



Concept Note

Youth in Agribusiness Festival at UR/CAVM Nyagatare Campus

Theme: "Youth as Catalyst for Agribusiness Development in Rwanda"



INTRODUCTION

AgriProFocus Rwanda and partners would like to organize a "Youth in Agribusiness Festival", to enhance the engagement of youth in agribusiness by facilitating information-sharing and practical entrepreneurship experience -sharing between youth role-models and those who want to enter the Agribusiness career as well as creating links and networking space between youth agribusinesses and agribusiness companies, development partners, farmers' federations, farmers cooperatives, financial institutions and policy makers.

The two previous ones were organized in close collaboration with **Rural Development Initiative (RDI)**, **the University of Rwanda/College of Agriculture (UR/CAVM)**, **National Youth Council** and **RYAF**

The event will take place in UR/CAVM Nyagatare Campus on the 22nd November 2017

WHAT IS "YOUTH IN AGRIBUSINESS FESTIVAL"?

"Youth in Agribusiness Festival" is an event that started in 2015 from an idea of RDI and AgriProFocus Rwanda with the aim of advocating, to policy makers and development partners to support youth in the agribusiness sector. The festival was an effective advocacy and networking tool which inspired many partners including the Ministry of Youth & ICT, the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources, linked youth agribusiness entrepreneurs with key development partners such as USAID/PSDAG and inspired unemployed youth to tap into agribusiness.

The first festival took place 2015 attracted more than 300 people that included but not limited to UR-CAVM students, and lecturers, youth role models' agribusiness companies, financial institutions, government institutions and NGOs. The festival was closed by Honorable Minister Philbert NSENGIMANA - Minister of Youth and ICT.

The second was attended by 642 participants of the same profile as in the first one.

Testimonies from the 2015 Youth in Agribusiness Festival participants



"It was a pleasure for us participating in this festival. We are "Smart Youth Association for Agriculture Development", an association of youth interested and engaged in agricultural innovation and creativity that bring solutions to existing problems faced by vulnerable families (farmers, poor people, youth and women in rural areas) By that time we were still volunteers striving to fight against malnutrition in poor families and we were offering free services for farmers. I would say through the festival, we learned a lot from other youth agropreneurs on how they started and we came up a with a good business model; we now charge all our services including Farm Consultation & Farm planning at affordable prices where we mainly help families in converting vacant land to Aesthetic vegetable and fruits garden"

- Juvenal Kagabambe, Chairman of Smart Youth Association for Agriculture Development.



"As someone who was representing Vision Agribusiness Farm (VAF) Ltd, a company that carries out activities that aim to eradicate poverty was very impressed with the festival particularly the youth role models' businesses & achievements and those who showed massive interest in pig farming. At VAF Ltd we keep more than 600 pigs and have distributed other hundreds to local farmers in the support of Government's EDPRS II's initiatives. Our vision is to be a role model in using readily available resources to reduce and eventually eradicate hunger and poverty in Rwanda and East African community as well. Through discussing with the youth who participated in the event, we received many of them (after this Festival) who would like to engage into pig farming. We are still ready to provide them more technical assistance in their pig farming journey"

- Alexis NDAYAMBAJE, Programs Manager at Vision Agribusiness Farm.

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO ENGAGE YOUTHS IN AGRIBUSINESS?

African Youth in Agriculture

African countries have the youngest population in the world and the largest share of the world's available arable land. Indeed, as the Youth Division of the Africa Union Commission puts it, about 65% of the total population of Africa is below the age of 35 years and 10 million youth enter the labour market annually. The future of the continent is in the hands of the youth. They are one of the greatest assets and an inevitable force for improving the productivity and growth of all sectors of Africa's economy. In the urban and rural areas of Africa, young people are in the majority.

10 million youth enter Africa's labor market annually. Youth is generally defined as people between the ages of 15 (exclusive) and 35 (inclusive). By 2020, 3 out of 4 Africans will be, on average, 20 years old.

Youth unemployment rate in sub-Saharan Africa is about 12%

Only 16% of youth have a 'wage job', while 62% work on family farms and 22% in household

Source: International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA)

The Rwandan context

The importance of agriculture sector to the growth and development of Rwanda economy is manifested in many ways: It contributes about 52% to the Gross Domestic Product. It employs over 70% of the total Rwanda's population. Out of the 1 million Rwandans that were lifted out of poverty in only five years, during the implementation of the first generation of the country's Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS 1) between 2006 - 2011, agriculture sector contributed about 45%. Agriculture has the potential to create jobs for youths and women as well as alleviating poverty and re-distribute wealth among the population.

The increased participation of youth within the Rwandan agricultural sector is necessary and vital for the following reasons:

1. There is compelling evidence of an ageing farmer population, which must be addressed in order to promote a sustainable agricultural production and a higher level of food security. The average age of farmers in Rwanda is 55 years old and life expectancy is between 60 and 65. Consequently, with less young people joining the agriculture sector, the production of food within the region will be seriously compromised in the next 10-15 years.
2. The country food import bill (now estimated at two hundred million US Dollars (US\$200)) continues to increase while the national agricultural production falls. If this trend does not stop, the availability of food by 2020 will strongly depend on extra-regional food production sources, making the country vulnerable to catastrophic events and other exogenous shocks that have negative impacts on the level of food production of these sources. It is necessary to enhance the level of food production in the region, increasing the number of producers and the level of productivity. The youth population is strategic to the success of these efforts to boost regional food production.
3. The poor image of people involved in the agricultural sector needs to be changed and youth represents the ideal catalysts that will trigger this image refreshing process. Young people, in fact, are

more willing to adopt new ideas, concepts and technologies which are all critical for changing the way agriculture is practiced and perceived.

4. Increased employment, particularly rural employment, is strongly required since the level on unemployment among young graduates is still at 13.5%. Given the opportunities available in the



Dr. Gerardine MUKESHIMANA, Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources

'It is now time to bring on board a new, innovative and enterprising cohort of our society to lead the transformation of agriculture in Rwanda – the youth,' Minister Mukeshimana said, at the Official Launch of the Rwanda Youth in Agribusiness Forum - Kigali, 3rd May 2016, encouraging the Youth of Rwanda to adequately utilize the technical and financial support that is being availed to them by the Government through the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources, and by Development Partners''

agricultural sector, this can play a pivotal role in the reduction of the level of youth unemployment and, by extension, of the total percentage of unemployed people within working age.

5. Youth (16-30) represents 28% of the total population. They clearly play a fundamental role in the increase of agricultural productivity and the transformation of the agricultural sector. The energy that young people possess and the fact that their numbers are significantly high, clearly demonstrates their importance in the creation of a highly productive agricultural sector.

Currently, the youth participation in agribusiness is mainly constrained by:

1. Limited knowledge on agribusiness skills
2. Lack of start-up capital
3. Lack of information on agribusiness opportunities
4. Limited access to land
5. Limited agri-entrepreneurship spirit

PURPOSE / GOAL OF THE 2017 YOUTH IN AGRIBUSINESS FESTIVAL

Turning youth into successful agribusiness entrepreneurs through advocacy, linkage and networking.

EVENT OBJECTIVES

- Create links and networking space among youth agribusiness entrepreneurs with big buyers, agribusiness industry leaders, investors, farmers' federation and Research institutions.

- Encourage the agribusiness companies, private investors and financial institutions to invest in youth
- Share the current situation on opportunities and challenges for youth engagement in agribusiness
- Raising awareness on existing youth forums & networks in the Rwandan Agribusiness sector
- Inspire more young girls to venture into agribusiness
- Inspire the stakeholders to develop new actions to invite and/or retain Youth in Agribusiness

TARGET PARTICIPANTS

The festival will bring together more than 1000 participants. Participants will be: UR students & lecturers, Young Agro-entrepreneurs / role models, agribusiness industry leaders, policy makers, NGOs' projects, agribusiness companies, financial institutions, agribusiness investors, research institutions, youth cooperatives/ associations' representatives, etc.

COMPONENTS OF THE EVENT

- (a) Presentations on the testimonies/success stories of the past youth in agribusiness festivals
- (b) Presentations by some key partners on their programs supporting youth,
- (c) Panel discussions on different agribusiness value chains (ex: Horticulture, Potatoes, Poultry, Pig, Maize, Beans, Farming, Beekeeping),
- (d) Small Exhibition by youth agribusiness/role models,
- (e) Networking session & Entertainment

WHY SHOULD YOU ATTEND THE 2017 YOUTH IN AGRIBUSINESS FESTIVAL?

Benefits as a youth

You will get good information, enhance your skills & knowledge on agribusiness opportunities: Youth will have face-to-face inquiries with the involved stakeholders and discuss ways of engaging more into agribusiness. The event will offer many business opportunities around the agribusiness sector and will present a platform for meeting youth in agri-business partners: during the panel sessions, youth in agribusiness role models will share their experiences/success stories, discuss the opportunities & challenges on how they made it.

Benefits as a government institution / development partner

The event will bring together UR/CAVM students & lecturers, unemployed youth, agribusiness practitioners and all development partners to connect experiences on opportunities & challenges, and will inspire all the youth in agribusiness programs' supporters, to develop new actions/programs to invite and/or retain youth in Agribusiness.

Benefit as an agribusiness company / finance Service Provider

Participating in this event could give you the unique opportunities:

- to effectively demonstrate & market your company's products, technologies and services to a huge number of potential future youth clients
- to enhance the company's image

- to invest in the youth
- to expand your company's future clients and partners list
- to effectuate direct sales

SPONSORSHIP OPTIONS

Why become a sponsor?

We expect this event to be the largest Youth in Agribusiness Event in 2017. This is a unique opportunity for you to engage with a youthful community that is eager to invest in Agriculture in the coming years.

The various sponsorship opportunities give you the flexibility to showcase your products and services:

Gold Sponsorship (2000 USD)

- Logo on main banner, above stage, in parallel workshops + all other publication materials
- Opportunities to **display** your products and services at the exhibition space
- Identification in both the **press release** and **event documentary** after the Event
- Interview in the event documentary
- Recognition at the **Official Opening** of the Festival as Gold Sponsor
- Free add in the catalogue (A5 page)

Silver Sponsorship (1000 USD)

- Logo on main banner, above stage, in parallel workshops + all other publication materials
- Opportunities to **display** your products and services at the exhibition space
- Identification in both the **press release** and **event documentary** after the Event
- Free add in the catalogue (A5 page)

Bronze Sponsor (500 USD)

- Logo on main banner, above stage, in parallel workshops + all other publication materials
- Opportunities to **display** your products and services at the exhibition space

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

MINAGRI, MYICT, Help a Child Rwanda, Eastern Province, National Employment Program (NEP), National Youth Council (NYC), VSO, YPARD, YEAN Rwanda, Gashora Girls School, Agahozo Shalom, FAO, Urugaga Imbaraga, PSF – Chamber of Agriculture, PSF – Chamber of Young Entrepreneurs, Urwego Opportunity Bank, KCB, etc.

