



CREATING MORE AND BETTER JOBS FOR RURAL YOUTH

The global youth population (15 to 24 years old) has reached the unprecedented figure of 1.2 billion, with approximately 85 percent living in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, primarily in rural areas. While this exceptionally high figure represents a significant opportunity for the rejuvenation of agrifood systems, young people continue to turn away from such systems, as a result of factors such as poor access to land and other natural resources, infrastructure, finance, technology, knowledge and support services, a situation compounded by low remuneration. In rural areas, in particular, the transition of youth to decent work is hampered by the lack of productive employment opportunities. Addressing their needs is therefore crucial to harnessing their full contribution to the development of agrifood systems.



WHAT DID THE PROJECT DO?

The project helped five target countries (Guatemala, Kenya, Rwanda, Senegal and Uganda) to adopt strategies and/or programmatic approaches and to initiate their implementation in an effort to support youth engagement and employment in agrifood systems. Formal policy commitments were put in place, with youth and partners now aware of them and enjoying increased capacities to progress the youth agenda. A network of youth employment champions was also established in different public, private and civil society institutions.

The project was structured around a number of key outputs, including knowledge generation, awareness-raising and capacity development, policy and programme development, strengthening of tools and internal capacity, knowledge-sharing and partnerships, as well as support for the response to COVID-19 and the design of a new ICA phase.

In total, more than 3 800 young agripreneurs and cooperative members (41 percent of them women) were supported by the project. Additionally, 14 000 extended beneficiaries were reached through awareness-raising activities or as part of the project's initiatives on digital inclusion. At least eight youth organizations and networks were supported in their establishment or strengthened.

KEY FACTS

Latest Approved Budget
USD 5 728 738

Duration
December 2018 – April 2024

Resource Partners
Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs of France (MEAE); Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)

Partners
Ministry of Economy (Guatemala); Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (Kenya); Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (Rwanda); Ministry for Youth/National Agency for the Promotion of Youth Employment (Senegal); Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (Uganda)

Beneficiaries
Local government authorities; Youth organizations (nearly half of project beneficiaries are rural young women); Producers', workers' and employers' organizations; Community-based organizations; National ministries of agriculture

IMPACT

The expected impact of the project was that, by 2030, youth employment rates, earnings and working conditions in the rural areas would be enhanced, leading to reduced poverty and distress migration.

ACTIVITIES

- Policy priorities related to youth in agrifood systems formally agreed in all countries and technical working groups (TWGs) established to oversee project implementation.
- 30 knowledge documents produced, of which around 24 were country-specific, on areas such as value chain prioritization, context analysis and youth financial inclusion.
- Workshops, fora, and field work conducted to enhance capacities of stakeholders to promote youth engagement in agrifood systems. Examples include the training on youth-sensitive value chain development and contract farming in Rwanda and regional workshops for mainstreaming youth issues in the Third National Development Plan in Uganda.
- Youth-centred policy initiatives and related programmatic interventions developed, including the Holistic Rural Entrepreneurship Support Initiative in Guatemala, the Kenya Siaya County Youth in Agribusiness Strategy, Rwanda's National Strategy on Youth Employment in Agrifood Systems, the Insertion Model for Young Agripreneurs (MIJA) rural incubation services programme in Senegal and the Youth Inspiring Youth in Agriculture (YIYA) Initiative in Uganda.
- Digital initiatives introduced to increase youth activities. These include the African Youth Agripreneurs (AYA) platform, which has a membership of over 4 000 youth (of whom around 44 percent are women) from countries across Africa, and the Chisparural platform in Guatemala, which has around 400 registered users.
- Guidance materials developed on youth-sensitive value chain development, youth-centred assessments for financial inclusion, youth digital readiness and communication ecosystem assessments and gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) for youth-led organizations.
- Contributions to a range of webinars and fora, including a dedicated final global ICA webinar in May 2023, attended by around 200 stakeholders, to discuss achievements and lessons learned.
- Standard operating procedures developed for prevention and control of COVID-19 in the agricultural sector, in partnership with the Ministries of Labour and Agriculture in Uganda, distribution of personal protective equipment to youth-led enterprises to help them to cope with COVID-19 health protocols in both Kenya and Uganda, as well as seed distribution and business continuity support to young agripreneurs in Senegal.



Project Title

Integrated Country Approach (ICA) for boosting decent jobs for youth in the agrifood system

Project Code

FAO: GCP/INT/335/MUL

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