empowering and engaging youth in agriculture, but this knowledge is scattered and could be shared through use of ICT. ICT could also facilitate match-making between capacitated youth and youth demand.

## Muhammad Mehmood-Ul-Hassan, World Agroforestry Centre, Kenya [2nd contribution]

Another un-attended CD area is the youth capacity in agricultural science within the context of impending effects of climate change. I am not aware if any African university has even looked at revising their curricula to address new issues due to warming, shifting rain and temperature patterns etc etc. The (agricultural) science being taught and practiced in Africa is reductionist and compartmentalized in nature and needs to re-orient to newer models of inter and transdisciplinary science as opposed to multi-disciplinary organization of universities. In addition, peer review capacity is extremely lacking in Africa.

We at ICRAF had proposed a skeleton of an initiatives to African Academy of Science back in 2015, but it did not materialize so far.

## Hillary Maket, Agriterra, Kenya

Hi All,

Thanks for this great forum and interesting discussions. I would like to voice out regarding question 2;

**2. What are the examples of existing post-capacity development sustainability initiatives for youth in agriculture in Africa? What works and what does not? Are there any success stories and good practices that can be shared?**

At  [Agriterra](https://www.agriterra.nl/) we are working with agricultural cooperatives in Africa towards building their capacities throughout the whole value-chains (rice,maize,coffee,maize,etc). Our intiatives are also now more directed to young farmers in ensuring they are part of the cooperatives. In Kenya as country focus, in particular, we advocate for youth councils. A youth council brings together young members supplying their produces to the cooperatives and non-members who are interested in getting into agriculture. We ensure that they get organised by helping them come up with clear roadmaps on how to increase productivity, how to attract more members into agriculture and some are trained as TOTs and potential extension officers.

In further attracting these young people into agriculture, the cooperatives provide finance (loans) based on the produce or savings with them. Some are allowed to form groups even though they havent started supplying to the cooperative. These group loans cushion the likelihood/risk of loan default.

We also undertake peer to peer exchange for the most improved young farmers. These enables them to see the best practices elsewhere which eventually becomes an added input to them.

The main challenge is to see that management (and boards) of these organisations consistently support the young farmers and not see them as threats towards leadership positions.  We so far work with 18 cooperatives in Kenya. 5 of them have operational and or improved youth councils. Our focus is to ensure that we have young farmers having a single voice under a youth council national confederation of cooperatives. Viva!

## Lahcen Daali, Morocco

*French version*

* Susciter l'intérêt des jeunes à participer au développement en général
* Susciter l'intérêt en eux à participer au développement agricole par des motivations tangibles,
* Empowering les jeunes femmes et hommes à tirer profit du patrimoine existant
* Renforcement de leurs capacité par des coaching in-situ par des professionnels présentant les meilleurs trains technique de production, de valorisation, de commercialisation et de communication et en fin par des aides en matière de matériel agricole adéquat, et des intrants adaptées.

*English translation*

* Promote interest of young people to participate in development in general
* awaken interest in them to participate in agricultural development with tangible motivations,
* empowering young men and women to realize profit from the available patrimony
* Reinforcing their capabilities by in situ training carried out by professionals who present the best trends in production, adding value, commercialization and communications techniques, and finally with help in terms of appropriate agricultural equipment and suitable inputs.

## Haruna Adam, Partners in Rural Empowering and Development (PARED), Ghana

Is there a role for modern technologies, including Information and Communication Technologies, in sustaining capacity development initiatives? Yes. Modern technologies plays an important role in sustaining capacity development initiatives. For instance in the project am currently working on in the East Mamprusi district of the Northern Region of Ghana, we have adopted the use of video screening in reaching out to communities and educating them on the use of improved seed, comparing the performance of farmer saved seeds to that of the improve varieties and good agronomic practices. This gives us the opportunity to educate many farmers within a short period. Also, the use of Information and Communication Technology in information dissemination via mobile phones messages to some farmer’s areas such as weather forecast and prices of produce in the local market will help the farmers in planning their activities.

## Aklilu Nigussie, Ethiopian Institutes of Agricultural Research, Ehtiopia

Dear all;

1. For me the challenge of capacity development in youth agriculture sustaining is the enabling environment to implement the theoretical and practical capacity development (these enabling could be financial source, access to credit, access to land, and other endowments) which are the basic source to implement the aptitude undertaken.
2. In most cases creating a form of business co-operatives can have a chance to exist with 3 to 5 youth engaging in supply chain; for instance family poultry and dairy small co-operative business in Ethiopia; yet this has its own constraints because youth similarity  of interest and thoughts of the business.
3. The problem in youth agricultural participation in Africa is not only a capacity gap on business incubation or innovation system but the start-up engine to the initial. Creating profitable agricultural production system can lead to diffuse skills and knowledge to the low concentrated district and PA as its own innovation and system development.
4. There are technologies that can enhance development with scaling out all it package and with the innovation adopted it for each assumed youth character.
5. Yes indeed; because it can facilitate and ease the transformation of scaling out technologies with an accelerated velocity for the implementation and success to the supply chain with filling the information and demand gaps.

## Michael Ige, Concerned Africans Youth Forum – CAYF, Ghana

Dear Justin and all,

Thanks for putting up this brilliant idea.

I think basically, what the challenges are borders on

(1)The lack of follow up after the capacity building exercise, like coming up with some post-activities.

(2) The inability to address the key issues that were raised by all the stakeholders during the capacity development initiatives.

(3)Inability to implement some of the recommendations on the key challenges that were proffered.

(4) Funds Funds Funds! This is a general challenge but the honest truth in my opinion is, lack of access to funding for small start-ups and small holder young farmers. The capacity building initiatives is a brilliant and laudable idea but no matter how great the idea is, if there is no access to funding, then the exercise won't have much impact.

## Musa Usman Musa, Kano State agricultural and rural development authority, Nigeria [2nd contribution]

**In response to question 2 on examples of existing post-capacity development and the success story:** in Nigeria specifically Kano state we had a series of capacity development initiatives, fundamentally, number trainings organized and run by "Kano State agricultural and rural development authority (KNARDA)" from 2003-2011. During this period, KNARDA initiated a project "Management training plot (MTP)". This project aimed at boosting productivity in Maize production. Farmers were trained, agricultural inputs were given at subsidized rate (fertilizer =N1000/bag, seed = 500/10kg ......). In Bunkure LG of Kano State we have 267 farmers' groups, and each group constitutes of at least 25 members 70% of which were youths. In addition, each group entitled to 45 bags of fertilizer, 20 bags of which were meant for the cultivation of 2 hectares to be managed collectively by the group members, while the 25 bags were for the individual group members. The 2 hectares were used as the MTP Plot, where the extension agent facilitates the activities in the MTP plots. Farmers were trained on good agricultural practices and marketing strategies in maize production. Farmers were well capacitated, but unfortunately, due to lack of follow-up and continuity as a result of changes in government policies the project is no longer visible. If that project (MTP) been sustained till present, Am sure Kano state alone can produce maize beyond National demands. At this juncture, am arguing government /NGOS to strengthen their efforts in youth capacity building and it's sustainability for brighter future.

## Musa Usman Musa, Kano State agricultural and rural development authority, Nigeria [3rd contribution]

**In response to question 3 : What post-capacity development support do the youth need? What can the youth do to support each other in developing their skills and capacities?**

In my opinion, the fundamental post-capacity development support our youths require is finance. If our youth could obtained a financial support, am sure the issue of unemployment in Nigeria will become a history. In Kano Kano State for example, majority of our farmers especially youth, can play a role of extension agent in other states due to series of trainings they undergone. They have the skills of agricultural entrepreneurship, but capital is the major impediment. If our youth obtained capital they will establish a business, by doing so, they can support each other by sharing ideas and engaging their friends in one activity or the other, and that can reduce unemployment in the country. And also, when our youth established business, they will serve as subject of emulation in the society.

## Maina Karuiru, Food Quality and Safety Services Ltd, Kenya

Good People

I promised to offer solutions to challenges that i posted a few days ago. here we go. First a brief about our Company and solutions after the brief.

Our Business food quality and safety services Ltd in Kenya is full time consultancy company based in Kenya and offering  solutions to solve challenges in the Agribusiness and Horticultural Industry in Kenya to make  it profitable and attractive especially to the young people. Among others, our main roles include

1. Help drive efficiency and make the farms profitable. This involves looking at everything in the value chain from Land preparation; growing aspects, Growing mix, and Pack house Operations and all the way to the market, and putting the necessary mitigation measures in place from capacity building, GAP compliance among others.

2. Connecting local farmers and companies to both local and international to markets. This ensures that they deal directly with the markets as opposed to Middlemen or Brokers, which in turn ensures high income for Farmers.

3. Work with export Companies and Farmers to put in place the most efficient water utilization methods, from water harvesting, irrigation systems and techniques that will ensure water as a scarce resource is used efficiently, and cost effective. Use of best practices in water management , gained from countries like Israel that are water deficient yet are self-sustainable in food production.

4. Help Export companies with Implementation of Quality, Safety and Environmental standards required by European Union e.g. Global Gap, BRC- (British Retail Consortium Certification), as well individual Buyers (supermarket) standards.

5. Apart from Consultancy in the Horticultural Industry I’m also a serious avocado Farmer farming profitably for the last 9 years.

Proposed Solutions

Africa continues to face food shortages and despite good arable land and conducive climate.

It is in public knowledge that Africa has the youngest population worldwide- ages between 15-35 years

Stated problems and Proposed possible solutions.

1. Continuous reliance on rain fed agricultural farming- climate changes and unreliable rains. Due to unreliable rains famers continue to suffer huge losses. This needs to change and water harvesting- even at rural areas can go along away in harvesting water to farm when it is dry. Secondly irrigation - while quite expensive especially if you do drip system it is the ultimate answers since it ensures efficiency use of water and application of some chemicals in some cases. We also have to embrace trees/ fruits trees planting in our farms as part of measures to reduce effects of climate change.

2. Reducing yields per unit/Hectare in the last 20 years or so and growing costs increasing at the same time making farming a loss making venture. This has been as result of various factors namely, planting uncertified seeds, lack of knowledge on nutritional requirements for crops, failure to rotate and poor land prep among others. The solutions here include, planting certified seeds, regular rotation of crops, governments and local authorities working with farmers to train them on good practices and elimination of middlemen who rake big profits at the expense of  farmers.

3. Inadequate Government policies to address challenges in Agriculture. Research institutes need to get more actively involved in coming with solutions affecting  yields, varieties and good government support in lowering the cost of inputs will address this challenge

4. Rapidly increasing population- leading to more food consumption.- we have no choice but to grow more and do it efficiently due to declining productive land. How will manage this is a an open complex question.

5. Post-harvest losses in some cases up to 40% of the harvested produce. It is painful that after all the hard work is done we end losing  so much due to post harvest losses. One approach that would work well is capacity building  and training farmers on post-harvest management way before they harvest their crops, and where possible government and Investors invest in storage facilities for various crops in different regions of the country.

6. Inability to practice good agricultural practices eg adding manure or compost to farms, crop rotation. Due to low level of education in rural areas as well government in ability to train farmers on basic good practices concepts

7. Poor linkages between Agricultural research a organizations and their findings with the people involved in agricultural activities. A visit to Kenya Agricultural Research centres reveal massive grounding breaking research  on agriculture, but  the farmers who need this information most don’t have it- a way of disseminating information to farmers and other interested parties must be found- otherwise all the good research will add zero value

8. Subdivision of arable land as part of cultural practice of land inheritance and property development in arable areas.... This is complex especially in Kenya where children must inherit their parents land and later pass it to their children - further reducing arable land to un economical units. A government policy to contain this problem in Kenya failed - because land in Kenya is quite emotive - but long term solution will lie around convincing all of us that land subdivision is detrimental to food production and agree on minimum acreage that can’t be divided.

Comments are welcome

## Peter Stele, Independent consultant, Australia

**FSN Network Debate**

**Sustaining the Impact of Capacity Development Initiatives for African Youth in Agriculture**

Contribution: Planning for the big picture

Hello everyone,

Here’s my take on some of the macro-issues that lie behind the five questions raised. You’ll see that I’m generally skeptical about what young people in Africa can do for themselves either individually or collectively given the limited resources and opportunities that face the majority. This, however, should not detract from what some are already doing successfully and from the the investment required of those currently in charge – of countries, regional/national institutions, banks, investment funds, companies and similar. And too, the contribution of those on the outside looking into the continent not all of whom will be pro-Africa, pro-youth or neutral in approach.

**Introduction – difficult choices for distant planners**

If ‘youth’ and ‘agriculture’ appears in the title you must take note - the compatibility and the incompatibility of the two sectors in Africa (and many other places). Many contributors have already made that obvious link between young people and the future – the young you see around today are the leaders of tomorrow – it follows logically. The challenge is equally obvious – capturing these young people to the social and industrial sectors that are essential to the development of the national economy; and this becomes fundamental when you realize that these are the same people who may have been trained and educated by the state.

It’s equally obvious that the loss of these potentially productive young people is a wasted resource if they are not captured, encouraged and incorporated into the national workforce; lose them and you lose both your current investment and your future.

Sounds great, notwithstanding the reality of what you read as described by many of your 35 correspondents thus far – unemployment, few opportunities, inadequate resources (access to land, finance, technologies, etc.), poverty of national planning, no/limited markets, etc. You name it – it’s listed somewhere in this FSN debate; and if not this one, then one of the others\*. We are, as an interested and technically-competent community (meaning us - the FSN community) clever with words, but perhaps less capable when it comes to shifting ideas into practice.

**Lost resources – people who emigrate/drift**

And, this thing then about reality – take an example – what about the young Nigerian men working the supermarket car parks in Italy. You name a town – you will find them there; hassling the shoppers for their return trollies because – you guessed it – there’s a euro return fee in the chain-locking system, and this is how people on the fringe of a society can make a marginal living. And it’s not just the Nigerians, but also those from many other African countries doing much the same.

Talk to them – they are always either English or French speaking – and you’ll find many are graduates who have left their countries for the unknowns of Western Europe. And, in addition to the supermarket men they’re also casual petrol pump attendants, seasonal agricultural workers by the tens of thousands, and hawkers of all kinds of cheap merchandise at traffic lights and around the bars in Italy. What a way to make a living.

Equally – take a second example - you meet educated young Egyptians driving taxis in Cairo – graduates from the universities representing all manner of technical/literary sectors – who are unable to find suitable work; and this, in one of the most dynamic of the North African countries. Imagine a country that lives on <10% of the land area and has difficulty in attracting young people to the land – typically distant lands - and then keeping them there. How do you provide living space and feed 100M people? The challenges are obvious.

**Africa feeding the world**

And here’s the contradiction of agricultural production industries as a recipient of young people; individually they may have neither the capabilities nor the resources to make it given the need to modernise national (and regional) agricultural industries across the continent. With 20% of the world’s land area, Africa is well-placed to literally ‘feed-the-world’ when (I hesitate to say ‘if’) sufficient inter-regional/trans-national African institutions, companies, investors, regional/national governments, etc. can be mobilized and provided with the vision required; and then mobilize the resources and make a difference.

**Vision followed by action**

Sure, much of this comes within a ‘macro-planning/longer-term’ target, but time is not the best of allies here. You only have to explore the agro-industrialization offered by large-scale irrigation that has been introduced in recent times into Northern Sudan – the transport infrastructure that links into national networks in Egypt and will eventually link Nairobi to Addis Ababa to Khartoum to Cairo on all-weather highways; and the investment in agro-production and agro-industrial processing that will follow/is already underway. And, if not by those with Africa-first priorities, but those that see the continent as ready for modern food production.

Everyone knows the basic food security numbers; >1B people food insecure today; 10B people to feed by 2050 (of which >2.5B will call Africa ‘home’), and changing dietary requirements that include more varied and interesting foodstuffs that demand higher investment, more advanced technologies and the capabilities, knowledge and experience of specialized people. Above all, key issue this, you need markets, buoyant commercial sectors – national and regional – and pragmatic public sectors that are able and sufficiently confident to provide the basis for the private sector to grow and succeed.

Ask yourself why all those well-educated young men from Nigeria continue to drift northwards at alarming rates; from a giant of a country with a rich petrochemical economy and a resilient agro-production heritage?

**Consider India**

And, by way of shifting this contribution from the ‘smoke & mirrors’ of hypothesis, explore the national planning available from India, for example. Larger population than Africa and with few of the natural resources available; but better organized and with considerable potential already recognized on global scale. Download the government’s sales document ‘EY Doing Business in India 2015-16’. It’s available at: <http://www.ey.com/Publication/vwLUAssets/EY-doing-business-in-india-2015-16/%24FILE/EY-doing-business-in-india-2015-16.pdf>. Explore potential, examine the investment sectors highlighted, see what they say about employment.

Similar problems to Africa too – languages, abject poverty, growing Gini Index, etc. And note India’s competitive position – way down the international scale when it comes to others - in the bottom 25%. The point is to recognize this – and change. India will also have more young people than Africa into the next period, of which females in the workforce post-secondary & higher education are already dramatically under-employed. Key words: ‘Inefficiency & waste’. Read about it at: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/10/india-workforce-skills-training/>

**Final words**

Off tack? Sure, could be, but an approach to macro-planning and monitoring/adapting the experience of others when considering the five questions/issues raised for this FSN debate by Mr Chisenga has value. It is expecting too much of the FSN network to do more than provide a debating platform, but it’s a start. Youth to youth opportunities for Capacity Development? Hmmm. Strictly limited/non-existent. Define ‘agriculture’ and link this to ‘national education’. Put into place those short, medium & long-term national plans for agro-production and post-production. Encourage the rise of core and down-stream service and advisory industries, get public sector services into the field. Decide on the priorities that link urban and rural development. Be smart.

Africa needs to nurture its young people; those with experience need to monitor, advise and guide; those with vision need to share their ideas and imagination; watching from the side will be the investors and entrepreneurs who will take risk, exploit and reap the rewards; herein will be need for competent and sympathetic governments that will provide those essential frameworks to encourage the investors, etc. but also to collect the taxes and re-invest them, and share new wealth within local communities. Oh, and don’t forget safety nets for those who cannot easily participate from first base.

Key subject then: ‘Young people and their future’. Enjoy the debate.

Peter Steele  
Melbourne  
Australia  
01 November 2017

\*We had a similar topic for the FSN West Africa Network January 2013 – ‘Finding work for young people – agricultural options’ Check it out. My earlier contribution was more ‘hands-on’.

## Eileen Omosa, We Grow Ideas, Kenya

**Sustaining African Youth in Agriculture**

Congratulations to all the young people practising agriculture and related enterprises. It is a great achievement from the perspective of one who was a youth when the common narrative was that agriculture, especially small scale agriculture was for those who failed to qualify for “office” jobs – or was it a trick used by our parents to keep us in school?

We now know it differently. Whatever career choice one makes, agriculture remains a noble profession. No human being; billionaires, world leaders, the monetary poor, or the young, can survive without food and other agricultural products. Does that sound like one can never go wrong with agriculture as a career choice?

Yes, with a lot of encouragement and support

1. The need for society to start accepting agriculture as a career choice and a sustainable way of providing a livelihood. Parents and teachers to reserve their comments whenever children talk of farming as one of their dreams. Schools to divert from using farm activities as punishment to students.
2. Learning and training institutions to develop curricular that embraces both family farming and commercial agricultural production as potential activities on land. The result will be that youth who lack access to large parcels of land will be willing to start from family land. Kitchen gardens have proven a success in the achievement of food and nutritional security at the household level.
3. Capacity development to focus on agriculture as a system comprised of activities from land/livestock, harvesting and storage, value adding, marketing and consumption. The view of agriculture as a system provides alternatives for the youth to choose from. Those still not ready to touch soil after acquiring a university degree can choose to engage from value addition and marketing stages of the chain.
4. The formation and strengthening of youth groups as one way to overcome financial challenges. It is always easier for recognizable groups to access resources from financial institutions or available grants – compared to individual applications. Groups are a source of strength and encouragement in markets and marketing, especially in current times where middlemen have strengthened their hold on transport and marketing. Easier for youth to form groups when one views middlemen as any cohesive group with a common goal.
5. For now, not everyone has access to land for agriculture. Youth can initiate public discussions where they ask those with extra land for lease. Youth to lobby policy makers for formulation of policies in support of use of vacant land without harassment from the land owners.
6. Develop strategies to share successful case studies – nothing works like field visits to agricultural activities managed by fellow youth. The youth will have a chance to learn from other youth, that farming requires patience and lots of labour, knowledge and skills – not a one year activity for one to reap benefits.
7. The need for analysis of available agricultural related policies at the international, national and local levels. The outcome will be a document for youth to refer to whenever in doubt. This will save time and create awareness on available policies for youth to take advantage of, or areas of lacking for them to lobby for formulation of supportive policies.
8. Youth to take advantage of their superior access and knowledge on technology. Having acquired an education, youth can access available educational materials in agriculture and life in general. Reading widely means that one will be well-equipped to separate “shining passing objects” from well-tested techniques and inputs that will work. The current world is one of information overload, calling for critical thinking when making decisions and choices in relation to access, affordability, practicality and many other abilities that are area and individual specific.
9. The youth already in practice to step forward as living examples. Visit schools and other learning institutions and share your experience as a youth farmer who is ready to continue practicing agriculture. I am still waiting to watch one of our youth at a TedTalk – local or international.

Many of our youth are already on the right pathway. Keep it up, use your unmatched access to social media to ask questions, share challenges and successes stories.

Always remember that there are thousands or millions of us out here ready to share our experience and skills with the younger generation – I want to be assured that when I retire from farming on my 80X40 parcel of land, there will be enough “good” food for me to access. There will always be a ready market for agricultural produce, aka, food.

## Justin Chisenga, FAO, Italy – Facilitator of the discussion

**French translation below**

Dear All,

A few more challenges youth in agriculture face after participating in CD initiatives have been added to the list since my last post. These are lack of follow-up and continuity by organizations on their CD initiatives/projects, inability to implement recommendations made during CD initiatives/projects, and lack of “decent jobs” in agriculture. The lack of “decent jobs” forces the youth graduating in agriculture to look for jobs in other sectors.

Regarding **question 2**, from the contributions made to date, I have identified **six** contributions (with some good details) highlighting examples of initiatives or projects that are working or worked on addressing sustainability issues of capacity development targeting youth in agriculture. These are:

[Togo](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/comment/8321): an NGO - Entreprises Territoires et Développement (ETD) has setup a fund - CIDEA (Capital Investissement pour le Développement d’Entreprises dans le secteur Agricole) - to finance agro-food enterprises and a **business incubation** and promotion centre to support young people in the agro-food sector (and later in other sectors).

[Nigeria](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/comment/8359): the IITA Youth Agripreneurs initiative equips young agripreneurs with skills in production processes and business management to help them to become both agriculturists and people who understand how the business world operates.

[Nigeria](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/comment/8362): the National Institute for Freshwater Fisheries Research runs an undergraduate programme called **Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme** which provides work experience to students trained in aquaculture and fishery.

[Nigeria](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/comment/8411): a project by the Kano State Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (KNARDA) (during the period 2003-2011) worked with farmer groups (in which 70% of the members were youth). The project trained farmers in good agricultural practices and marketing strategies in maize production and provided agricultural inputs at subsidized rate.

[Kenya:](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/comment/8375) Greenfarm International is helping young farmers to develop contract farming to collect the fodder and sell it to the organization. Greenfarm International finances all purchases, transport and storage.

[Kenya](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/comment/8394): Agriterra is building capacities of youth to enable them to be part of agricultural cooperatives by helping them to get organised into Youth Councils. The supply their produces to the cooperatives and other interested in agriculture. This arrangement makes it possible for the youth to access finance (loans), based on the produce or savings, from the cooperatives. Peer to peer exchange among young farmers is also promoted.

I have the following questions to the contributors of the initiatives:

To: Atsu Sename (TOGO); Ololade Adesola, Musa Usman Musa and Philip Ifejika (NIGERIA); James Aucha and Hillary Maket (KENYA) – **what are they lessons, if any, that have you learned from your post-capacity development initiatives that you could further share on this Forum?**

To: Atsu Sename (TOGO),  Ololade Adesola and Philip Ifejika (NIGERIA) - **what specific support is provided to the youth after they have gone through the CD initiatives that you have highlighted?**

I am sure there are more examples of initiatives addressing of post-capacity development sustainability. I and my colleagues will be happy to hear about them.

Regards,

Justin

**French translation**

Chers/Chères Amis/es,

D’autres défis auxquels sont confrontés les jeunes après avoir participé aux activités de renforcement des capacités ont été rajoutés à la liste depuis mon dernier article. Il existe en effet un manque de suivi et de continuité de la part des organisations dans la réalisation des initiatives/projets de renforcement des capacités, une incapacité à mettre en œuvre les recommandations formulées au cours de ces initiatives/projets de renforcement des capacités, ainsi qu’un manque « d’emplois décents » dans le secteur agricole. Ce manque « d’emplois décents » oblige les jeunes diplômés en agriculture à chercher du travail dans d’autres secteurs.

En ce qui concerne la question numéro 2, j’ai pu, sur la base des contributions faites jusqu’à présent, recenser six exemples (relativement bien détaillés) qui mettent en évidence des initiatives ou des projets qui travaillent ou qui ont travaillé sur la question de la durabilité du renforcement des capacités ciblé sur les jeunes en agriculture, notamment :

[Togo](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/comment/8321) : une ONG - Entreprises Territoires et Développement (ETD) a mis en place un fonds - CIDEA (Capital Investissement pour le Développement d'Entreprises dans le secteur agricole) -qui a pour but de financer les entreprises agroalimentaires ainsi qu’un centre d’incubation et de promotion des entreprises pour soutenir les jeunes qui travaillent dans le secteur agroalimentaire (et postérieurement dans d’autres secteurs).

[Nigéria](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/comment/8359) : l'initiative Jeunes Agripreneurs de l'IITA met à la disposition des jeunes entrepreneurs agricoles des compétences liées au processus de production et à la gestion de l’entreprise afin de les aider à devenir à la fois des agriculteurs et aussi des personnes qui comprennent comment fonctionne le monde des affaires.

[Nigéria](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/comment/8362) : l’institut national pour la recherche sur les pêches en eau douce (National Institute for Freshwater Fisheries Research) organise un programme de premier cycle intitulé Mécanisme d’expérience en travail industriel pour étudiants (Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme) qui offre une expérience professionnelle aux étudiants formés en aquaculture et en pêche.

[Kenya](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/comment/8411) : un projet de la Kano State Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (KNARDA) a travaillé avec des groupes d'agriculteurs (dont 70% des membres étaient des jeunes) pendant la période 2003-2011. Le projet visait à former les agriculteurs aux bonnes pratiques agricoles, ainsi qu’aux stratégies de commercialisation de la production de maïs, et leur fournissait des intrants agricoles à un taux subventionné.

[Kenya](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/comment/8375) : : Greenfarm International aide les jeunes agriculteurs à développer l'agriculture contractuelle pour collecter le fourrage et le vendre à l'organisation. Greenfarm International finance tous les achats, le transport et le stockage.

[Kenya](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/comment/8394) : Agriterra s’occupe du renforcement des capacités des jeunes afin de leur permettre de participer à des coopératives agricoles en les aidant à s’organiser en conseils de jeunesse. Ils livrent leurs productions aux coopératives et à d’autres intéressés par l’agriculture. Cet arrangement permet aux jeunes d’accéder à un financement garanti par leurs produits ou par l’épargne, moyennant des prêts accordés par les coopératives. L’échange entre pairs parmi les jeunes agriculteurs est également encouragé.

J'ai les questions suivantes à poser aux personnes qui ont contribué à ces initiatives:

À : Atsu Sename (TOGO), Ololade Adesola et Philip Ifejika (NIGERIA), Atsu Sename (TOGO), Ololade Adesola et Philip Ifejika (NIGERIA) : Avez-vous tiré des leçons des initiatives menées après le renforcement des capacités dont vous pourriez nous parler sur ce Forum ?

Quel soutien spécifique a été fourni aux jeunes à l’issue des initiatives de renforcement des capacités que vous avez soulignées?

Je suis persuadé qu'il existe d'autres exemples d'initiatives qui traitent de la durabilité des mesures à prendre dans la foulée des initiatives de renforcement des capacités. Mes collègues et moi-même serions heureux de les connaître.

Cordialement,

Justin

## Shadrack Agaki, Africa Youth Employment Initiative, Kenya

**Negative Influence from environment**

Just like a drop of blood dirties a whole drum of clean water so does the negative energy and Negative perception on agricultural activities kills the morale of youth who undergoes capacity development. A strategy paper drawn by the Ministry of Agriculture (Kenya Youth Agribusinsess Strategy 2017-2021) launched in July identifies Youth Negative Perception towards agriculture as the biggest impediment to implementation agribusiness in Kenya.

According to the strategy paper, we must overcome this challenge if we are to succeed in attracting youth into agribusiness.

The solution then would be even as organization develop and design curriculum, attention should be paid to the need of pilot projects that would be used as case studies to share as success stories. It is through story telling that we can win the fight against negative perception. Platforms like *peer learning forums*would make perfect places where this stories would be shared.

So capacity development programs should be modelled in form of this forum to facilitate easy learning and adaptation.

## Halimatou Baldeh, Food Safety and Quality Authority of the Gambia, Gambia [1st contribution]

Africa is a youthful continent is as authentic as the holy books and the only way to ensure that Africa is self-sufficient in Food is by empowering our youthful population. Here in the Gambia the Government is doing all that is possible to ensure that the youths are empowered through agriculture. One of the Major activities embarked upon in my Agency right now is the training of youths on Good Agricultural Practices through Food Value Chain. Choosing casava as a main crop that every Gambian can cultivate is a positive way of helping youths to grow cassava in abundance so as to meet both local and international demand. We are anticipating that in the near future the Gambia will grow cassava in abundance using Good Agricultural Practices in order to be able to export cassava and cassava products to the most stringent countries, such as the EU, which have very strict hygiene and safety procedures.

## Musa Usman Musa, Kano state agricultural and rural development authority, Nigeria [4th contribution]

In response to your question based on my previous post; what are they lessons, if any that have you learned from your post-capacity development initiatives that you could further share on this Forum?

There are numerous lessons learned from our post-capacity development initiatives, below are some of them:

(1) The majority of farmers (youth) are willing to engage in agribusiness, but they don't have the capital strength to start up.

(2) Most of our youths have the agribusiness skills.

(3) Youth are always ready to participate in an activities that can improve their livelihood.

(4) Lack of continuity retards progress

(5) Farming is riches

(6) Top-down approach should be avoided, while bottom up should be encouraged.

(7) Agribusiness is the appropriate channel to alleviate poverty

## Yves Stephane Ngaleu, Ministère de l'agriculture et du développement rural, Cameroon

One of the biggest challenge youth face after going through specific CD initiative is lack of support, it could be moral, equipment and / or financial. In Cameroon, there is a project call "*Programme* *de Promotion* *de* *l'Entrepreneuriat* *Agropastoral* *des* *Jeunes* ", this program empowers youth for three months and at the end of their capacity development on good agricultural practices, management and how to write a project, they will present a project that is going to be financed as follows: government supports  50% of the total capital, the youth brings 10% of the total capital and there a loan of 40% by a microfinance Institute.

Often after the training some youth are not able to mobilise their 10%, some doesn't have guaranty for the loan. But those who are able to benefit from this opportunity, create job for their self and for other youth in their community. They are able to transfer what they acquire to other youth and serve as examples and model for the future beneficiaries of the program.

## Ololade Adesola, L.A. Consult Limited, Nigeria [2nd contribution]

Many of the Youth trained have grasped the vital importance of super-imposing Business Skills on Production Skills in order to make a Success of **Agriculture as a Business**.

They can now Study their Business Environments, Identify their Strategic Business Priorities and use these to develop their own Peculiar Business Plans that would guide future Deployment of Financial, Material and Human Resources.

However, many of them are constrained by Finances as they are yet to acquire Loans or Grants to actualize their Dreams and Plans.

But those who have been fortunate to raise Funds are Managing their Businesses more Prudently and Efficiently - Identifying (and Negotiating) with Markets even BEFORE Production, Maintaing Industrial Harmony by Managing Human Hesources fairly to both Employer and Employee, Proactively Identifying Potential Risks (not just Production Risks but Enterprise Wide Risks Assessment) to Business Success and Mitigating those Risks BEFORE they materialize etc.

In addition, the Business Management Training has given them Boldness, which is not evident in Agripreneurs without this type of Training.

It is still early days, so it is premature to fully report Successes, but the Prognisis is certainly reassuring.

## Nawsheen Hosenally, Agribusiness TV, Burkina Faso – expert supporting the discussion

First of all, I would like to thank FAO and partners for taking this initiative to organize this e-discussion which touches the critical component of post-capacity development support. As a youth, I have myself been involved in some capacity development initiatives that have improved my skills and enabled me to see opportunities, grab them and make a change. I am very glad to be one of the subject matter experts and would like to respond to the questions of the debate based on my experience.

**What are the biggest challenges youth in Africa face after going through youth-specific capacity development initiatives in agriculture?**

I think the biggest challenge in post capacity development initiatives for youth is the reality on the ground and also lack of follow-up from the initiator/organiser of the training. For example, suppose the young participants have been trained on packaging, branding and marketing, then coming back home, the person realizes that the materials that they need for packaging is not easily available at an affordable price where they are based. Or online marketing is challenging because of the poor Internet connection, which is still a big challenge in many African countries. And of course, access to finance is another issue. These are just few examples, but there are so many examples on training v/s reality gap. Moreover, when a training is organized, its viability and long-term impact should be thought of by the organizer. Then, there is the issue of follow-up from the organizers. Once the youth go back home, if there is no follow-up in terms of communication or activity, it is rare that the youth will actually use the knowledge/skills gained from the training, unless the person has clearly had prior motivation and plans on how to use the knowledge gained from the training in his/her activity.

**What are the examples of existing post-capacity development sustainability initiatives for youth in agriculture in Africa? What works and what does not? Are there any success stories and good practices that can be shared?**

For me, I was already into agriculture as a student, but it’s such a broad subject that you don’t really know in which segment of the value chain you should be in and what to do after your studies. I was lucky that I came across an essay competition organized by [CTA](http://www.cta.int/) on youth finding ICT solutions that can address agriculture challenges in their country. I wanted to participate and started to do some research and read on the use of ICTs in agriculture. I was really amazed to see how mobile phones were being used to share market or weather information to farmers, something that did not exist in Mauritius back in 2010. I got inspired and submitted an entry for the competition. It was shortlisted and the next step was a Web 2.0 and social media training for development. Following that, CTA launched a blog competition a year later and I won the first prize in the individual category. This opened many opportunities to me, including job opportunities. If I am working in the area of youth, agriculture and ICT today, it’s the result of this programme. My point here is that what made it work is that it was a series of activities that was linked to each other, and over time, I grabbed all opportunities that came to me. In addition, we were added to an online network (mailing list) which, after 7 years is still active. Today, this programme is no longer here in the same format, but there are still opportunities for youth through other programmes. Recently, what has also worked has been the introduction of incubation programmes that help youth in different aspects of their business and which takes place over a certain period of time. What certainly does not work is one-time activities with no communication or follow-up after the training.

**What post-capacity development support do the youth need? What can the youth do to support each other in developing their skills and capacities?**

In my experience, youth networks are very useful and many of these are very often online networks. Sometimes they are not directly agriculture related, but broadly on business/entrepreneurship. I would take a recent example, which is the [YALI](https://yali.state.gov/) (Young African Leaders Initiative) Network. I left my job to start a business in 2015 and during that time, I came across the YALI Network and joined. On its online platform itself, they offer many online courses on various topics (environment, business, leadership etc). In addition, the members in the network are all across Africa and have the possibility to exchange with them. This year, I was selected for the Mandela Washington Fellowship, which is part of the YALI initiative and I was placed at the University of Iowa for 6 weeks, whereby we studied business and entrepreneurship. We were 25 fellows from 18 countries and most of us already had a business. Apart from the training itself, it was a great opportunity to learn from each other and share experiences. Even now after the programme, we are still in touch through our Whatsapp group and other communication channels. When we need a contact or information where the other fellows are, it’s easier and sometimes, we even collaborate with each other. What happens also is that when we come back to our countries, we have the possibility to become a mentor for some programmes and mentor other youth. In this way, we share our experiences and also create other leaders.

**What enabling environment is needed to ensure sustainability of youth in agriculture capacity** **development** **initiatives?**

* Tailor capacity development programme based on the needs of the youth and their context.
* Link with various institutions while designing the programme so that when it is completed, they can support the youth in terms of finance, technical skills etc.
* Collaboration among institutions at national, regional, International levels is also needed to avoid conducting the same activities in isolation.

**Is there a role for modern technologies, including Information and Communication Technologies, in sustaining capacity development initiatives?**

Yes, certainly. Training programmes are often organized in another region/country than where the young person in based and it’s not always practical to meet physically on a regular basis. From the examples I have shared for the previous questions, online platforms have been very useful in sustaining capacity development initiatives. Online platforms can be in the form of mailing lists, Facebook groups, WhatsApp groups etc.

**To sum up, the following are my recommendations on post-capacity development support:**

* Youth is a heterogeneous group. We cannot put all of them in the same basket – urban/rural youth, education level of the youth, their interest (production, processing, marketing, services etc.). Hence the youth group targeted must be properly identified.
* Tailor training/capacity building programmes based on the needs of the identified youth.
* Select the youth to be trained on a competitive basis. If they have to strive to get it, they will understand its value and make the most of it.
* Seek feedback on the capacity development initiative and always improve the programme, based on the responses.
* Follow up with the youth who have been trained and link them with partners and other opportunities.
* Avoid one-time activities.
* Encourage youth to get into networks. But too many networks with same activity is also exhaustive, and the youth lose interest. Hence, various institutions should work in collaboration.

I will stop here for now.

Thanks for reading!

Nawsheen

## Atsu Sename, Entreprises Territoire et Développement, Togo [2nd contribution]

#### French version

#### Bonjour

Je réponds aux questions du facilitateur:

**To: Atsu Sename (TOGO);**Ololade Adesola, Musa Usman Musa and Philip Ifejika (NIGERIA); James Aucha and Hillary Maket (KENYA) **– what are they lessons, if any, that have you learned from your post-capacity development initiatives that you could further share on this Forum?**

Les principales leçons tirées sont les suivantes:

* un travail de sensibilisation est encore nécessaire pour faire participer les jeunes filles à l'entrepreunariat agricole. En effet, nous avons remarqué que les jeunes filles au Togo ne s'impliquent pas dans la production agricole. Elles sont plus tournées vers la commercialisation.
* il est important de nouer un partenariat avec une institution de micro-finance ou une banque avant de lancer la formation des jeunes pour pouvoir tenir compte des exigences de ces institutions lors de la formation. Ce partenariat permettrait aux jeunes d'échapper aux difficultés qu'ils rencontrent dans les formalités de demande de crédit.
* la création par l'Etat d'un fonds d'appui à l'entreprenariat agricole est nécessaire pour booster l'activité des jeunes et renforcer l'attractivié du secteur agricole.
* l'innovation agricole au niveau de la jeunesse mérite d'être soutenue par la promotion d'un fonds d'investissement qui opère spécifiquement en faveur des jeunes entrepreuneurs agricoles.

**To: Atsu Sename (TOGO), Ololade Adesola and Philip Ifejika (NIGERIA) - what specific support is provided to the youth after they have gone through the CD initiatives that you have highlighted?**

Après les renforcements des capacités,

* nous mettons les jeunes en relation avec les banques d'affaires et les institutions de micro finance pour remplire les formalités d'obtention de crédit sur la base d'un fonds dédié accordé par un bailleur.
* nous faisons un suivi-accompagnement des jeunes pour la mise en oeuvre de leurs plans d'affaires sur les trois premières années.

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**English version**

Hello

I am answering the facilitator's questions:

**To: Atsu Sename (TOGO);**Ololade Adesola, Musa Usman Musa and Philip Ifejika (NIGERIA); James Aucha and Hillary Maket (KENYA) **– what are they lessons, if any, that have you learned from your post-capacity development initiatives that you could further share on this Forum?**

The main lessons learned are the following:

* work on spreading awareness is still necessary to encourage young women to participate in the agricultural business. Indeed, we have noted that Togolese young women do not get involved in agricultural production. They are more involved in marketing.
* it is important to foster a partnership with a micro finance institution or a bank before beginning the training of the young in order to be able to take into account the demands of these institutions after the training. This partnership will allow the young to avoid the difficulties that they face when they are requesting a credit.
* the setting up by the State of a fund in support of the agricultural business is needed to boost the activity of young people and reinforce the attractiveness of the agricultural sector.
* agricultural innovation by the young deserves to be supported by the promotion of an investment fund which operates specifically in favor of the young agricultural entrepreneurs.

**To: Atsu Sename (TOGO),  Ololade Adesola and Philip Ifejika (NIGERIA) - what specific support is provided to the youth after they have gone through the CD initiatives that you have highlighted?**

After the CD initiatives:

* we introduce the young people to the commercial banks and micro finance institutions to complete the formalities of securing credit on the basis of a dedicated fund backed by a guarantor.
* we follow up the young people during the implementation of their business plans during the first three years.

## Atsu Sename, Entreprises Territoire et Développement, Togo [3rd contribution]

**3. What can the youth do to support each other in developing their skills and capacities?**

Je pense que la mise en place de mécanismes de discussion et de partage des connaissances en groupe serait d'un véritable atout pour les jeunes de s'entraider. Ces échanges leur permettraient de se partager les difficultés et les leçons.

**5. Is there a role for modern technologies, including Information and Communication Technologies, in sustaining capacity development initiatives?**

Les jeunes pourront se servir des téléphones mobiles ou des réseaux sociaux tels que whatsapp ou facebook pour lancer des initiatives d'entraide.

## Kafui Agbe, YPARD, Ghana [1st contribution]

**What are the examples of existing post-capacity development sustainability initiatives for youth in agriculture in Africa? What works and what does not? Are there any success stories and good practices that can be shared?**

There are keys factors that will lead to the sustainability of capacity development initiatives. These include space (office or land) for youth to exhibit the skills and knowledge acquired, finance to implement innovative ideas and business mentoring. A good example is the Kosmos Innovation Centre (KIC) AgriTech Challenge in Ghana where youth were trained in business modules, team building and other relevant soft skills to establish and manage their business in the agricultural technological space. Team formed by youth were tasked to come put with ideas to solve real agricultural problems to compete for two winners’ price of $100,000.00. Each winner is given $50,000.00, an office space to operate from, mentors to guide them and other supports needed for establishment. Winners from the KIC AgriTech Challenge since its inception in 2016 include TrotroTractor Ltd, Ghalani, AgriInnova, and QualiTrace. Trotro Tractor Ltd ([www.trotrotractor.com](http://www.trotrotractor.com/)) for instance is a powerful platform created to link farmers to tractor operators thereby solving mechanization problems of farmers. This solution in mechanization is made possible because of a solid system put in place KIC and MEST for post capacity development sustainability.

There is also the need to create interaction platforms between the trainers, trainees and other relevant stakeholder to support the enterprises established by the youth. Follow ups are key element of success. Follow ups makes youth more responsibility in their businesses.

What works is a capacity building with all things provided thus a whole package capacity building with funds, networks, space (land), mentorship and right business environment. For instance a business environment that registration of businesses take a long time, interest rates on loans very high, market barriers etc will not lead to post capacity development to be sustained.

## [Stephen Adejoro Adejoro](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/member/stephen-adejoro-adejoro), Livestock Industry Foundation For Africa, Nigeria

Most capacity development organized for youths in Africa have limited exposures to practical intervention, and field exposures to case studies, or learning routes to acquire on training contacts with practical challenges

The first huddle to break is for youths to show keen interest in practicing animal or crop farming as a sustainable livelihood, also at the same time societal perspective and image of a youth engaged in farming need to change, because positive image and perception of the society on any profession is a booster to the professional or entrepreneurial ego to embrace such jobs as ways of living

In most Africa society agriculture is perceived as a second class jobs to white collar jobs which makes most youths to want to prefer them than getting engaged in practical agriculture

## [Garba Saleh, Federal College of Education (Tech) Bichi, Nigeria](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/member/stephen-adejoro-adejoro) [2nd contribution]

**The enabling environment needed in order to ensure sustainability of youth in agriculture capacity development initiatives especially in Africa are as follows:**

1. Provision of capital for implementing innovations: Youth need enough capital in order to implement the agribusiness. Therefore, African governments, NGOs and international organizations, including FAO, should provide substantial capital either in form of credit or grants to youth in order to ensure sustainability of youth in agriculture.
2. Access to land for agribusiness: Youth in Africa need land for proper implementation of their business. Example youth that are train for broiler production they need permanent and suitable land where they can settle and continue their production.
3. Provision for infrastructure: Infrastructure necessary to transport agricultural produce for example, livestock, livestock products, vegetables etc from remote rural communities, where production is concentrated, to urban markets where is lacking. Roads are necessary for easier conveyance of farm produce to market for sustainability. Also storage facilities should be provided especially for perishable products such as milk, vegetables and so on. Furthermore processing centers should be provided in many villages so that agricultural produce can be processed.
4. Provision for cooperative society:  Provision for cooperative society in many communities and for different types of agribusiness is necessary for making agricultural production easier for accessing loan, grants, markets and so on in order to ensure sustainability of youth in agriculture.
5. Provision of marketing channels and market information: Youth in agriculture should have access to market information. The market information would have been an important driving force for increased production and sustainability.
6. Power supply provision is very important for processing and preservation of farm produce especially in Nigerian villages and cities in order to ensure sustainability of youth in agriculture.

## Philip Ifejika, National Institute for Freshwater Fisheries Research, Nigeria [2nd contribution]

Dear Justin,

For clarification on SIWES programme for undergraduate student, our role is limited with the training while lecturers from the school come for monitoring. At the end of the training, students return to their schools. To best of my knowledge, Institute don't provide post SIWES support.

However, on personal relationship with some students we provide mentorship. For instance, in July this year, a student from Bayelsa State contacted me on water quality kits while another female student from Makurdi sought my advice on taking up job to manage a fish farm.

Another case is a male student that I linked to an aquaprieneur to manage a modern fish farm in Anambra State due to our relationship after SIWES. Also, I am aware of some that asked for fingerlings, fish processing, and management practices.

Philip

## Atsu Sename, Entreprises Territoire et Développement, Togo [4rt contribution]

**4. What enabling environment is needed to ensure sustainability of youth in agriculture capacity development initiatives?**

**\*\*** J'aborderai la question de l'environnement sur deux angles : premièrement je dirai que les jeunes ont besoin d'une garantie de la part des Etats auprès des banques, des IMF et une garantie quant à l'accès à la terre, et deuxièmement  il faut que les Etats créent des cadres juridiques financiers spécifiques à l'investissement des jeunes dans l'agriculture.

Aujourd'hui les banques et les institutions de micro finance hésitent à financer les jeunes dans l'agriculture parce qu'elles n'ont pas confiance en la capacité de remboursement des jeunes vue les conséquences du changement climatique sur la productivité agricole. Si les Etats se portent garants des crédits de jeunes agripreuneurs auprès des banques, les  jeunes s'investiront aisément parce qu'ils savent qu’en cas de catastrophe naturelle ou d'inondation ou de ravage de criquets, etc. ils ne seront pas poursuivis par les banques. Aussi, qui parle d'agriculture parle de la terre, or la terre appartient à des collectivités familiales (au Togo). Ce qui fait que un jeune qui veut se lancer dans la production agricole a peur d'investir dans le structurant, car le jour où le propriétaire de sa parcelle décide de la lui retirer il perd tout.

Les entreprises portées par les jeunes dans le domaine agricole devraient bénéficier d'un système d'impôt spécifique qui ne soit pas trop lourd pour eux. Au Togo, les jeunes qui se lancent dans l'entreprenariat agricole sont souvent confrontés aux difficultés de payement des impôts. Ce qui n'encourage par d'autres jeunes à se lancer dans les mêmes projets.

## Halimatou Baldeh, Food Safety and Quality Authority of the Gambia, Gambia [2nd contribution]

**1: What are the biggest challenges youth in Africa are facing after going through youth-specific capacity development initiatives in Agriculture?**

This particular Forum is very much interesting. After giving out my preamble on Youths and Agriculture from the Gambia Situation i also want to take the opportunity to answer the above questions as applied to the Gambian situation as far as youths and agriculture is concerned.

Recently in the Gambia the Government, through a technical assistance from the European Union have started training youths on various life skills trainings and one of them is on Agriculture. In the Gambia 80% of the population are Farmers and the best way to empower youths is through farming because it is already a traditional way of life. Unfortunately the likely challenges that is going to face the youths after training them on Agriculture is sustainability. If youths are trained and they are not given enough capital that is modern farming tools, money and access to wide markets their skills will not be able to benefit them and that is one of the biggest challenges facing African Youths engaged in Agriculture.

**2: What are the examples of existing post -capacity development sustainability and initiatives for youth in Agriculture in Africa. What work and what does not work? Are there any success stories and good practices that can be shared.**

Back to the Gambia, West Africa, there are existing post -capacity development sustainability initiatives for youth in Agriculture. One of them is the training of young Entrepreneurs on Good Agricultural and Good Hygienic Practices by the Food Safety and Quality Authority of The Gambia an Initiatives that came up to ensure that youths are empowered. One dividend that this training has yielded is that most of the youths trained are now engaged in small scale entrepreneurship such as Fish Processing, the Selling of fish from the coastal region to the inland where fish is scarce. Most of the youths have also embarked on poultry Farming and most are now engaged on a year round cassava cultivation using available resources to produce abundant cassava.

What does not work in this initiatives right now is now is the possibility to export in the nearest future because these trained youths still need more capacity building and extra resources for them to be able to follow the Food Safety Management System that may eventually accord them the opportunity to be audited independently and certified internationally to meet requirements.

The success stories are that these youths in Agriculture have now committed themselves, using their meagre resources to start doing business.

**3 What post capacity development support do the youth need? What can the youth do to support each other in developing their skills and capacity?**

The post-capacity development support that youths in Africa doing Agriculture need are capacity building and capital to sustain the initiatives given to them. For example if youths are trained in groundnut production, they need to be trained extensively on Good Agricultural Practices. They also need mechanised Agriculture and in that youths need to be provided with modern machinery to enable them produce more and build wider markets. Most importantly youths need training.

What the youths need to support each other is to form networks. Networking always make things easy and in that they will be able to share ideas easily.

**4: What enabling environment is needed to ensure sustainability of youth in Agriculture capacity development initiatives?**

The enabling environment that youths need to ensure sustainability of youth in Agriculture capacity development initiatives is empowerment. Youths need to be fully empowered in all aspects.

5: Is there a role in Modern Technologies, including information and Communication Technologies in sustaining capacity development initiatives.

Yes Information and Communication is also the easiest and quickest way for youths to learn and share information on Modern Agricultural Technologies. Youths can share information through e-learning courses.

## Justin Chisenga, FAO, Italy - facilitator of the discussion

Thanks once more to all of you for contributing to the consultations.

I have noted the responses to my questions, in [my last post](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/comment/8416), by [Oladade Adesola](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/comment/8423) (Nigeria) , [Atsu Sename](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/comment/8425) (Togo) , [Philip Ifejika](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/comment/8437) (Nigeria) , and [Musa Usman Musa](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/comment/8421) (Nigeria).

I have taken note of:

* additional contributions on challenges faced by youth in agriculture;
* a few more examples ([Cameroon](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/comment/8422) , [Burkina Faso](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/comment/8424) and [Ghana](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/comment/8427) ) highlighting how post-capacity development sustainability are being addressed; and
* the reminder to participants on this discussion that youth is a heterogeneous group and they cannot all be put in the same basket.  Therefore, distinct categories of youth may require different strategies to address their capacity development needs and post-CD support.

In this post, I focus on contributions on **question 3 on post-capacity development support to youth**.

The overall view is that if the major challenges (lack of or inadequate access to finance to setup and develop their agribusinesses, lack of access to land, lack of access to markets, poor prices for agricultural produce, lack of access to appropriate information, etc.) the youth in agriculture face are addressed, it would equally address most post-CD issues and thus contribute to making the young African agripreneurs to succeed in their endeavours.

In addition to the above, the following are indicated in the contributions as areas (not in any order or priority) on which post-CD support to youth in agriculture should also focus:

* organizing the youth into groups (i.e. cooperatives, youth networks, etc) to facilitate provision of support to them. This would also make it easier for the youth to access resources;
* facilitating knowledge sharing and peer learning among the youth;
* monitoring the impact of CD programmes by following up on the youth, hearing their stories (feedback) and improving the programmes, based on the feedback;
* helping the youth to map business opportunities and linking them to the opportunities;
* organizing competitions for youth in agriculture to motivate them and to ensure visibility of their initiatives and potentially attract other youth to agriculture;
* providing mentoring services and involve the youth in other CD programmes (i.e. study tours to successful agricultural enterprises/farms) that would enable the them to acquire additional knowledge.

To help themselves, the **youth should**:

* be willing to collaborate with each other, share good practices, successful case studies, etc,
* establish communities of practice/peer learning platforms;
* initiate public discussions where they could express their concerns and ask for help that they need, including access to land for lease, etc.
* lobby policy makers to formulate policies that would facilitate their participation in the agricultural sector and access to resources;
* The following two points also came up very clearly in the contributions, that it may be time to:
* start training youth that are selected through a competitive process. This, would in a way, ensure that only youth that have a strong interest in agriculture and more likely to stay in the sector, benefit from capacity development programmes;
* avoid one off training initiatives as these are not enough to turn youth into farmers or agripreneurs. Develop integrated CD programmes that also include post-CD activities/support.

More contributions, especially on how youth can help themselves, are welcome.

For those of you that are yet to contribute on the question of the **enabling environment**, as you prepare your contributions, think about the **broad enabling conditions** that, in your view, would increase the likelihood of success and impact of the capacity development initiatives targeting youth in agriculture.

Regards,

Justin

## Kafui Agbe, YPARD, Ghana [2nd contribution]

**What post-capacity development support do the youth need?**

The post capacity development support that youth need is mentorship and coaching.  There must be a systematic guidance to the ventures or businesses young people undertake. My work as a mentor under Next Generation Cocoa Youth Program (MASO) project funded by MasterCard Foundation's Youth Forward Initiative and implemented by Solidaridad and Ashesi University in Ghana has shown that guidance and direction for youth helps to bring out excellent results. Youth in rural areas who had little idea about business where taken through a Business Academy to acquire skills and knowledge to identify business opportunities in their environment. Coaches and Mentors are then introduced to them to share their experiences in business start-up, motivate and build the confident of mentees. Through this successful businesses were established by young people in their communities.

**What can the youth do to support each other in developing their skills and capacities?**

As mentioned by Halimatou youths need to form networks.  Youth network such as Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD) need to be supported financially to facilitate the creation of opportunities and relevant networks for young people. The YPARD Ghana chapter recently organized an Agribusiness Networking Cocktail to bring together various companies and organizations in agriculture and agribusiness. All drinks, meat and items for the event were sourced locally from young agripreneurs. Through the event, Goat Master Ltd (www.goatmastersgh.com) the suppliers of Goat Kebab for the event has secured the opportunity to serve his goat kebab to the staff of BEIGE, one of the leading investment companies in Ghana. The Agribusiness Network Cocktail is part of a programme called Farmers Connect under the Future Farmers Initiative (FFI) designed by YPARD Ghana and its partners.

Youth networks must also serve as a link between the young agriprenuers, authorities and agencies of governments. The various youth groups existing in any particular country must join forces to push government and authorities to release funds for youth enterprises with flexible payment terms.

## Inza Fanny, Association des riziculteurs de Touredougou, Côte d'Ivoire

**French version**

**La question 1**

La méconnaissance de l'agriculture par les jeunes, pas de véritable politique agricole de nos gouvernants. Pas de suivi des projets. L'agriculture doit être instaurée dans le cursus scolaires afin que les jeunes aient une notion de l'agriculture.

Pour améliorer l'entrepreneuriat agricole des jeunes, il faut un délai d'apprentissage raisonnable.

**English translation below**

**Question 1.**

The ignorance of young people about agriculture, no real agricultural policy on the part of our Governments. No follow up of projects. Agriculture must be included in the school curriculum so that young people may have some idea of what it is. In order to improve the agricultural business start-ups of young people, a reasonable period of apprenticeship is necessary.

## Julian Akinremi, Fourteen farms, Nigeria

Hello this is a wonderful topic and am sure every active advocate for youth participation in agriculture would want to drop a few words. I would start my little contribution by giving my view on this question.

**What should be the nature of post-capacity development support to these youth in order to retain them in agriculture, and to ensure the sustainability and long-term impact of youth-specific CD initiatives?**

After every CD initiative, the expected outcomes should be managed considering the following factors: Long term ability of the agribusiness to thrive, start-up challenges prevailing in the locality where the business is setup, marketability of the intended business with regards to import substitution and quality of harvested or processed material.

I want to assume two factors can help keep youths in agribusiness after capacity building or development training and they are:

1. Follow-ups: If these youths have been encouraged to take-up careers in the agricultural sector, and their capacities to make impact in the sector has been developed then, the organizers of the CD training must create avenues to follow–up these new startups.

2. Empowerment: If a person is trained on how to cultivate cassava for 3months then he is left alone to startup with little or no funding, am certain he would lose interest after the first 2 weeks if funds to implement the knowledge gained and the ideas that sprouted during or after the training. Provision for empowerment must be made alongside CD training plans.

In other words the post CD activities would determine how well the CD would be used to impact on agriculture.

**1. What are the biggest challenges youth in Africa face after going through youth-specific capacity development initiatives in agriculture?**

i. Finance: knowledge is power but how many people have been able to use their knowledge to generate wealth. A job seeking youth who is not an agricultural graduate is trained to practice agriculture and not empowered to get land, seeds, fertilizer and tools. No matter how impactful the CD sessions were the zeal to implement the ideas and knowledge would die off faster than it came.

ii. Infrastructure: We have lots of challenges with post-harvest handling of agricultural materials. Good road networks, standard farm structures in rural areas, farm tools and other basic need to enable youths make honest gains from carrying out farm work must be made available.

iii. Markets: Local farmers have issues with imported goods, local prices are higher, processing skills are poor or non-existing hence a sizable amount of the farm products go to waste.

iv. Rural Development: Asking a graduate to relocate to a farming community which is miles away from the rural area that is just bearable for the youth is a difficult thing to ask in this age of cinemas, internet, etc.

**2. What are the examples of existing post-capacity development sustainability initiatives for youth in agriculture in Africa?**

i. Grants and Loans: Bank of Industry (for processors) loans, Bank of Agriculture loans, USAID grants, Tony Elumelu Foundation grants etc. are available for young entrepreneurs in Nigeria and Africa.

**What works and what does not?**

i. Selection system: we have some organization using high tech selection systems that have breed seasoned agripreneurs while others have selected job seeking graduates who have little or no flair for agriculture.

ii. Focus should be on Agriculture students’ right from campus. They should be nurtured systematically to love what they do over time till they graduate. Most would create jobs in the agricultural sector before becoming graduates.

**3. What post-capacity development support do the youth need?**

Mentoring

Farm to factory support

Government intervention support

Access to basic farm facilities

**What can the youth do to support each other in developing their skills and capacities?**

i. Interstate/ Region/ Country Collaboration

ii. Create Networks

iii. Meet often offline and on line to share ideas, challenges and proffer solutions.

**4. What enabling environment is needed to ensure sustainability of youth in agriculture capacity development initiatives?**

i. Access to startup finance

ii. Mentoring

iii. Entrepreneurship support follow-up

iv. Business friendly government policies aimed at enabling SMEs grow

v. Rural Development.

**5. Is there a role for modern technologies, including Information and Communication Technologies, in sustaining capacity development initiatives?**

Yes there is a major role for ICT and modern technologies. Educated farmers want online store for agricultural products, online markets that are secure, apps for measuring starch content, moisture content, desirable properties, apps for networking youths all over the world in same line on the agriculture food chain, apps that enable them have access to info on outbreak of pest and disease, new varieties of seeds, new processing methods, user friendly data collection apps, easy to use monitoring and evaluation apps, daily water requirement apps.

Lots of work has been done to ensure that youths build careers that thrive in the agricultural sector but more can still be done.

Akinremi Julian

Food, Agricultural and Environmental Engineer, Agripreneur and Agribusiness Consultant.

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## Daramola Tolu, Nigeria

**What are the biggest challenges youth in Africa face after going through youth-specific capacity development initiatives in agriculture?**

Corruption and a bad case of misplaced priorities. A lot of youths interested in agriculture still need a sustenance during the start-up phase, in the absence of which t they settle for white collar jobs and end up lingering past the age of youth benefits.

**What are the examples of existing post-capacity development sustainability initiatives for youth in agriculture in Africa? What works and what does not? Are there any success stories and good practices that can be shared?**

I love a project between Leventis and FG in Nigeria here they run a one year internship, all-expense paid for the youth the challenge is that most qualified youths (interested and passionate about agriculture) do not have the pre requisite of farm land and farm experience. In my opinion, it is quite foolish to be offering a one year training and expecting an applicant to be experience already, if a youth meets all their criteria, such youth would not be needing training, it is a similar situation with most agriculture support programs. you find out most beneficiaries are well positioned more as pen farmers (only farm with keypads and never actually see a farm operation) or youths looking to kill time pending when they get a white collar job not he actual intended beneficiaries.

**What post-capacity development support do the youth need? What can the youth do to support each other in developing their skills and capacities?**

I personally think vocation agriculture schools should be established in all states, where possible in each LGA and youths from junior Secondary Schools should be able to enrol even its just a summer holiday program.  This would help many interested get familiar with modern systems like urban sack farming, organic farming etc...the serious ones can then be given access to lands till then can be independent.

**What enabling environment is needed to ensure sustainability of youth in agriculture capacity development initiatives?**

A serious reduction in the bureaucratic system, if a youth could pick up a form and be sure of been attended to, instead of going from one office to the other at government establishment with no result. I have mentioned before, the need to reduces and possibly eliminate monetising agriculture benefits...if a body wants to help, bring us machineries that can be leased, or given out, provide trucks for transporting goods on a schedule from farming communities to major cities/markets. Money in its raw element is yet to be of any good to young farmer

**Is there a role for modern technologies, including Information and Communication Technologies, in sustaining capacity development initiatives?**

A lot of youths are designing solutions for agriculture but they do not see the light of day because no one is listening, everyone is holding seminars but what is the support/feedback platform when a youth keys in and develops a solution for the sector. Instead, the elites try to buy the apps right off them before assisting them with anything thus discouraging them and causing them to look at more viable and flexible sectors like entertainment

## Theodore Mulumeoderhwa Lushombo, Action For Improvement of Food Child and Mother, Democratic Republic of the Congo

**French version**

1. parlant des principaux défis rencontrés par les jeunes africains à l'issu des initiatives de développement des capacités axées sur les jeunes dans le secteur agricole, ici il sied de noter que les jeunes entrepreneurs œuvrant dans le domaine de l'agriculture en milieu rural sont heurté à plusieurs défis qui nécessitent d'être relevés notamment le manque ou l’insuffisance des capitaux pour commencer les initiatives au préalable.

2. l'inaccessibilité au microcrédit pour soutenir les projets de l'agriculture et la pisciculture ainsi que l'élevage; le manque des garanties exigés par les banque pour accéder aux microcrédits.

3. les difficultés liées à la politique d'accès aux partenariats des organisations internationaux pour la coopération technique et une assistance financière pour l'acheminement des projets conçus sur le terrain.

4. Le manque d'accompagnement des gouvernements africains, des secteurs privés; des initiatives des jeunes entrepreneurs dans le domaine de l'agriculture d'où le chômage en grande échelle.

**English translation**

1. Regarding the main challenges faced by young Africans in the context of initiatives for capacities development aimed at the youth in the agricultural sector, here it is convenient to mention that the young entrepreneurs working in the agricultural sector in the rural areas face several challenges which need to be raised, in particular the lack or insufficiency of capital to begin the projects in the first place.

2. Difficulties in accessing micro credit to sustain their projects in agriculture and pisciculture, as well as, animal husbandry; the lack of the guarantees which are demanded by banks to obtain access to micro credits.

3. The difficulties related to the policy governing access to partnerships with international organizations for technical cooperation and financial assistance for the starting up of projects conceived in the field.

4. The lack of support from African governments and the private sector; lack of initiatives for young entrepreneurs in the agricultural sector resulting in widespread unemployment.

## Salahuddeen Mohammed Shitu, SALAKNIGHT LTD, Nigeria

Most of our youth has the agri business skills. One of the problems youth face in Africa is the initiatives and access to easy process loan programs, accessing loans in Africa is one of the hardest things and when someone is opposed to get the loan it comes out with higher interest rates to pay back, our financial institutions needs to be more effective and flexible with the loan process,

## [Youssoupha Diouf](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/member/youssoupha-diouf), CNAAS, Senegal

You know, farming is a business and the farm owner must consider that he has a business in his hands. Young Africans must believe in agriculture and its potential to make them rich. Governments, in turn, need to put in place economic policies that allow for much of their business viability and help them grow and become multinationals in the agri-food sector that is a sector of the future. World continues to grow and the primary need to eat is greater than ever in the African continent where so far there are thousands of women and children who do not eat their hunger.

## Tony Nsanganira, FAO, Ghana – expert supporting the discussion

Many thanks to all participants for the very valuable contributions posted so far and many more are certainly to be registered. Issues to be dealt with are very clear and I want to believe that through collaboration/partnerships a lot can be achieved in addressing them, building on/learning from what already works in some parts of the continent and beyond.

Please allow me to share this very informative publication jointly produced by FAO, CTA and IFAD: **Youth and Agriculture: Key Challenges and Concrete Solutions** [http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3947e.pdf](http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3947e.pdf  )

It highlights various challenges (relevant for this Forum's topic and most of which - if not all - have been posted here) and, most importantly, proposes some solutions with replicable success stories. It is a very important guiding material that we can all make good use of and let's also share it widely.

At FAO, we look forward to keep strengthening collaboration with partner-institutions, among which youth organisations, as we take forward this very important agenda for Africa.

## Innocent Chamisa, FAO, Italy

Firstly, l would like to thank all those who have contributed to this very interesting, important and timely discussion, l am learning a lot!

**Qn: What post-capacity development support do the youth need?**

“Developing the knowledge, skills, and talent of youth will also require investing in smallholder agriculture in order to provide successful examples and viable livelihoods for all future generation” In addition:

**More Mentors and Role models!** Youth in Agriculture need More Mentors and Role models. In Africa, widely loved and supported by many youth is the game of Soccer. Ask me or any other youth about our Role models in soccer, commonly known and mentioned are the likes of Kalusha Bwanda from Zambia, Jay Jay Okocha from Nigeria, Bruce Gobbler from Zimbabwe among many…However, ask me or any other African youth about our role models in Agriculture, honestly many will not be able to point at one.  To engage more youth in Agriculture and to ensure sustainability of CD initiatives, we need to have more Mentors and Role models in Agriculture who can inspire the young generation to stay in Agriculture.

**Encourage Mentorship Programmes** – visiting and communicating with experienced farmers for mentoring opportunities and liaison with experts for example Extension Officers.

Creation of **knowledge sharing and exchange** platforms .These are platforms where youths can convene regularly to share experiences and lessons learnt in their respective agricultural projects, this could improve their knowledge and motivate them to stay and continue doing well in Agriculture. Example ZFC –[Young Farmers club in Zimbabwe](http://www.zfu.org.zw/projects/zimbabwe-youth-agripreneurship-summit-2017), which has managed to successfully host the annual Youth-Agric summits in Zimbabwe since 2012.

To encourage those youth already engaged in agriculture, **create producer competition amongst youths and source prizes** to lure more youths.

To improve youth access to financing options with reasonable conditions **set up Revolving Funds Loan Facility**

**Exchange visits: Establish: Youth Agricultural Exchange Programs:** South-South Youth in Agriculture Programs and North-South Youth in Agriculture exchange programs.

**Establish regular feedback mechanism** to maintain the interests amongst the stakeholders and the youth involved in the CD initiatives. (CD initiatives should never be once and for all activities)

**Qn:  What can the youth do to support each other in developing their skills and capacities?**

“Inspiration without adequate tools is unfruitful, gather up the necessary information, skills before taking up the correct action. Plan adequately.”

The starting point is to be **organized into vibrant youth structures** from the villages, through the wards, districts, provincial to national levels to ensure legitimacy and credibility. Establish and utilize Young people’s resource centres at grassroots level.

Creation of **Young farmers forums** for knowledge sharing awareness campaigns and creating partnerships through Young Farmers Clubs (YFCs)

**Capitalise on Social Capital: Network** and sharing the work they are doing with others “Networking is a key in taking action” Working together and linking with each other, sharing resources through YFCs, Cooperations, and partnership

**Collective marketing and advertising** of young farmers produce.

**Frequent interaction through social media** sites for example Facebook page, WhatsApp, YouTube and twitter.

D**evelop young farmers business ethics**such as commitment, trustworthy and accountability

**QN: What enabling environment is needed to ensure sustainability of youth in agriculture capacity development initiatives?**

**Recommendations:**

Key amongst all: **Ensure Equal and equitable distribution of land for both male and female young farmers.** Consider revisiting the old and outdated land tenure systems across Africa. Most land is still in the hands of the older people, who in some cases are not utilising it, and many have multiple (5-10 farms) and men usually own this.

Need to **acknowledge the heterogeneity of African youth in Agriculture:** This is crucial and key when planning for any CD initiative. Need to be cognizant of issues such as gender, class, tribe, level of education, location among these youth inter alias. These heterogeneous groups of youth will require different support prior, during and post the CD initiative/s.

**Support** **more Agripreneurship projects** so that the youth will be able to directly put all things learnt into practice for a price. We recently launched the Agripreneurship alliance to support African Youth in Agriculture. I am among the founding members of the organisation , for more visit  our [webpage here](https://www.theagripreneur.org/)

Facilitate the development **of vibrant youth structures.**

**Inclusion of youth representatives** in all agricultural related decision making forums, include youth representatives in all agricultural related decision making forums.

When it comes **to policymaking and dialogue**- **Get rid of youth side events:** We should be focusing on inter-generational work. Currently young farms are not given spaces, where and when they are given,  in most cases they are given their own spaces, but at the cost of not being in the room for the “grown-up” discussions. Youth in Agriculture **should interact and inform decision-making on thematic issues,** so should be involved in all discussions.

**Recognise Youth who are already champions** in Agriculture, support  and empower them to inspire the rest – making the youth part of the solution not the problem

**Promote sustainable Mechanisation for young people** in agriculture. Form strategic partnerships with private institutions to support youth with sustainable smallholder agricultural equipment.

**Promote Innovative Extension support mechanisms** such as -Sight learning, Young Master Farmer, Exchange visit and field days.

**Valuate young farmers assets and use them** as collateral to acquire loans, and secure markets and  create young farmers venture capital fund with favourable repayment terms

**Strengthen YFCs platforms** for sustainable farmer to farmer, and stakeholder to farmer linkages (contract farming)

**Establish Young Farmers Resource centres or hubs** to improve information access to lower level structures.

Many now believe that to lure and keep youth in agriculture, we should ***make agriculture, “cool and sexy.”*** I would like to add, with specific reference to Africa, where agriculture is still dominantly a rural activity, we ***also need to make the rural areas “cool and sexy “***Making the youth who have gone through CD initiatives to voluntarily stay in the rural areas and be engaged in agriculture, rather than migrating to the cities.

Establish **nationwide demonstration plots** for young farmers clubs.

**Leveraging on technology for research** on production, information gaps, and constant young farmer interaction.

**Improve ICTs uptake** amongst youths through agriculture applications etc.

**Ignite the imagination of young people** to seize new technologies to become proactive and engaged.

For now, l will end with this quote from the FAO director General:

“A sustainable world can only be achieved with the full engagement of Young people, they must feel integrated, and believe that a more peaceful and prosperous world is possible. Building the Zero Hunger Generation requires building a new generation of farmers and businessmen and women in Africa.”  Jose Graziano da Silva

\*\*Views are personal.

## Toyin Otitoju, Africa Leadership forum, Nigeria

Development of youth capacities in agricultural opportunities is a good initiative. However, though there are numerous initiatives out there that are beneficial to Nigerian youths, quite a number of youths have been trained on Agribusiness, many have even developed good business plans on various innovations. But unfortunately, these innovations have remained in the pipeline due to lack of fund and good infrastructural facilities. Therefore, capacity development most be coupled with access to finance and seed capitals for start-ups and existing businesses. State and Federal government should develop irrigation schemes/ rehabilitate old irrigation facilities across the nation, provide electricity, mechanization, good road, clean potable water, affordable or free internet services in rural areas. 80% arable land in Nigeria remain unused as a result of high cost of land clearing operations, government in partnership with private sector should clear up this land and relax the land holding policies, thereby making it available at little or no cost to youth that are interested in Agriculture.

## Ken Lohento, CTA, Netherlands – expert supporting the discussion [1st contribution]

Dear all

Great contributions so far. Thanks to everyone for the knowledge shared. I am Ken Lohento, Programme Coordinator at the Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation ([CTA](http://www.cta.int)), based in the Netherlands; we cover Africa, Caribbean and Pacific countries. I focus on youth in agriculture and ICT activities and I am Focal Point for Youth in agriculture activities for CTA. You can have information about our youth activities on links such as: CTA [Youth Strategy](http://www.cta.int/images/CTA_youth_strategy.pdf); stories on some [young agripreneurs](http://www.cta.int/en/news/agripreneurs.html); our [youth Facebook Page](https://www.facebook.com/ardyis) and our [Pitch AgriHack](http://pitch-agrihack.info/) program page. CTA has been supporting youth in agriculture through various programs and activities relating for example to young farmer involvement in farmers organisations, ICT, youth in agriculture policies, supporting youth specific projects on the ground.

I would like to focus on the first question for now:

**What are the biggest challenges youth in Africa face after going through youth-specific capacity development initiatives in agriculture?**

As many contributions pointed out, big challenges after capacity development initiatives are lack of access to productive equipment (including lands for production), lack of access to finance and lack of access to profitable markets. But this may be an easy answer.

In many agriculture/agribusiness development programmes that included training, or leveraged on already provided training, youths have been provided with credits or grants but in many cases, these resources have not been always used adequately. Re-payment rates are sometimes as low as 10% for loans. This may be related to the fact that sometimes, those trained and provided with financial resources are not youth with the right profile, actual agripreneurs or motivated aspirant agripreneurs. Sometimes, beneficiaries of programs concluded by provision of start-up funds may just be youth rewarded for their involvement in political militancy. Therefore, in many cases, youth may face mismanagement of the agribusiness programme that was supposed to support them and sometimes, youth themselves just don't do the right thing.

In other cases, though technical agricultural training would have been provided, business management skills are lacking in the youth. Business management skills are necessary not only to know to manage daily the business, but also how to implement successful business strategies (which can help you, for example, know how to seize market opportunities, manage relations with the supply chain, even in times of market challenges). It has also to be reminded that a person with business management capacity is not necessary a good financial manager. Accounting capacity (for records keeping and general account management) and financial management capacity (understanding how to implement sound financial strategies, including for successful additional resource mobilisation) is often lacking in small and young entreprises in Africa; therefore they don't grow easily, and stagnate or fail. In some cases, young companies may just need to have the resources to pay for an accountant and/or financial manager. And in other cases, the promoter has to understand that it should be the personal with capacity to understand and implement financial operations who should be selected to attend specific finance related training.

Talking about aspirant agripreneurs, not everyone can become a successful entrepreneur, though you are encouraged to try (if you don’t try, you can’t even have the chance to succeed). Globally, it is often said that 9 out of 10 young companies fail in the first three years. African stats may even be worse, but we don’t have enough stats on discontinuation of young companies on the continent. Failure reasons may include other issues such as the unfavourable (agri)business environment; too high tax rate for start-up/young/small companies, etc. Banks usually do not have financial credit schemes favourable to youth, because they believe that young businesses are just businesses (therefore, we need to have youth friendly business policies that government have to adopt and implement). (By the way, failure needs to be more valued, and we should put in place strategies to learn more from companies and entrepreneurs that face those difficulties. Actually the use of the word "failure" is not always relevant as young companies can pivot and become more successful)

Other post capacity development challenges include the lack of continued agribusiness mentorship/incubation schemes. Some training programs are very short, some even though they may last three months would have lasting effectiveness if they are complemented by periodical incubation/mentorship schemes. There is therefore a need to call for the strengthening of agribusiness incubators (many are young and weak, including in their governance) and agribusiness incubation schemes in Africa.

I will share more comments later on other questions.

Regards, Ken

## Alex Ariho, African Agribusiness Incubators Network (AAIN), Ghana – expert supporting the discussion

**Thank you all for this very vibrant and excellent contributions to this important discussion. African Agribusiness Incubators Network (AAIN)** as a private sector network has a mandate of incubating incubators for job and wealth creation. The incubators and incubator hubs target to support startups whose composition is mainly educated, uneducated ,rural and urban youth in Africa .The network is composed of incubators that supports the setup of Small and Medium Enterprise (SME), Small Scale Agribusiness Incubator hubs (SSAIH) and offer  mentorship Programme in Africa. The Mentorship program is designed to support startups, individuals, SME’s, groups or cooperatives from across Africa engaged in diverse value chains, with the aim to make them competitive in their respective value chain, business, country or region.

**Qn: What post-capacity development support do the youth need?**

As noted from other contributors. I think, in addition the following areas are critical towards capacity development of youth in agriculture and agribusiness in Africa:

* Hand holding support through mentorship provision by incubators to address transitional challenges faced by the youth in agriculture sector. This can be done by strengthening and creating relevant Incubators to improve their service delivery through human and institutional capacity development leading to increased support to youth at various levels. The incubators also join a Peer Network for extended knowledge sharing among youth and associated actors.
* Support youth and associates to map out the business ecosystems, define the operational parameters, the targeting of the value chain, the business models and sustainability plans to youth related enterprises and startups.
* Financing Incubation. Currently there are no funds that are designed to respond to the incubator/incubation needs. Agribusiness to support Youth requires structured financing and AAIN works with its partners to redesign how existing resources can be modelled for the benefit of agribusiness incubators and for impact, based on the establishment of an African Agribusiness Incubation Fund (AAIF).

**Qn: What can the youth do to support each other in developing their skills and capacities?**

* Formation of peer to peer youth technical advisory clubs and associations by developing youth driven solutions to meet the needs of Agribusiness Value Chain actors and those of their peer groups. The solutions can range from capacity development, technology pipelining, business development, enterprise development, input and output market development as well as business modelling.
* Start peer to peer saving and investment clubs to kick start enterprises with high potential for growth and development .This will attract joint investment options, equity, credit, risk grantee and bankability of youth related enterprises leading to more jobs and employment opportunities.

**QN: What enabling environment is needed to ensure sustainability of youth in agriculture capacity development initiatives?**

* Following a renewed international focus on the economic development potential of the African agricultural sector, there has been a growing interest in finding approaches that can support, accelerate and sustain the development of agricultural innovation systems and promote the growth of agribusiness enterprises. Among other business development instruments, business incubators and public-private partnerships have been promoted as two important policy tools.
* There need for increased investment in agriculture , Agribusiness and infrastructure development to attract youth in the sector .This investment must be driven by public and private sector partnership models.
* Both government and private sector need to develop a clear reward system with clear incentives and benefits along agriculture and agribusiness value chain development that is attractive to youth in Africa

## Hazeez Durosomo, Biofinderplus, Nigeria

Government and NGO based initiatives often need strong structures to implement and sustain post capacity development initiatives. Sadly, the case has been mostly of weak structures generating results with mixed success. Challenges such as access to post capacity development intiatives are very limited with inadequate funds made worse by the heavy politics involved. More importantly, the question of marketing of agricultural produce, product storage and transport have not always been answered with weak government support.

The case study of a state government project in my country has led to my above conclusion. When government embark on capacity development initiatives by providing infrastructure, inadequate training, limited funding to a non-target audience with no non-governmental organisation involvement, the results are certain to provoke almost a no change in status quo. If training, infrastructure, funding were adequately provided to target youth participants with a true interest in Agriculture, other support in terms of storage, transport and marketing through collaborations with agro-allied or agricultural produce companies will fan the embers of youth engagement in agriculture and generate a much needed success. A missing link in my case study.

The youth can support each other by forming local cooperatives to generate and manage funds, creating agro-markets (online and site), forming local working groups for mentorship and embracing the advantages of Information and communication technologies (ICT). ICT has the potential to solve marketing concerns through E-Commerce platforms, provide access to agro-transport and assist in helping farmers meet export requirements of agricultural produce.

In conclusion, government and NGO support in capacity development of youth for agriculture must continue all the way from farm to consumer. A strong capacity development initiative should involve the trio of stakeholders which are youths, NGOs and government.

## Gbadebo Odularu, CREPOL, Senegal

One of the pathways to ensuring the long-term impact of youth-specific CD initiatives in Africa is to effectively consolidate on the achievements of current CD programmes, and striking strategic alliances with regional/international partners to continually upgrade youth’s capacity to harness the enormous potential of ICT, especially access to high-speed digital services in benefiting from the huge agribusiness opportunities on the continent. One of the recent global CD-financing frameworks in this regards is the G20 Compact with Africa (CWA)'s initiave which is G20-Africa coordinated and concerted efforts on capacity development cooperation towards launching the G20 Initiative for Rural Youth Employment, and contributing to creating 1.1 million new jobs by 2022 and to providing innovative skills development programmes for at least 5 million young people over the next five years.

## Justin Chisenga, FAO, Italy - Facilitator of the discussion

**French translation will be available soon**

Thus far, contributions to the discussion have shown that African youth engaged in agriculture face several challenges for which the solution requires a holistic approach that addresses the interlinked three dimensions of capacity development – individuals, institutions and the **enabling environment**in which CD initiatives targeting youth in agriculture can sustainably realise the desired impact.

Discussions on **question 4 – enabling environment**needed to ensure sustainability of youth in agriculture CD initiatives, highlights the following factors relating to **government policies**, **financing arrangements** for youth in agriculture, **infrastructure**, and **youth empowerment** through incentives, and **involving the youth in decision making**:

* **Government policies**that create an enabling environment that removes obstacles to youth participation and investment in the agricultural sector (taking into consideration the entire value chain); promote youth agripreneurs and allow SMEs in agriculture to grow; assure youth with access to market and agro-inputs; consider the heterogeneity (gender, education level, urban or rural dwellers, etc.) of youth in agriculture; and make it easy for youth in agriculture to participate in decision making, planning and implementation processes.
* **Government guarantees**to enable the youth to access financial services, especially for small start-ups and smallholder young farmers;
* **Reduction on taxes** for agro-inputs for youth getting into agriculture;
* **Infrastructure development** including development of rural areas to facilitate easy access to areas where agricultural production is taking place and to the markets;
* **Involving youth**in agricultural consultations and related decisions that affect them and avoid holding consultations on youth in agriculture side events;
* Establish **rewards and incentives systems** for youth engaged in agriculture to motivate them and to attract those considering entering the sector;
* **Empower youth**through incubation systems that will allow them to access expertise/mentorship/coaching and research services without paying for these services directly;
* Develop guidelines and indicators for **monitoring youth involvement**in agriculture to facilitate documenting impact and generating lessons learned.

**Are there good examples in your countries or work environment, on any of the following, that you could share on this discussion?**

1. Government policies that have created an enabling environment for youth to engage in agriculture.
2. Platforms that are in place in which youth in agriculture participate in making decision that affect them.
3. Rewards and incentive systems to motivate youth in agriculture.

Regards,

Justin Chisenga

## Nyawira Gitaka, Kenya

I think one of the things to look at is the structure of the capacity building itself. Is it that capacity development has to be that one has to farm or training is it in a way that challenges youth to rethinks agribusiness altogether and is utilize whatever skills they have from their background in agribusiness? Case and example is Twiga foods that utilizes tech to address supply chain and delivery issues in bananas in Kenya.

**Is there a role for modern technologies, including Information and Communication Technologies, in sustaining capacity development initiatives?**

There is a huge role for modern technology in every sector. Currently, food prices in urban areas have sky rocketed because of distribution challenges. Is there potential for youth to tap into such a gap and create solutions yes, and some of these innovations are made possible by modern technology. Communication technologies are vital as this is how information among the youth is shared not only on experiences but is also a major avenue through which they can support each other.

## [Kafui Agbe](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/member/kafui-agbe) Young, Professionals for Agricultural Development, Ghana

**What enabling environment is needed to ensure sustainability of youth in agriculture capacity development initiatives?**

There are four ecosystems that will enable the sustainability of youth in agriculture. These are the **financial environment, market, Infrastructure and institutional environment**. As already mentioned agriculture enterprises require more **patient financing** than any other enterprises due to the nature of activities involved. Government need to set aside special financial schemes to promote youth in agriculture to raise the needed capital for investment.

**Market** is key for survival in agricultural space. The deliberate creation of market for young people products through a policy to procure produce from youth in agriculture for government interventions such as school feeding will sustain their enterprises. When offtakers for produce of young people are assured, their involvemnt in the agricultural value chain will be sustained.

**Insfrastructure** in term of roads, ICT, and others must be provided to support the youth in agriculture. These facilities are needed to enhance operations along the value chain. For youth to be engaged in decent employment in Afrca there must be decent infrastructure provided in term of good roads, ICT facilities, social amenities, Schools etc.

Finally,**Institutions** established to ensure business and agriculture must be more youth friendly. Business registration systems and processes must be aligned to meet the needs of the youth. Standard and certification authorities must educate and orient youth to produce products of standard for both local and international markets.

When all these four ecosystems are put in place for youth in agriculture, sustainability of capacity bulibing initiatives will be assured.

## [[JEAN DE DIEU HARERIMANA](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/member/jean-de-dieu-harerimana), Kenya](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/member/kafui-agbe)

**What are the biggest challenges youth in Africa face after going through youth-specific capacity development initiatives in agriculture?**

The challenges affect youth most of the time are more likely linked to asymmetric information limit access to markets and this cannot be solved by relying on ICT or communication itself.

The information to promote youth involved in Agriculture, is merely and fundamentally to the willingness of different nations in Africa to give hand for the youth in fact once the information as channel to liberalize. youth can be able to engage in viable and sustainable agricultural ventures.

Access to markets for youth is becoming even more difficult due to the growing international influence of the rigorous standards of their supply chains. Youth in developing countries face additional constraints in accessing markets, due in part to the fact that their freedom of movement is sometimes limited by cultural norms.

## [Atsu SENAME](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/member/atsu-sename), Entreprises Territoires et Développement, Togo

**French version**

Bonjour Justin, bonjour à tous,

Je viens partager avec vous des exemples du Togo sur les trois points soulevés.

*Existe-t-il de bons exemples dans vos pays ou dans votre environnement de travail, sur l'un ou l'autre des points suivants, dont vous aimeriez nous faire part dans cette discussion?*

***1. Des politiques gouvernementales ayant créé un environnement favorable à la participation des jeunes dans l'agriculture.***

Le Togo dispose d'un cadre politique très fourni qui cré un environnement favorable à la participation des jeunes dans l'agriculture.

* La Stratégie de Croissance Accélérée et de Promotion de l’Emploi (SCAPE), dont le premier axe porte sur l'agriculture;
* Le Programme National d’Investissement Agricole et de Sécurité Alimentaire (PNIASA)
* Le Programme National de Développement Agricole au Togo (PNDAT)
* Des instruments financiers d'appui à la formation agricole rurale et à l'entreprenariat rural
* Le Fonds d’Appui aux Initiatives Economiques des Jeunes (FAIEJ) est un dispositif intégré d’appui technique et financier du gouvernement togolais qui vise l’insertion socioprofessionnelle des jeunes à travers la promotion de l’entrepreneuriat
* Le Fonds National de la Finance Inclusive (FNFI), est une institution de refinancement des IMF, dont l’objectif est de favoriser l’accès au crédit pour le segment le plus marginalisé de la population, avec des produits comme AJISEF (Accès des jeunes aux Services Financiers) et AGRISEF (Accès des Agriculteurs aux services financiers).
* Le Programme d'Appui à l'Insertion Economique des Jeunes dans les Secteurs Porteurs (PAIEJ SP)

***2. Plateformes permettant aux jeunes agriculteurs de participer à la prise de décisions qui les touchent.***

Aucune plateforme permettant aux jeunes agriculteurs de participer à la prise de décisions qui les touchent n'existe au Togo

***3. Système de récompenses et d’incitations pour motiver les jeunes à s’impliquer dans le secteur agicole.***

Oui, des systèmes de récompenses et d’incitation pour motiver les jeunes à s’impliquer dans le secteur agicole existent au Togo. J'ai cité plus haut :

* Le Fonds d’Appui aux Initiatives Economiques des Jeunes (FAIEJ) qui est un dispositif intégré d’appui technique et financier du gouvernement togolais qui vise l’insertion socioprofessionnelle des jeunes à travers la promotion de l’entrepreneuriat
* Le Fonds National de la Finance Inclusive (FNFI), qui est une institution de refinancement des IMF, dont l’objectif est de favoriser l’accès au crédit pour le segment le plus marginalisé de la population, avec des produits comme AJISEF (Accès des jeunes aux Services Financiers) et AGRISEF (Accès des Agriculteurs aux services financiers).
* Le Programme d'Appui à l'Insertion Economique des Jeunes dans les Secteurs Porteurs (PAIEJ SP) qui sélectionne et incube les jeunes désireux de faire carrière dans l'agroindustrie.

Cordialement

Atsu SENAME

Knowledge manager à ETD

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**English translation**

Hello Justin! Hello everyone!

I would like to share with you examples from Togo on the three points raised.

Are there good examples in your countries or in your working environment, on any of the following points, you would like to share in this discussion?

**1. Where government policies have created a favorable environment for youth participation in agriculture.**

Togo has a well-developed political framework that creates a favorable environment for youth participation in agriculture.

* The Stratégie de Croissance Accélérée et de Promotion de l’Emploi (SCAPE) [Strategy for accelerated growth and employment promotion], of which the first objective is related to agriculture;
* Le Programme National d’Investissement Agricole et de Sécurité Alimentaire (PNIASA) [National program for agricultural investment and food security];
* Le Programme National de Développement Agricole au Togo (PNDAT) [National program for agricultural development in Togo];
* Financial measures for supporting rural agricultural training and rural entrepreneurship.
* The Fonds d’Appui aux Initiatives Economiques des Jeunes (FAIEJ) [Fund in Support of economic initiatives of the young] is an integrated measure for technical and financial support by the Togolese government for the socio-professional inclusion of the young through the promotion of entrepreneurship.
* The Fonds National de la Finance Inclusive (FNFI), [National Fund for inclusive financing] is an institution for refinancing IMFs where the objective is to facilitate access to credit for the most marginalized segment of the population, with products like AJISEF (Accès des jeunes aux Services Financiers, [Access of the young to financial services]) and AGRISEF (Accès des Agriculteurs aux services financiers, [Access of farmers to financial services]).
* Le Programme d'Appui à l'Insertion Economique des Jeunes dans les Secteurs Porteurs (PAIEJ SP) [Support program for economic integration of the young into the distribution sector].

**2. Platforms enabling the young farmers to participate in the decision making that concerns them.**

No platforms enabling the young farmers to participate in the decision making that concerns them exists in Togo.

**3. System of rewards and incentives to motivate the young to get involved in the agricultural sector.**

Yes, there are systems of rewards and incentives to motivate the young to get involved in the agricultural sector in Togo. I have noted above:

* The Fonds d’Appui aux Initiatives Economiques des Jeunes (FAIEJ) [Fund in support of economic initiatives of the young] which is an integrated  measure for technical and financial support by the Togolese government on behalf of the socio-professional integration of the young through the promotion of entrepreneurship.
* The Fonds National de la Finance Inclusive (FNFI), [National fund for inclusive financing] which is an institution for refinancing MFIs [microfinance institutions] where the objective is to facilitate access to credit for the most marginalized segments of the population, with products like AJISEF (Accès des jeunes aux Services Financiers, [Access of the young to financial services]) and AGRISEF (Accès des Agriculteurs aux services financiers, [Access of farmers to financial services]).
* Le Programme d'Appui à l'Insertion Economique des Jeunes dans les Secteurs Porteurs (PAIEJ SP) which selects and fosters the young wishing to make a career in agro-industry.

Sincerely

Atsu SENAME

ETD Knowledge Manager

## [[Belinda Kiraya](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/member/belinda-kiraya), ecom, Kenya](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/member/kafui-agbe)

1. Through capacity is good start for the youths in agriculture sector. It will act as a motivation to them in the field of agriculture but when it comes to implementation from the capacity building the results will be very low. This could be due to lack of capital to support them in starting up the agriculture projects although they have the desire to do so. Another reason could be due to lack of support that they need in implementation their agriculture projects. From the workshop they will gain knowledge but there will be nobody to follow them to ensure implementation has been achieved.

2. From Kenya we have an initiative whereby we first educate youths on the value of agriculture and the one we are currently dealing with is the importance of youths in coffee farming. In this initiative we educate the parents first on why they should start nurturing their children when they are still young on the importance of coffee farming. Once that has been done the children will grow up understanding the coffee industry and when they are old enough they can be given some coffee trees to start taking care of. For the youths who we encourage them to participate in coffee industry we first do a follow up at farm level to ensure the parent have given them some of the trees to start with. This will help in implementation of the coffee farming agenda. For those who have farms we follow them at their farms to offer them some inputs support and agronomy extension. The youths can also start their own group and from what they obtain after coffee payment they can use it as a contribution for their group savings.

3. Post capacity building that the youths can be given is supporting them to start sustainable initiatives like chicken rearing or dairy or any activity which will have long term effect on their initiatives.

In addition doing a follow up on the implementation of their projects plus offering them extension support.

4. The kind of environment youths need to be in a position to sustain themselves is to ensure they have a mentor and follow up.

## [Agbessi KENYEKU](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/member/agbessi-kenyeku) Nardy, Green Planet, Togo

Bonjour tout le monde,

Merci à la FAO de nous avoir donné cette opportunité.

J'aimerais intervenir sur la quesion suivante:

**Existe-t-il des exemples bons dans vos pays ou dans votre environnement de travail, sur l'autre des points suivants, vous vous voulez faire partie de cette discussion?**

**1. Des politiques qui ont créé un environnement favorable à la participation des jeunes à l'agriculture.**

Au Togo, l'Etat a mis en place des outils d'appui technique et financier qui créent un environnement favorable à la participation des jeunes à l'agriculture. Je pourrais citer le FAIEJ, le FNFI, le PRADEB, le PAEIJ.

Nardy Green Planet bénéficie de l'appui du FAIEJ depuis 2015.

**2. Plateformes permettant aux jeunes agriculteurs de participer à des décisions qui touchent.**

Aucune plateforme n'existe au Togo. Nardy Green Planet travaille sur un projet de création d'une communauté de pratique pour faciliter le partage de connaissances et de bonnes pratiques entre les jeunes entrepreneurs appuyés par l'Etat, les IMFs et banques et l'Etat.

**3. Système de récompenses et d'incitations pour motiver les jeunes à s'impliquer dans le secteur agricole.**

Au Togo, l'Etat développe des méthodes pour récompenser et inciter les jeunes à s'impliquer dans le secteur agricole. Par exemple en 2015, l'Etat a organisé un forum de développement durable au cours duquel les 10 meilleurs projets verts ont été appuyés techniquement et financièrement. Nous (Nardy Green Planet) avons été lauréat de ce forum. Les appuis techniques et financiers dont nous avions bénéficié nous ont permis de développer une startup spécialisée dans la production de jeunes plants d'espèces à forte valeur environnementale et dans l'accompagnement des agriculteurs à la mise en place de parcelles agroforestières et agro écologiques.

Agbessi.

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Hello everyone!

Thank you to FAO for giving us this opportunity.

I would like to comment on the following:

**Are there good examples in your countries or in your working environment, on any of the following points, would you like to share them in this discussion?**

**1. Policies have created a favorable environment for youth participation in agriculture.**

In Togo, the State has implemented technical and financial support tools which create a favorable environment for the participation of young people in agriculture. I could mention the FAIEJ, FNFI, PRADEB and PAEIJ.

Nardy Green Planet has benefited from the support of FAIEJ since 2015.

**2. Platforms enabling the young farmers to participate in the decision making that concerns them.**

There are no platforms in Togo. Nardy Green Planet works on a project of creating a practical demonstration community to enable sharing of knowledge and good practices between the young entrepreneurs supported by the State, the MFIs and the banks.

**3. System of rewards and incentives to motivate the young to getting involved in the agricultural sector.**

In Togo, the State evolves methods to reward and incentivate young people to get involved in the agricultural sector. For example, in 2015, the State organized a sustainable development forum in which the best 10 green projects were supported technically and with funds. We (at Nardy Green Planet) were awarded at that forum. The technical and financial support received has enabled us to develop a startup specializing in the production of seedlings of species of great environmental value and to support farmers in establishing agro-forestry and agro-ecological plots.

Agbessi.

## [Jacques DIOUF](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/member/jacques-diouf), Senegal

**French version**

**Quels sont les principaux défis rencontrés par les jeunes africains à l’issue des initiatives de développement de capacités axées sur les jeunes dans le secteur agricole?**

Au Sénégal la CARITAS a eu à former des jeunes issus de milieu  pauvres entre les années 70 et  80.

Suite à cette formation de deux ans dans des centres agricoles avec un statut d’internat, un équipement complet a été fourni à la fin de la formation et ces jeunes travaillaient la terre et cultivaient des melons, des pastèques des tomates et du gombos. L’aviculture était intégrée à ces exploitations agricoles. La production était bonne car ils exportaient même dans les marchés extérieurs.

Des techniciens encadreurs les accompagnaient pour la commercialisation des produits

La gestion et la crédit bancaire sont arrivés au bout de quelques années à mettre à genou l’initiative.

La faillite a suivi et toutes les exploitations ouvertes par la Caritas ont été fermées. Jusqu’à ce jour il n’y a plus  eu de repreneurs.

Comme défis à souligner je peux citer  les intermédiaires entre les producteurs et les consommateurs

Le crédit bancaire aux pauvres jeunes sans aucun héritage consistant  et  aux couches vulnérables ; Le manque de formation en finance dans la création e richesse.

**Connaissez-vous des exemples d’initiatives actuelles visant à assurer la pérennité de renforcement des capacités pour les jeunes africains dans le domaine agricole? Qu’est-ce qui fonctionne et qu’est-ce qui ne fonctionne pas? Y a-t-il des exemples d’initiatives réussies et de bonnes pratiques à partager?**

Suite à la Caritas le projet maitrisards et le projet ANPEJ étaient théorisés et mis en application entre la décennie 80 des Socialistes et en 2OOO avec le régime libébéral  le résultat est le même . Les échecs sur le terrain et la mauvaise gestion des Agences ont produits de mauvais résultats.

Avec le régime actuel des fermes ANIDA ouvertes dans les villages emploient des jeunes plus ou moins formés sur les risques d’échecs qui peuvent survenir e t la prise en compte de la dimension des remboursements des crédits et les subsides réels à partager après récoltes par les exploitants

Sociologiquement cette manière de faire engendre toujours des conflits d’intérêts entre bénéficiaires et

Divise tôt ou tard le groupe des collaborateurs.

**De quel type de soutien les jeunes ont-ils besoin dans la phase postérieure au renforcement des capacités? Que peuvent faire les jeunes pour s’entraider et renforcer ainsi leurs compétences et leurs capacités?**

Former des jeunes et les soutenir techniquement et sociologiquement peut prévenir les conflits et cultiver la patience dans la création des richesses serait une approche.

Mais En agriculture, les résultats sont à long terme pour un groupe de personnes issus de milieu différents et ne partageant pas les mêmes besoins matériels .

Les leçons apprises ci-dessus et cette vérité  sur  les besoins  matériels me font douter de l’emploi des jeunes dans l’agriculture comme solution au chômage en Afrique au SUD du SAHARA. Même s’il est pour un temps un semblant de solution, il arrivera au mauvais moment une décadence dévastatrice des projets individuels circonscrits dans la volonté politique qui voudrait fournir un emploi à chaque citoyen et surtout aux jeunes majoritaires dans les villes et  villages .

Une meilleur approche existe dans les projets de l’ASCFM appelés  la redynamisation des grands champs familiaux. En fixant les jeunes d’un même village on détruit progressivement les germes du chômage adressé dans les villes par l’exode des jeunes ruraux.

**Quel environnement favorable faut-il assurer pour garantir la permanence des jeunes dans les initiatives de renforcement des capacités dans le secteur agricole?**

J’attache beaucoup de pris à la formation en agriculture .Familiariser les héritiers de la culture de l’arachide et du coton  à la compréhension des nouvelles techniques agricoles  et de protections de l’environnement ouvriraient de nouveaux comportements aux producteurs.

**Les technologies modernes, notamment les technologies de l’information et des communications, ont-elles un rôle à jouer pour assurer la durabilité des initiatives de renforcement des capacités?**

Les moyens technologiques de l’information et de la communication rapprocheront les producteurs de la bonne information sur les sols, les végétaux, les micronutriments, la dégradation, la régénération des sols, l’arboriculture, les intrants agricoles l’agriculture intelligente ou résiliente au changement climatique. Seul la formation peut jouer ce rôle tès important pour INFLUENSER  l’avenir de l’Agriculture en Afrique AU SUD du SAHARA.

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**English translation**

**What are the biggest challenges youth in Africa face after going through youth-specific capacity development initiatives in agriculture?**

In Senegal, Caritas has trained the young from poor backgrounds between the 1970s and 1980s.

After these two years of training with residence in agricultural centers, complete equipment was provided at the end of the training, and the young worked the land cultivating melons, watermelons, tomatoes and okra. Poultry farming was integrated with these agricultural operations. The production was good because they exported even to external markets.

Administrative technicians assisted them in marketing of products.

Administration and bank credit arrived after some years and brought the initiative to its knees.

Bankruptcy followed and all the operations opened by Caritas were closed down. Until today, there has been no one to take them up again.

As challenges to be emphasized, I can point out the middle-men between producers and consumers; bank credit to the impoverished youth with no relevant experience and to vulnerable households; the lack of training in finance for the creation of wealth.

**What are the examples of existing post-capacity development sustainability initiatives for youth in agriculture in Africa? What works and what does not?  Are there any success stories and good practices that can be shared?**

Following Caritas, the master's project and the ANPEJ project were thought up and implemented during the Socialist years of the 1980s and in the year 2000, with the liberal regime, the result is the same. The failures in the field and bad management by the Agencies have produced poor results.

With the present regime, the ANIDA farms opened in the villages employ young people more or less prepared on the risks of failure that could come about and, on taking into account the scale of credit paybacks and the real subsides to be shared by farmers after the harvest.

Sociologically, this form of operating always creates conflicts of interest between the beneficiaries and divisions sooner or later within the group of collaborators.

**What post-capacity development support do the youth need?  What can the youth do to support each other in developing their skills and capacities?**

Training the young and supporting them technically and sociologically could prevent conflicts and fostering patience in the creation of wealth would be an approach.

But, in agriculture the results are long term for a group of people from different backgrounds and who do not share the same material needs.

The lessons learnt here and this truth about the material needs make me doubt the employment of young people in agriculture as the solution of unemployment in South Saharan Africa. Even if for a time there is a semblance of a solution, at the wrong moment there will occur a devastating collapse of individual projects defined  by the political desire to provide a job to each citizen and in particular to the young majorities in towns and villages.

Better approaches are the ASCFM projects, calling for the redynamization of the large family fields. By holding in place the young people of the same village one progressively eliminates the origins of the unemployment faced in the towns by the exodus of the rural young.

**What enabling environment is needed to ensure sustainability of youth in agriculture capacity development initiatives?**

I consider very important the training in agriculture. Familiarizing those who inherit the production of peanuts and cotton with the understanding of new agricultural techniques and the protection of the environment will bring about new behavior in the producers.

**Is there a role for modern technologies, including Information and Communication Technologies, in sustaining capacity development initiatives?**

Modern technologies of information and communication will bring the producers closer to reliable information regarding land, vegetables, micronutrients, degradation, regeneration of soils, tree growing, agricultural inputs, intelligent farming or  that which is resilient to climate change. Only training can fulfil this important role to INFLUENCE the future of farming in South Saharan Africa.

## [Aklilu Nigussie](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/member/aklilu-nigussie), Ethiopian Institutes of Agricultural Research, Ethiopia

Dear

It's an interesting policy issue that you brought on board; which a vicious circle effect.

1. In Ethiopia though policies are in most cases driven by the interests of politicians yet youths partcipate in the agricultural production by their own notice to create capital especially on the irrigated farmining system. Most of the commercial agricultural system is monopolized with invisible inteference of politicians for instance the poultry sector in country. If the government create an enabling environment it will craft not only production increament on a competative base it also have the ability to absorb unemployment and other circular effects in the economy system at macro level.

2. There is no any plat form that I know of especially for agriculture youth but there are political issue plat form for youth. This is more African type of problem to be solved that needs an attention at a policy level.

3. On some condition rewards can have negative impacts unless caution is under taken for many reasonal level of objectives. Rewards and incentive are given in most cases to high level investors I don't know why?

## [April Dodd](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/member/april-dodd), International Agri-Food Network, United States of America

In order to feed a world of nine billion people by 2050, we need more people working in agriculture in all its forms. Despite the universal agreement on the importance of agriculture to our future, we are not succeeding in attracting young people to the field. While the reasons for this are many, we believe that one central problem in the context of capacity-development programs is insufficient attention to the creation and maintenance of meaningful and supportive networks post-program.

Many excellent capacity-development programs for young agricultural leaders exist; a few inspiring examples have already been mentioned in this discussion. To the credit of those programs illustrated here, several of them highlight the importance of their post-program network. We believe that formal, committed networks – which, depending on context, might connect people in a particular geographical area; build relationships between new farmers and experienced ones; improve integration between various actors along the food value chain; provide fora for discussing problems and solutions across locales; and more – serve many functions in supporting impactful young agricultural leaders. First, being part of a formal network helps increase access to investment and mitigate risk, since networks multiply connections. This fact is particularly essential to youth, whose individual networks may not provide the resources they need to begin their careers in agriculture. Second, networks, even largely virtual ones, help to satisfy social needs that can be compromised when one chooses a life in agriculture. They also provide opportunities for formal and informal mentorship. Third, and perhaps most importantly, active networks create an enabling environment in which partnerships between agripreneurs are born. Active networks can be considered in some ways as incubators for grassroots problem-solving of not only SDG2 but many of the other goals as well.

Modern technology can and should absolutely play a central role in establishing and maintaining networks of support, enabling knowledge sharing, and encouraging innovation. While having strong connections with other farmers and agripreneurs in one’s geographical area provides one type of essential support, the nature of technology provides a complement to local knowledge in the form of geographically diverse problem solving. Activating such networks is not only a key way to fast-track the implementation of solutions; it is also a way to clarify to young agricultural leaders that they are part of a meaningful global profession, not a lone farmer in the field.

If we wish to celebrate agriculture as a profession that is modern, profitable, and cool, then farmers and agripreneurs cannot be perceived as isolated people hidden in rural locales. They must be socially, intellectually, and financially engaged with other farmers, processors, distributors, vendors, researchers, restaurateurs, and all food chain actors. Accomplishing this means investing not only in capacity development programs themselves but also in post-program networks that are productive, solutions-oriented, and specifically designed to meet young agricultural leaders’ needs.

## [Girmay Tesfay Belay](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/member/girmay-tesfay-belay), Mekelle University, Ethiopia

Dear Moderators,

Thank you for initiating such an important discussion and this is to share my views some of the points. We hope to learn more from the contribution of other and the final synthesis.

**What are the biggest challenges youth in Africa face after going through youth-specific capacity development initiatives in agriculture?**

Africa is heterogeneous, hence the opportunities for African youth in farming is not uniform. One of the challenges is that access to farmland for those who would like to start business is not the same. In countries like Ethiopia, land has been the main stay of the economy and it has reached its climax carrying capacity. The land holding is too small (less than a hectare per household of average 5 members). The interest of youth to stay in agriculture is very low and youth are continually migrating to other sector (if available) or out migrating in search of better opportunities elsewhere. Any global intervention to support youth in agriculture should take into consideration different feasible paths for the land-constrained regions and those with possibilities for land expansion. The capacity building for youth from land constrained communities should focus on farming business that require less land and water resources. Most training so far are on dairy, irrigation, vegetable production, seed multiplication and the like but these assume land availability. Hence, post-training, youth face constrained situation in terms of land availability and poorly developed land markets to exercise their skills. We need to develop context specific capacity building programs for the rural youth in Africa. There are initiatives in Ethiopia, like in the Tigray region, where landless youth are allocated rehabilitated hillsides. In the Tigray region, 65% of the land is not suitable for conventional farming because of topographic constraints. However, youth group are allocated some of the rehabilitated community lands to develop suitable hillside farms. This may ease temporary problems but the long-term consequences depend on how the youth group will manage the land. Capacity building efforts in this line should take such condition and that youth are trained to overcome such challenges. Beyond land availability, youth should have access to finance and technology.

**What post-capacity development support do the youth need? What can the youth do to support each other in developing their skills and capacities?**

Sustaining the collective action among key stakeholders supporting youth is important. Most support service for the youth are seasonal and uncoordinated. The youth should be encouraged to work in groups and collaborate along the value chain to maximize their opportunities and address the challenges they face along the way. Most youth may engage in production individually but when it comes to post-production activities working in group (as marketing groups and unions) may enable them to create functional value chains in their favour.

**What enabling environment is needed to ensure sustainability of youth in agriculture capacity development initiatives?**

The policy support for the youth in terms of clear land tenure rights, access to finance, nonpartisan approach, and other enabling condition along the value chain is important. In some countries, the youth groups are based on political party affiliations and access to support services are conditional. Hence, all youth should have equal access to land, financing and the like without any political biasedness. Government should create for private investment in agro-processing sector to diversify the market options for commodities produced by the youth.

**Is there a role for modern technologies, including Information and Communication Technologies, in sustaining capacity development initiatives?**

A huge role. IT based platforms can create enabling conditions for transparency in implementation of youth support programs, providing continuous support in terms of information on production systems, marketing, business opportunities and life-long learning to youth post training. IT can be a good platform for mentoring and coaching of youth engaged in farming business and to facilitate access to expert advice on demand.

With kind regards,

Girmay Tesfay

Mekelle University, Ethiopia

## [Constantino Nguivoum THEA](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/member/constantino-nguivoum-thea)GIZ, Cameroon

**French version**

Bonjour à tous,

Je suis très heureux de participer à ce forum et de débattre une fois de plus de la thématique qui nous réunit.

Les défis sont légions!!! Le premier défi et le plus important est avant ces fameuses initiatives de développement de capacité: c'est celui de la perception de l'agriculture. Regardez autour de vous, l'agriculture est proposée comme roue de secours aux jeunes qui n'ont pas pu s'insérer dans les secteurs souhaités et/ou ventés. Pour vérifier mes propos, c'est simple... demandez aux jeunes lycéens quelle profession voudraient-ils exercer dans l'avenir et vous constaterez. Quel avenir voudrions-nous bâtir avec un mauvais casting!!! Donc le premier défi est culturel et même idéologique, l'entrepreneur rural/agricole se façonne dès le bas âge et avec l'aide de ça communauté (famille, mentor, média, etc.).

Un adage très populaire dit "l'appétit vient en mangeant". Considérons que des initiatives de développement de capacités axées sur les jeunes soient faites avec un mauvais casting. Le deuxième défi à mon avis, est celui de la franchise et de sincérité. Préparer les jeunes en formation à affronter la dure réalité de l'insertion socio-professionnelles en comptant d'abord sur eux. L’agriculture est et demeurera un business avec tout ce que cela comporte (analyse de marché, investissement, gestion, marketing/vente etc.). Comme tel, donc ces initiatives doivent produire des "winners" et des "leaders" qui pensent grand et durable. il s'agit de s'assurer que chaque jeune en formation ou sa famille possède au moins un lopin de terre qui est indispensable pour toute activité agricole. Dans ce sens il devient facile d'accrocher le rêve (entreprenariat) du jeune à une réalité (terre). Faire ainsi, C'est renforcer la conviction et la détermination des jeunes intéressés, et éviterait des promesses fallacieuses de financement qui détournent les intentions des jeunes en formation de l'essentiel.

Maintenant, à l'issue des initiatives de développement des capacités, le défi est conjoncturel et structurel. Sur le plan conjoncturel, il faudrait que les jeunes issues des initiatives soient incubées sur une période de raisonnable afin de parfaire le projet de vie. Les Etats ont l'entière responsabilité de protéger et de soutenir ces jeunes avec des mesures incitatrices (financement, coaching, atelier, etc.). Et sur le plan structurel, l'Etat devra protéger la production local/national à travers des mécanismes d'équité afin de permettre la viabilité des entreprises locales promues par les jeunes. Il s'agira de protéger et promouvoir les produits locaux afin de stimuler la demande au niveau national et international, et d'améliorer quantitativement et qualitativement l'offre national. Mais, toutes ces resterons vaines, si la mesures restent opaque, entachées de corruption et de favoritisme.

Voici ma modeste contribution au débat proposé, en espérant quelle sera d'une quelconque utilité.

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**English translation**

Hello everyone!

I am very happy to participate in this forum and to debate once again the topic that brings us together.

There is a multitude of challenges!!! The first and most important challenge is, before these famous initiatives for capacity development, how agriculture is perceived. Look around you, agriculture is proposed like a 'spare tyre' to young people who could not gain entry to the desired and/or most popular sectors. To verify my assertion, is simple... ask school children which profession they would like to follow in the future and you will have it confirmed. What future could we construct with a bad casting!!!  Therefore, the first challenge is cultural and even ideological; the future rural/agricultural entrepreneur is shaped from an early age and with the help of the community (family, mentor, media, etc.).

A very old saying "the more you have, the more you want." We think that some capacity development initiatives aimed at the young are based on bad casting. The second challenge, in my view, is openness and sincerity, to prepare young people with training to face the hard reality of socio-professional insertion by relying on them. Agriculture is and will remain a business with everything that that means (market analysis, investment, administration, marketing/sales, etc.). As such, therefore, these initiatives must produce winners and leaders, who think in terms of big and sustainable.  It is about ensuring that each young person in training, or its family, owns at least a piece of land which is indispensable for all agricultural activity. In this sense, it is easy to link the dream (entrepreneurship) of the young person to a reality (land). Doing it like this, will reinforce the conviction and the determination of the young people concerned, and would avoid the misleading promises of funding which distract the intentions of the youth in training from what is essential.

Now then, on the issue of the capacity development initiatives, the challenge is of conjuncture and structure. Concerning conjuncture, the youth emerging from the initiatives must be fostered for a reasonable amount of time so that they may perfect their life plan. The State is entirely responsible for protecting and sustaining these young people with incentives (funding, coaching, workshops, etc.). And concerning structure, the State should protect local/national production through fair trading mechanisms to allow local enterprises promoted by the young to be viable. It will be all  about protecting and promoting local products in order to stimulate demand at national and international level, and to improve quantitatively and qualitatively the national offer. However, all will be in vain if the measures stay secretive, tarnished by corruption and favoritism.

This is my contribution to the debate proposed, hoping that it will be of use.

## Justin Chisenga, FAO, Italy - facilitator

**Is there a role for modern technologies, including Information and Communication Technologies, in sustaining capacity development initiatives?**

All your contributions on the above question acknowledge the role of modern technologies in sustaining capacity development initiatives, largely by providing platforms/facilities to support post CD activities including networking, access to information services and innovations, business opportunities, lifelong learning opportunities, and on-farm data/information processing.

Modern technologies are needed to:

1. **Support networking**: enable youth agriprenuers to establish online platforms such as mailing lists, Facebook groups, WhatsApp groups, mobile apps, etc. that could be used to stay in touch with each other and facilitate information/knowledge sharing on modern agricultural technologies, experiences and good practices.
2. **Provide platforms for lifelong learning**: access to online courses and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) to support personal development.
3. **Provide online platforms** for mentorship, coaching including virtual interaction with peers and experts.
4. **Facilitate acces**s: to ICT-based information and e-advisory services, i.e. SMS-based alert systems, mobile apps, etc. outbreak of pests and diseases, weather information, market information services, financial services, e-extension services, etc.
5. **Facilitate access to innovations**: provide easy access to information about research, available agricultural technologies (i.e. new varieties of seeds), and other data and tools that are relevant to youth entrepreneurship initiatives.
6. **Offer business opportunities**: modern technologies offer business opportunities youth agripreneurs and access to distant markets/clients for their products and services.
7. **Support on-farm activities**: ICT (especially Apps) provides opportunities for on-farm systems for collecting and processing socio-economic and agronomic data (i.e. daily water requirement, measuring starch content, moisture content, etc.) useful to the running of the business.

**Are there other opportunities presented by modern technologies that could contribute to sustainability of capacity development interventions targeting youth in agriculture?**

Justin Chisenga

## [Eyawassou Baya](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/member/eyawassou-baya), Songhaï Centre, Benin – expert supporting the discussion

**French version**

Il faut que nous sachions désormais que la prospérité économique, l’approvisionnement en énergie, la capacité industrielle, la santé personnelle et publique, la sécurité, la qualité de l’environnement etc. dépendent tous désormais de la **Connaissance**. Bien que la connaissance et la technique soient les principaux capitaux et ressources sociales dans le monde aujourd’hui, elles restent des formes de capitaux toujours mal réparti dans notre monde.**L’éducation de qualité chez nous en Afrique est difficilement accessible.** Or ce sont les gens qui ont plus de connaissances ou plus accès à la connaissance et à la technique qui ont plus d’avantages et qui enregistrent plus de succès, de croissance, que ceux qui n’en ont pas, car « **le succès et la croissance sont fonction de la connaissance reçue** ».

L’amélioration significative de la qualité des efforts des gens et leur productivité qui sont recherchés dépendront donc de l’investissement et de la qualité de cet investissement dans le capital humain.

Pour Songhaï, ce concept du capital humain est la mesure de la valeur du savoir, savoir-faire, créativité et humanité qui peut être acquise à travers un investissement de qualité dans la formation. C’est cela qui constituerait un gisement de citoyens constructifs et engagés, d’entrepreneurs, d’inventeurs et de la main-d’œuvre qualifiée recherchée à l’emploi. Dans le monde contemporain, la connaissance est donc devenue le capital principal et la ressource sociale fondamentale. Elle est civilisatrice.

En vue de garantir  le montage du capital humain qui doit s’équiper pour faire face efficacement aux défis du développement, des interventions visant à renforcer les capacités et à impliquer les jeunes dans l’agriculture s’organisent çà et là par différents organismes de développement dont la FAO. Nous allons mettre l’accent sur les points ci-dessous :

* **Quels sont les principaux défis rencontrés par les jeunes africains à l’issue des initiatives de développement de capacités axées sur les jeunes dans le secteur agricole?**

Comme les uns et les autres l’ont mentionné dans leurs interventions, les jeunes sont confrontés aux défis de non suivi après les sessions de renforcement de capacités. Dans la plus part des cas les interventions s’arrêtent juste à un renforcement de capacités. C’est bien de les équiper de connaissances techniques morales, organisationnelles et managériales qui les amèneront à rendre leurs activités productives mais il ne faudrait pas en faire  simplement un modèle habituel de formation, de transfert de technologie ou de production. Cela devrait être plutôt des opportunités incroyables pour la masse critique de jeunes, un cadre organisationnel et des services favorables  pour les jeunes afin de créer, gérer et mettre en réseau leurs entreprises. Beaucoup de contraintes restent à reculer quand ils redescendent dans l’arène de l’entreprise.

Bref, disons que les jeunes sont confrontés au défis de manque de fonds (pas facile d’obtenir des crédits auprès des banques ou des institutions de micro finances) pour renforcer leurs activités avec un suivi rigoureux qui pourrait permettre de non seulement faire accroitre leur production mais aussi de créer un **effet boule de neige** dans leur communauté. Les jeunes sont également confrontés au problème de débouchés pour les quelques-uns qui peuvent voler de leurs ailes pour produire. Egalement, il n’y a pas une politique gouvernementale qui encourage, soutient et appuie les bénéficiaires de ces différents programmes, du coup le problème est juste déplacé et non résolu car cela ne permet pas d’avoir et de maintenir les jeunes dans l’agriculture qui reste un secteur terriblement porteur.

* **De quel type de soutien les jeunes ont-ils besoin dans la phase postérieure au renforcement des capacités ? Que peuvent faire les jeunes pour s’entraider et renforcer ainsi leurs compétences et leurs capacités ?**

Parlant de cette question, les jeunes ont besoin de suivi et accompagnement. C’est très capital. Ceci permettra de suivre la mise en place de leurs initiatives en milieu réel. Ils ont également besoin d’accompagnements technique, financier et managériale (mise en marché des produits), dans la mise en réseau. Des politiques gouvernementales promouvant l’entrepreneuriat par des mesures de facilitation pour les jeunes serait un aimant pour les jeunes afin de se jeter et y rester dans ce domaine.

Pour s’entraider et renforcer leurs compétences et capacités les jeunes doivent se mettre ensemble mais malheureusement, force est de constaté que les jeunes brillent par le désir de réussir seuls. Ils souffrent d’un déficit de co-création, d’action collective. Les jeunes doivent savoir que se réunir est un début, rester ensemble est un progrès, travailler ensemble est la réussite. Alors ils doivent se mettre en réseau, avoir régulièrement des échanges sur leurs pratiques, leurs défis, réussite à travers les « farmers to farmers visit » etc.

* **Quel environnement incitatif faut-il assurer pour garantir la permanence des jeunes dans les initiatives de renforcement des capacités dans le secteur agricole ?**

Pour avoir les jeunes et les maintenir dans l’agriculture, il faut qu’ils aient des mentors dans les domaines, des mises à niveau sur les nouvelles techniques de productions, des débouchés pour leur production, des structures de financement des entreprises à vocation agricole qui comprennent et tiennent compte des réalités des entreprises agricoles (un monde à part). Une politique d’identification et de récompense d’une manière ou d’une autre des meilleures réussites dans le domaine.

Les jeunes ont besoin d’être accompagnés avec des services tels que **le marketing, l'approvisionnement en intrants, les services d'accueil, de réseautage, des prêts financiers  et des services consultatifs**afin de leur permettre de rester autonomes, de créer une synergie et une coopération entre eux. Un aspect important à soulever aussi reste vraiment la sélection des personnes qu’il faut pour ces initiatives. Cela leur sera facile d’y rester dans le domaine et d’y amener d’autres à leur emboiter le pas à travers leur réussite. Sur ce il faudra sélectionner ceux qui sont capables d’intérioriser l’agriculture comme un métier digne, de valoriser les ressources disponibles pour créer la richesse, de devenir des leaders susceptibles de créer une dynamique entrepreneuriale, de développer des attitudes et aptitudes qui les mettent dans une logique de culture de succès, de produire des biens et services utiles pour le mieux-être socio-économique de leur communauté, de transformer les avantages comparatifs de leur milieu en avantages compétitifs dans un monde de plus en plus globalisant.

* **Les technologies modernes, notamment les technologies de l’information et des communications, ont-elles un rôle à jouer pour assurer la durabilité des initiatives de renforcement des capacités ?**

Elles n’ont pas juste un rôle mais un rôle capital dans le sens où elles peuvent être utilisées pour garder le contact avec les différents bénéficiaires et les organisateurs des programmes. Elles permettent de donner des informations sur les météorologies, la pluviométrie, les solutions aux pathologies, etc. de communiquer sur les prix  du marché par rapport à l’activité choisit. Elles vont constituer une plateforme d’apprentissage et de formation pour les jeunes en réseau sur le forum. Elles font créer et maintenir un réseau d’entrepreneurs de par le monde. Elles renseignent sur les différentes opportunités à saisir par les jeunes si disponible.

**English translation**

From now on, we must realize that economic prosperity, energy supply, industrial capacity, personal and public health, security, environmental quality, etc. all depend on knowledge. Even though knowledge and technology are the main assets and social resources in today's world, there are still forms of capital badly distributed in our world.Good quality education in Africa is difficult to access. Yet it is those who have more knowledge or more access to knowledge and technology who have more advantages and who record more success and growth than those who have nothing, because « success and development are functions of the knowledge received ».

The significant improvement sought in the quality of people’s endeavors and their productivity, will depend on the investment and the quality of this investment in human capital.

For Songhai, this concept of human capital is the measure of the value of knowing, know-how, creativity and humanity which can be acquired through an investment of quality in training. It is this which would create a resource of constructive and engaged citizens, entrepreneurs, inventors and the qualified workforce sought for employment. In today´s world therefore, knowledge has become the main capital and the fundamental social resource. It brings civilization.

In order to guarantee the assembling of human capital that must be prepared to face efficiently the challenges of development, interventions with a view to reinforce capacities and involve young people in agriculture are organized here and there by different development organisms such as FAO. We are going to emphasize the following points:

* **What are the biggest challenges youth in Africa face after going through youth-specific capacity development initiatives in agriculture?**

Like others have mentioned in their contributions to this discussion, young people face challenges from a lack of monitoring after the capacity development sessions. In the majority of cases interventions stop at the capacity development. It is fine to give them moral technical, organizational and managerial knowledge which will help to make their activities productive but this should not simply be made into a standard pattern of training, technology transfer or production. It should rather be more about fantastic opportunities for the critical mass of youth, an organizational framework and services in favor of the youth in order to create, steer and network their enterprises. Many obstacles remain to be dealt with when they go back down into the business arena.

In short, let’s say that young people are faced with the challenges of the  lack of funds (it is not easy to find credit with banks or microfinance institutions) needed to reinforce their activities with rigorous monitoring which would allow not only to make production grow but also to create a snowball effect in their community. Young people are equally facing the lack of opportunities for those who are able to strike out on their own in production. At the same time, there is no governmental policy which encourages, supports and backs up the beneficiaries of these different programs, thus the problem is just shifted and not solved because that does not make it possible to get and keep young people in agriculture which stays a very promising sector.

* **What post-capacity development support do the youth need?  What can the youth do to support each other in developing their skills and capacities?**

Talking about this question, young people need monitoring and backing. It is really essential. This would permit the monitoring of the implementation of their initiatives in the real world. They also need technical, financial and managerial backing (bringing products to market), in networking. Governmental policies which promote entrepreneurship with facilitating measures for the young will be a magnet for the youth to get them to take the plunge and stay in this sector.

To help each other and reinforce their competences and capacities young people should join together but unfortunately, it should be noticed that young people are full of desire to succeed alone. They suffer from a deficit of joint creation and collective action. Young people should know that getting together is a start, staying together is progress, and working together is success. Therefore, they should get into a network, have regular exchanges on their practices, challenges and successes through farmers to farmers’ visits, etc.

* **What enabling environment is needed to ensure sustainability of youth in agriculture capacity development initiatives?**

To have and to keep young people in agriculture, it is necessary that they have mentors in the areas of new production techniques, openings for their production, financing structures for agricultural entreprises which understand and take into account the realities of agricultural business (a world appart).   A policy of identification and reward in one way or another of the best successes in the sector.

Young people need to be backed with services such as marketing, supply of inputs, introductory services, networking, financial loans and consultative services so that they can stay independent, and create a synergy and cooperation between themselves. Also, an important aspect to raise is the selection of the right people for these initiatives. For them it will be easy to stay in the sector and by their success to bring others to follow in their footsteps. In this respect, it  will be necessary to select those who are able to embrace agriculture as a worthy occupation, to take advantage of the available resources for wealth creation, to become leaders capable of creating business momentum, to develop attitudes and abilities that will foment a culture of success within them, to produce goods and services which are useful for the socio-economic wellbeing of their community, to transform the comparative advantages of their environment into competitive advantages in a world more and more globalized.

* **Is there a role for modern technologies, including Information and Communication Technologies, in sustaining capacity development initiatives?**

They do not have merely a role but a fundamental role in the sense that they can be used to keep contact with the different beneficiaries and organizers of programs. They make it possible to provide weather-forecasts, rain fall, solutions to pathologies, etc., .and to transmit market prices in relation to the activity chosen. They are going to form learning and training platforms for young people in the network on the forum. They create and maintain entrepreneur’s networks around the world. They provide information on the different opportunities open to young people as and when available.

## [Edward Tanyima](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/member/edward-tanyima), FAO Uganda

1. **What are the biggest challenges youth in Africa face after going through youth-specific capacity development initiatives in agriculture?**

The biggest challenge youth face in Africa even after going through youth-specific capacity development initiatives is failure to participate productively in agriculture either as investors or just workers/employees.

In terms of investments, youth are limited by access to affordable finance. Generally in Africa, the bank lending rates are too high which young people cannot afford. In Uganda for instance, the average lending rates for commercial banks is 23% p.a , the highest can even reach 30% p.a. This is really very high for any one intending to invest in agriculture especially with the high risks involved.

I agree with many colleagues who mentioned limited access to land as a key challenge. Yes to some extent but emphasis should focus on enhancing youth access to affordable finance. Once youth have access to funds and given good guidance and appropriate skills, they can invest appropriately in agriculture. Besides, investment in agriculture does not only require land. In circumstances where land is inaccessible, youth such as the urban dwellers and those living in the refugee areas can invest at the upper end of the value chain such as processing/value addition and marketing among others.

In line with finances and the law, some categories of youth are still limited by exiting laws that hinder them from accessing finances. For instance, youth less than 18 years of age in Uganda even if they are above the legal working age of 14 years are assumed to be in schools. They are not legally authorized to contract or be contracted and cannot open up bank accounts unless authorized through a next of kin. On the other hand, youth in the age category 18-30 years who legally qualify to transact and open bank accounts are limited by the need for collateral such as land which most youth lack.

Further, there is lack of mentorship and continuous supervision. In Africa, many initiatives aim at training masses of youth without making follow-up on youth  for proper mentorship. To ensure sustainability and cause impact, youth need to be mentored and continuously supervised even after going through youth-specific capacity development initiatives

Lastly, many capacity development initiatives aim at building capacity of youth to acquire skills to enable them get jobs with less attention on working conditions of youth in agriculture. Therefore youth employees in agriculture continue to work under poor and hazardous conditions. There is need to blend skills development with awareness campaigns on the rights of youth employees for their health and safety.

**2. What are the examples of existing post-capacity development sustainability initiatives for youth in agriculture in Africa? What works and what does not? Are there any success stories and good practices that can be shared?**

What works? Continuous mentorship, support and guidance of youth guarantees sustainability. Blending successful individual youth with others youth facilitates knowledge sharing and learning. Let me focus my contribution to the FAO youth rewarding mechanism in Uganda known as the **youth champions in Agriculture**. This initiative entails identification of young entrepreneurs who have developed cutting-edge innovations in agricultural value chain and using them to act as roles models to inspire and build the capacity of their fellow youth. The approach entails using nuclear youth champions as hubs where youth can form groups around the champions for continuous learning/knowledge sharing, collective bargaining and negotiations for better policies among others. Sustainability is ensured because the nuclear champions already have passion for working in groups and supporting communities. The champions also act as mentors to other youth.

**3. What post-capacity development support do the youth need? What can the youth do to support each other in developing their skills and capacities?**

Youth need continuous mentorship and linking them to financial service providers and better markets. Through youth platforms especially with the current ICT facilities and innovations, youth can support others through information gathering and sharing, advocacy and mentorship.

**4. What enabling environment is needed to ensure sustainability of youth in agriculture capacity development initiatives?**

Policy support should facilitate mainstreaming of agriculture and skills development for agriculture in primary and secondary schools curricula. There is also a need to target youth agricultural entrepreneurs to access agribusiness incubation services. This may involve training youth in farming as a business and identifying linkages to agribusiness incubators and financing.

There is however a need to develop and equip research and training institutions in a PPP approach between government and private sector and then linking youth to these institutions for youth incubation and mentorship. In Uganda, government through the National Strategy for youth employment in Agriculture recommends supporting establishment, nurturing of mentoring approaches for all youth categories including provision of start-up support to the 14-17 young persons to complete informal trainings combined with sustained mentoring and coaching.

**5. Is there a role for modern technologies, including Information and Communication Technologies, in sustaining capacity development initiatives?**

Modern technologies play an important role in facilitating learning and information sharing. Youth can easily adapt and use technologies and ICT facilities to enhance and complement the existing extenstion services required at different levels of the vaue chain.  In Uganda, the FAO youth champions started a whatsup platform where they share information related to their innovations including production and marketing information.

## [Taibat Moji Yusuf](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/member/taibat-moji-yusuf), Kwara State University, Malete, Nigeria

**Introduction.**

I wish to thank the organizers of this programme for allowing us participate in this valuable discussion. I wish to share Nigeria experience on similar issue under discussion -  The National Directorate of Employment (NDE)

In 1960s and 1970s, the Nigerian economy provided jobs for the teeming population and also absorbed considerable number of imported labour in the scientific sector. However, following the oil boom of the 1970s, there was a massive migration of youths to urban areas in search of wage employment. The downturn in the economy in the 1980s exacerbated problem of unemployment. Since then successive government s have made several spirited efforts through policies to create jobs and reduce unemployment in the country. One of such efforts is the creation of  the National Directorate of Employment NDE in 1986 to empower the unemployed graduate and unskilled youths to acquire marketable skills that would help them set up their own farm business. The program has recorded both successes and failures.

**What are the biggest challenge youth in Africa face after going through development initiatives in agriculture?**

The biggest challenge faced by the benefactors of the NDE program is lack of infrastructure.

The decadent state of infrastructure in Nigeria limits the youth effectiveness and remains a barrier to success

Infrastructure such as good roads, good drinking water, electricity, health faculties, and markets are necessities in any agricultural business. Machinery, equipment and farm inputs have to be moved into the farms along roads while the products from the farms have to be transported to areas where they are required in other to make profits and therefore remain in business. The processing, preservation and storage of the products of the farm before marketing require electricity at times. The youth who are the benefactors of this program, like their counterparts also have great attraction for social amenities like good drinking water, schools and good health

Another challenge is that of the pest and diseases which cause the following damage.

a) Large quantities of farm produce are lost both in the field and in the storage

b) They spend extra money in supplying to the farm and in the purchase of chemicals to control the pest and diseases

c) There is reduction in quantity and quality of the farms’ product

**What are the examples of existing post capacity development sustainability initiatives for youth in agriculture in Africa? What works and what do not? Are there good stories and good practices that can be shared?**

Presently in Nigeria government is developing business centers like Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agencies of Nigerian ( SMEDIAN ) in some states of the country to  provide basic training on needed tools to do business, on how to raise finance and how to manage their personal resources.

The program is effective in the states where it is established

**What post – capacity development support do the youth need? What can the youth do to support each other in developing their skills and capacities?**

* They need finance to continue in the farm business. More SMEDIAN centers should be established in all states of the federation
* They need regular education which will improve efficiency on the farm
* The youth can support themselves through networking, attending Agricultural days,  workshops, seminars and conferences

**What enabling environment is needed to ensure sustainability of youth I agriculture capacity development initiative?**

Agriculture is capital intensive, agencies that are saddled with the job of empowering the youth in terms of training and financial support should be provided with enough fund to perform their duty

Good roads and other infrastructural supports should be provided

Unfriendly tax regime is affecting the performance of the youth in agriculture. to encourage more investment  agricultural activities should be tax free for some years until agriculture  occupies its rightful position of proving food for man and animals, raw materials for industries and revenue for government

Government could review the curriculum of the nation’s higher institutions and universities to inculcate functional entrepreneurship/ agri-neurship skills in the graduates so that they can become employers rather than employees

**Is there a role for modern technologies, including information and communication technologies in sustaining capacity development initiatives?**

Yes. The honorable former  minister of Agriculture Dr Adesina introduced the use of mobile phones to contact farmers directly-  He used this medium to provide farmers with fertilizers, improved seeds and finance and technical training on their farm production.

## [Paul Emuria](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/member/paul-emuria), FAO Uganda

Dear Moderator,

4. **What enabling environment is needed to ensure sustainability of youth in agriculture capacity development initiatives?**

Thankyou for providing the platform for us to share experiences on CD for youth.

I think one of the key aspects that need to be harmonized is the varying ldefinitions on who a youth is as well as the legal age of employment which have far reaching legal implications on the ability of the youth to benefit from youth specific CD. For instance in Uganda,  youth is someone who is 18 years and above meaning that those below the age of 18 years do not benefit from youth specific CD initiatives. On the other hand the legal age of employment is anywhere between 12 and 14 years depending on the lenses on is using. This has an effect on the CD opportunities available to the youth

Secondly, CD initiatives should be based on comprehensive CD assessments and structured according to the unique needs of the youth categories in terms of age, gender and geographical location among others. For instance, youth aged 14-17 face peculiar challenges because they are transitioning to adulthood yet there are no specific CD programmes to prepare them to be adults when they turn 18.

Provision of a safe working environment for the youth is also key to their capacity development especially given that most of the youth in Africa work without contracts and therefore at risk of doing hazardous work. Strong policies on Occupational Safety & Health are therefore very key.

Thanks

## [Denye Ronald](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/member/denye-ronald), Agro-Tourism Association, Uganda

1. **What are the biggest challenges youth in Africa face after going through youth-specific capacity development initiatives in agriculture?**

Following the world’s population projected to reach 8.5 billion by 2030 with African having more than a half of this global change according to UN new Desa report Aug.18, 2015. On this population at list most African countries have about 75% youth where Uganda, Nigeria and South Africa take a lead. This has its own circumstances caused by most African governments which is beyond their reach until they try to realize should be part of the economic movement in the areas they are born. However putting that aside, agriculture being one of the sector for exploitation to liberating youth from unemployment among other risk encountered, has its own challenges youth face in Africa besides going through youth specific capacity development initiatives.

It’s clear that youth who should have been stakeholders in the development of process especially in view of the great assets of youth, their resilience, resourcefulness and perseverance is just unfortunate Africa’s youth are virtually left out in these policies and programmes considerations in agriculture sector by their country leaders.

The second principal challenge is youth’s insufficient access to knowledge, information and education. Poor and inadequate education has limited productivity and acquisition of skills, which also has hindered the development of entrepreneurial ventures. In Africa it’s where you find programs starting one to five month igniting youth in into agriculture and stopping abruptly on ideas of mindset change and many are discourage to continue with production.

Inadequate or totally no access to financial services is also another challenges. Most financial service providers are reluctant to provide their services including credit, savings and insurance to rural youth due to their lack of collateral and financial literacy, among other reasons calling the sector (Agriculture) as risk venture.

Difficulties accessing green jobs to strengthen youth involvement in agriculture. This would provide an open ticket to youth who are learnt to provide extension services and plan for future development. In Uganda have had serious changes in sector where soldiers are integrated in some government programs taking over areas which would be for youth engagement and sustainability where with this has left a very big gap and discouraging youth labour intensive involvement.

There’s also challenge of limited access to markets which bring the youth not able to engage in viable and sustainable agricultural ventures. This is even becoming more difficult due to growing international influence of supermarkets and rigorous standards of their supply chains and are not easy met. Youth sometimes affected or limited freedom movement by cultural norms.

In addition to above youth in Africa who are now known as timed boom to erupt anytime should nothing be done urgently against their needs have other challenges like limited involvement in policy dialogue for their voices to be heard, lack of land for cultivation and empowerment, political instabilities and their effects like South Sudan, natural hazards like drought and heavy rains destroying all green plantations among others.

In developing countries particular Uganda and Africa at large, facilitating youth cohort’s participation in agriculture will drive widespread rural poverty reduction for younger and surrounding communities alike with reduction of migration beyond borders.

**2. What are the examples of existing post-capacity development sustainability initiatives for youth in agriculture in Africa? What works and what doesn’t? Are there any success stories and good practices that can be shared?**

What workers is that youth who have been initiated in programs for example youth in agriculture should have direct strategic work plan for five years and above making sure those engaged are empowered in all phases of agriculture value chain production, promoting financial products catered to youth, mentoring programmes and start-up funding opportunities can all help remedy Africa’s youth challenges. There’s also need to improving youth access to education and training including formal and informal on job training to redress skills mismatch. On the side of market youth need niche markets offering particularly significant opportunities for young farmers. Lastly African policymakers must actively engage youth in the policy making process for their voices to be heard and this can bring accountability for heterogeneity of youth at all levels. There should be addition program of mindset change where youth should realize Africa is their land to change and be the owners of what should expect with care for next generations.

**3. What post-capacity development support do the youth need? What can the youth do to support each other in developing their skills and capacities?**

The youth need to engage in policies formulation on access to land, credit (finances) and investment within any government sent agricultural projects, encouraging use of modern technologies(ICT) to disseminate information and passion involvement, Farming from the word go should be presented more effectively as a business opportunity, promoting leadership in agriculture and lastly encouraging greater investment of time and resource in young professionals across sector value chain and toward climate-smart agriculture sustaining the environment for future generations.

**4. What enabling environment is needed to ensure sustainability of youth in agriculture capacity development initiatives?**

It’s through facilitation and encouraging policy engagement and formulation for youth support. This can be taken around all levels to where activities are implemented. There’s need of capacity building and exposure of youth in agriculture to embrace the cause and take on the opportunities in sector.

Lastly theirs need to incorporate stakeholdership taking youth as center and others on value china like credit and financing institutions, insurance, local government, markets among others not forgetting research institutions providing all basic and right information to youth activity involvement.

**5. Is there a role for modern technologies, including Information and Communication Technologies, in sustaining capacity and development initiatives?**

Modern technologies should be part since young people have a high propensity to embraces innovative technologies as revolution for the next generations in agriculture sector. New technologies are shaping the value chain and jobs are created. The world is moving very fast, most thing are shifting from one level to another. Therefore, ICT in agriculture has an impact for sharing information on mobile phones for example markets, skills, knowledge on type of product among others. There’s also lobbying and presentation for opportunities. Other services like credit, insurance, media news (Social media platform) and connections are all found on internet and can reduce time and cost to most agriculture development business projects infrastructure systems.

## [Aminata Fatmata Kandeh](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/member/aminata-fatmata-kandeh)Agro Fish farm, Sierra Leone

Thank you so much Mr facilitator  for such a educative platfrom  where we disussed issues that affect us a nations.

Aminata from Sierra Leone the CEO of Agro Fish farm,  i will like to give my own contribution in relations of what is the role for modern technologies, including Information and Communication Technologies, in sustaining capacity development initiatives?   For us to achieved sustainable Development Goal two which say Zero Hunger. We need to explode modern technologies so that we will be able to either process, label and distribute our goods. Information and communication technologies are very vital especially in the world we are living now. With ICT we are able to do some many things at the blink of your eyes without any difficulties. For example the present discussion we are doing on this platform it so significant because we are able to deliberate and analyses issues that is affecting everybody across the Global. In this forum we have learn a lot from each other views and an opinion on issues that is discussed here from different country perspective and this is possible because of information and communication technology. In Sierra Leone, in this sector we are making head way although it is not that too effective especially in the rural areas but the awareness is there and almost all the youth are aware of the important of information and communication technology. The stakeholders need to play very key role for us as country to actualize this particular development, they needs to provide sustainable electricity because technology don’t go without power. Where there is no power it is difficult for ICT to strive effectively and it limit you from so many opportunities that is out there.

Thanks for reading this is my  honable distribution

## [Gbadebo Odularu](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/member/gbadebo-odularu-0), CREPOL, Senegal

My contributions will be focusing generally on how best to support African youth in agriculture after they have gone through youth-specific capacity development initiatives.

* A workable science policy could be the springboard for sustaining the impact of capacity development initiatives for African youth in Agriculture.
* Do we need to have a look at the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA), S3A and other related strategies, and how they address the importance of Science (and Science policy) in sustaining the impact of capacity development initiatives for African youth in Agriculture? Comparatively, at the global level, Africa needs more scientists in order to fully appreciate how to champion more quality (monetary) investment votes in sustaining the impact of capacity development initiatives for African youth in Agriculture.
* At the political level, there seems to be a disconnect between the roles of science and legislation in illuminating these non-sustainability challenges in capacity-enhancing initiatives, and the relevance of science in advancing the solutions, as well as its implications for achieving the UN SDGs, amidst complex and competing interests.
* Fostering and implementing strategies for building highly skilled, inclusive and diverse youth in STI is one of the effective pathways to sustaining capacity development initiatives for African youth in Africa.

Lastly, though the discussion focuses on how best to support African youth in agriculture after they have gone through youth-specific capacity development initiatives, it is also very crucial for Africa to be able to nip the challenge at its bud. In other words, the science of sustainability in capacity-enhancing programmes for African youth in Agriculture hinges on how are Africa's most intellectually talented and brightest high-school leavers nurtured into Agriculture-related disciplines to help solve these numerous challenges confronting Africa - hunger, malnutrition, stunting, joblessness, climate change, etc

An efficiently functional capacity building value chain, which comprises relevant activities, processes, policies, programmes, strategies, etc, should operate an inbuilt mechanism that ensures the sustainability and long-term impact of youth-specific CD initiatives? With the support from international partners, development agencies and African governments, African Agribusiness Incubators Network (AAIN)'s and FARA's programmes, strategies, tools and activities are increasingly being enhanced towards responding to the issue of ensuring post-capacity building support to youth in order to retain them in agriculture-related sectors.

In spite of increasing investment in capacity building programmes in SSA, It is interesting that  'young people, and in particular female youth, still lack access to finance, land, markets, technologies and practical skills,' and the university graduates from most SSA countries are still largely underemployed and unemployed within agricultural sub-sectors and sectors.

Though multiple capacity-development initiatives (CDIs) exist in a number of communities, there is still a need to ensure that increasing number of youth and women engage in more industry-driven knowledge, skills, training and education. This represents one of the sustainability dimension of CDIs. These types of CDIs should be implemented by both medium to large scale farms in collaboration with selected universities or colleges of agriculture and CG centers. In fact, continuous acquisition of knowledge and technical agricultural skills by youth is the viable currency of the emerging African economy.

## Ken Lohento, CTA, Netherlands – expert supporting the discussion [2nd contribution]

Dear all

After my first input, I would like to respond now to question **5: Is there a role for modern technologies, including Information and Communication Technologies, in sustaining capacity development initiatives?**

Indeed, as specified by many contributions, ICT can play a very important role in sustaining capacity development initiatives.  At the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), I have been coordinating activities leveraging on ICT to engage different profiles of youth in agriculture, before, during after capacity development activities.

We have developed a four-pronged framework, to engage youth in agriculture using ICTs, as part of our youth [**ARDYIS**](http://www.facebook.com/ardyis)(Agriculture, Rural Development and Youth in the Information Society) project.  The first approach relates to the **use of social media to advocate for and promote agriculture**opportunities, and the second one focuses on **enhancing ICT use in youth-led farming and agribusinesses**, in order to improve market access and business processes. The third approach relates to the **development of ICT services targeting the agricultural sector by young entrepreneurs,** and the fourth one encourages **upgrading ICT use in all other agricultural professional areas in which youth can be involved**, particularly in extension, agricultural knowledge management, etc. CTA has been implementing a variety of activities within that framework. See the picture attached and this report [**http://bit.ly/youth-ict-agri-report**](http://bit.ly/youth-ict-agri-report)  for more information.

At each of these levels, after capacity development activities are implemented, ICT can help facilitate:

* a) the launch and management of community of practice on the training subjects (networking of, and with, trainees for continuous learning and improvement, and for the deployment of future initiatives);
* b) the sharing of best practices, lessons learned and post training opportunities;
* c) awareness creation and mobilisation of other youths who were not beneficiaries;
* d) access to  wider ICT-based opportunities (e-platforms, e-marketplaces where agripreneurs for example can find additional customers and trade) leveraging on new capacity acquired;
* e) development of new tools by trainees;
* f) training evaluation and delivery of more advanced training.

Best regards,

Ken Lohento, CTA

## Dahan Kueshi Semanou, Oxfam Youth Program, Benin

**French version**

Bonsoir chers tous, je suis très content de rejoindre une fois encore le forum et pour en contribuer à travers mon point de vue.

Pour ma part, ce qui concerne le soutien aux initiatives des renforcements de capacités pour la jeunesse africaine dans l’agriculture est très crucial, mais devons-nous faire d’abord une étude sur l’état psychologique de cette jeunesse pour voir si la plupart sont vraiment près pour ce secteur qu’est l’agriculture. Je veux me focaliser sur deux aspects à savoir : aspect, activités autre que l'agriculture en tant que jeune et l’aspect agriculture en tant que jeune qui veux aller dans l'agriculture.

Une chose est de soutenir des jeunes prêts pour l’un ou l’autre aspect, mais pas une jeunesse qui à défaut d’aller dans d’autres secteurs (fonctionnaire de bureau, continuez ces études de recherches pour devenir un professeur d’université, ingénieur en mécanique ou en génie civil…) tant souhaités se focalise dans l’agriculture (entrepreneur agricole) après mainte tentative de trouver quelque chose pour s’autosuffire. Pourquoi j’aborde le sujet dans ce sens, c’est parce que l’entrepreneuriat agricole doit être choisi par une jeunesse prête, dévouer pour ne pas dire une jeunesse qui a la vocation pour la terre. Si telle est le cas les initiatives de renforcement des capacités pour cette jeunesse se verras pas vain ou improductif ou encore ne trouveras pas assez d’embuches pour vraiment impacter.

En effet, les initiatives de renforcement des capacités sont plus ou moins disponibles actuellement dans les pays africains et tente vaille que vaille à soutenir les jeunes dans des activités agricoles, mais pourquoi vailles que vaille, c’est parce qu’il y a assez de défis auxquels ils font la plus par des temps, qui proviennent tant des initiateurs (structures étatiques, banques, microfinances…) et les jeunes eux-mêmes : on peut situer entre autres manque de suivi évaluation rigoureuse, la capitalisation des expériences pour un relancement meilleur, les choix par affinité des acteurs. Tout cela pourrait ou pour plus part des temps rend imperceptible l’effort des initiatives en terme d’impact, ne serais qu’un nombre très limité d’initiatives qui arrive vraiment.

Sur ce, je voudrais bien que l’accompagnement pour favoriser un impact soutenu des initiatives de renforcement des capacités pour la jeunesse africaine dans l'agriculture, dois vraiment démarrer par le formations des spécialistes pour un encadrement psychologique avant que ça soit entrepreneurial et autre. En plus je suggérais que les systèmes et initiatives en Afrique conçoivent des outils de formation uniforme en se basant aussi sur l’agriculture traditionnelle pour un impact durable, et que c’est institution soient vraiment accompagné pour être indépendant en matière de conception aussi d’un système de formation avant de recevoir l’appui de grandes institutions comme la FAO et non la domestication des programmes de formation « occidentale »

Veuillez recevoir ma modeste contribution, sur le sujet et espérant bien apport ma pierre à l’édifice agricole africaine.

Vous avez l’honneur à DAHAN KUESHI SEMANOU, jeune activiste membre d’Oxfam Youth Program Bénin

Très cordialement à vous.

## Abigail Iyilade, Agricultural and Rural Management Training Institute (ARMTI), Nigeria

**A) Challenges facing youth after going through development initiative in Agriculture**

I interviewed some youth that had received training on agriculture. Below were some of the challenges they faced after going through development initiative in Agriculture:

1. Inadequate/ lack of access to initial capital outlay for establishing agricultural enterprises.
2. Inadequate access to land for large scale production.
3. Paucity of fund for maintaining set up enterprises.
4. Lack of / inadequate agricultural enterprises management skills.
5. Low return on investment, especially for small scale agricultural enterprises

**B) Success Stories after going through development initiative in Agriculture**

Some of the Youth (Agricultural graduates) trained by Agricultural and Rural Management Training Institute (ARMTI) through the support of Federal Government of Nigeria have become employers of labour. Moreover, success stories were also recorded by some participants of Youth Empowerment in Agriculture Programme (YEAP) who received post capacity development training on Management skills development in agribusiness.  The training was organised by Gender and Youth Department of Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD), supported by FAO and facilitated by ARMTI.

The success stories of the Agricultural graduates were as a result of the fact that some of the participants trained were taught how to write business proposal and how to access loan/grants for agribusiness. Moreover, complimenting management skills with technical training for YEAP participants also contributed to the success recorded by them.

**C) How to enhance the sustainability of the impact of development initiative  for Youth in Agriculture:**

1. Linking them up on how to access fund.
2. Complimenting their technical skills with agribusiness management skills.
3. Facilitating their access to land for large scale production.
4. Establishing interactive platforms for participants after capacity development programme.

## Aklilu Nigussie, Ethiopian Institutes of Agricultural Reseach, Ethiopia

For me there is always a positive and negative implication to any technologies in science; thought the degree of negativity always go for minimum. So that the positive impact of technologies creates improvement in development initiatives like:

1. Encouraging innovative and creativity for the youth at individual household level or as farmers research group (FRG).

2. Improves communications skill and knowledge with practical applications and theoretical creativity according to the existing conditions of the farming system and beyond.

3. Improve the life style of the youth in different direction for instance wealth creation;

4. Improve Efficiency and productivity- this can also be related to invention and innovation; or doing things differently with different spectrum in the agricultural sector.

5. Improve convenience of time

6. Improve social network for innovation, development, research, invention and exchange of technologies

7. Improve methodological implementation or testing accuracy for different environmental phenomenals