

# OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

<b>DIALOGUE DATE</b>	Tuesday, 31 August 2021 11:00 GMT +03:00
<b>DIALOGUE TITLE</b>	The Y Factor: bringing rural youth in the conversation about inclusive and sustainable agri-food systems
<b>CONVENED BY</b>	African Youth Agripreneurs (AYA) Platform <a href="https://www.ayaplatform.org/">https://www.ayaplatform.org/</a>
<b>DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE</b>	<a href="https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/31374/">https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/31374/</a>
<b>DIALOGUE TYPE</b>	Independent
<b>GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS</b>	Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda

The outcomes from a Food Systems Summit Dialogue will be of use in developing the pathway to sustainable food systems within the locality in which they take place. They will be a valuable contribution to the national pathways and also of interest to the different workstreams preparing for the Summit: the Action Tracks, Scientific Groups and Champions as well as for other Dialogues.

# 1. PARTICIPATION

## TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

91

## PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0 0-18      62 19-30      23 31-50      6 51-65      66-80      80+

## PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

52 Male      38 Female      1 Prefer not to say or Other

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

51	Agriculture/crops	2	Education		Health care
2	Fish and aquaculture	3	Communication	1	Nutrition
5	Livestock	1	Food processing	3	National or local government
2	Agro-forestry		Food retail, markets	3	Utilities
3	Environment and ecology	1	Food industry		Industrial
	Trade and commerce	2	Financial Services	12	Other

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

6	Small/medium enterprise/artisan	3	Workers and trade union
	Large national business	1	Member of Parliament
1	Multi-national corporation		Local authority
33	Small-scale farmer		Government and national institution
7	Medium-scale farmer		Regional economic community
1	Large-scale farmer	7	United Nations
5	Local Non-Governmental Organization		International financial institution
9	International Non-Governmental Organization	2	Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance
	Indigenous People		Consumer group
4	Science and academia	6	Other

## 2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

### HOW DID YOU ORGANIZE THE DIALOGUE SO THAT THE PRINCIPLES WERE INCORPORATED, REINFORCED AND ENHANCED?

The content was designed to contribute to the Summit's agenda as well as give the youth a voice. Opening remarks by the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy to the UNFSS and the young President of the Pan African Farmer Organization set the scene for a solution-oriented conversation testifying to the UNFSS commitment to empowering youth as changemakers. We recognized the main audience was rural youth therefore we intentionally addressed the complexity of topics to be discussed by inviting young leaders to introduce each discussion item with an inspiring intervention during the plenary, whereby they shared their firsthand experiences and lessons learned about what works for youth inclusion in food systems. This helped frame the thematic topics and set the pace of the group discussions that followed later where the young participants addressed key issues, promising solutions, and key recommendations. We recognized the complexity of youth challenges and role in agri-food system, as well as their heterogeneity, therefore we embraced multistakeholder inclusivity by inviting rural youth from diverse backgrounds and geographies: representatives of rural youth networks, leaders in farmer and youth in agribusiness organizations, diaspora youth, and young policymakers, along with regional representatives from the global UNFSS youth movement. The content was designed by our partners Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the East African Farmers Federation. We also received great support from the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) through their contribution of facilitators for the dialogue's focus group discussions.

### HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

Commitment to the Summit and acting with urgency The dialogue was a means to have rural youth voices heard and key members of the UNFSS (United Nations Food Systems Summit) Advisory Committee were invited and committed to bring those youth experiences and recommendations up to the global Summit. On the other hand, the African Youth Agripreneurs (AYA platform) as a dialogue convenor, gathered the youth insights and recommendations as a basis to develop youth-tailored services in the short-medium term. Respectfulness Facilitators ensured that everyone had the chance to express his/her opinion and all participants listened attentively and built upon the input of others for collective sense-making. Building on the work of others A key role in the dialogue was played by keynote speakers and facilitators who were all youth selected for their relevant work, expertise, and/or advocacy role in agri-food systems. The event was a wonderful opportunity for participants to expand their network and build long-lasting connections both through the AYA platform and independently. Building trust The dialogue aimed to create a 'safe space' where youth could feel free to share ideas, concerns, or recommendations with their peers in a non-judgmental environment. Convenors and curators acted as mere facilitators and will continue to nurture such neutral spaces for rural youth to freely network, share and peer exchange.

### DO YOU HAVE ADVICE FOR OTHER DIALOGUE CONVENORS ABOUT APPRECIATING THE PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT?

Encourage convenors to follow up the discussion and action plan discussed after the dialogue. This provides a sense of accountability among all the stakeholders involved, increasing a chance of success overall.

# 3. METHOD

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The outcomes of a Dialogue are influenced by the method that is used.

**DID YOU USE THE SAME METHOD AS RECOMMENDED BY THE CONVENORS REFERENCE MANUAL?**

**Yes**

**No**

# 4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

## MAJOR FOCUS

The focus of the dialogue was to create dedicated venues for young people, particularly East African rural youth have their say, collectively set their agenda, and suggest their pathway towards more equitable and youth-friendly food systems. The dialogue adopted a gender and inclusivity lens to address the specific needs and priorities of young rural women and men.

The dialogue achieved the following outcomes:

1. Community: Young agripreneurs, rural youth networks, and youth-serving organizations across East Africa were meaningfully engaged to share experiences, lessons learned, and solutions for youth inclusion in agri-food systems.
2. Advocacy: Voices of young rural women and men raised, and visibility given to their transformative role in agri-food systems.
3. Youth-led policy agenda: Recommendations and priority actions identified to strengthen youth agency as changemakers and builders of resilient and sustainable agri-food systems, with a focus on inclusivity and gender equality.

The identified promising solutions/priority action areas and policy recommendations were on the following topics:

1. Networking and digital engagement
2. Access to finance and business support services
3. Gender equality and inclusivity
4. Accountability and political participation

### ACTION TRACKS

- Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
- Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
- Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
- Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
- Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

### KEYWORDS

- Finance
- Innovation
- Human rights
- Women & Youth Empowerment
- Policy
- Data & Evidence
- Governance
- Trade-offs
- Environment and Climate

## MAIN FINDINGS

There is a big capacity gap when getting into agriculture, especially across different value chain touchpoints and more importantly knowledge on policy. One of the actions stakeholders will take together is to deepen their engagement efforts with the youth to ensure access to information about agricultural policies and legal regulations is further deepened. The importance of forming new alliances among many organizations that work with young people to raise youth voices and initiate collective action was further stressed.

Below are key priority action areas we identified:

- a) Set up networking opportunities that accommodate women's needs (e.g., the timing of meetings) and be accessible in networks and rural settings their existing social networks (e.g., Chama in Kenya) can be leveraged.
- b) Create stronger farmer associations to be able to keep governments accountable, become aware of current legislation to be able to influence policies and regulations.
- c) Organizations running agripreneurship programs have dedicated calls for young women. This perspective boosts young women's participation in project calls/applications, therefore, giving priority to them.
- d) Increase knowledge access of existing policies, the art of policymaking, and advocacy through translation to local languages.

### ACTION TRACKS

	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
	Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
	Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
✓	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
✓	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

### KEYWORDS

✓	Finance	✓	Policy
✓	Innovation	✓	Data & Evidence
	Human rights	✓	Governance
✓	Women & Youth Empowerment		Trade-offs
			Environment and Climate

## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/4

### Topic 1: Networking and digital engagement

Below are some of the key issues highlighted by the youth with proposed solutions, priority action areas, and policy recommendations.

Challenges highlighted:

- a) Capacity gap among youth running agribusiness
- b) Young people scattered in several digital platforms instead of a one-stop-shop.
- c) Gender digital gap and information asymmetry
- d) Farmers face difficulties in getting organized to have access to information about agricultural policies and legal regulations.

Identified priority action areas for youth inclusion in networking and digital engagement:

- a) Peer-to-peer learning is a key solution to close the capacity gap among the youth. Digital platforms that encourage such activities are central to ensuring more youth have access to information that directly contributes to the growth of their businesses. Also, a well-encompassing platform that builds alliances among many organizations that work with young people to initiate collective action was found necessary.
- b) Encourage platforms to act as a broker between the youth and finance service providers will address the need for youth-tailored financial support.
- c) Create stronger farmer associations to be able to keep governments accountable, become aware of current legislation to influence policies and regulations. Examples included the social media tax bill in Uganda which negatively affected youths access to digital technologies.

### ACTION TRACKS

<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

### KEYWORDS

<input type="checkbox"/>	Finance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Policy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Innovation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Data & Evidence
<input type="checkbox"/>	Human rights	<input type="checkbox"/>	Governance
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Women & Youth Empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trade-offs
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	Environment and Climate

## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/4

### Topic 2: Access to finance and business support services

#### Challenges highlighted:

- a) Not all youth have professional knowledge needed and most of them are not professionally organized which is a requirement to access the right financing-Experts are needed to meet diverse types of training that will prepare youth to access the support services and relevant financing
- b) Lack of experience in business management (e.g., audited accounts) and businesses not having stable incomes which is usually a requirement to access financing
- c) Lack of proper documentation like formal registration, business plan preparation, tax compliance. There is a need for innovative financing mechanisms.
- d) Wrong socialization regarding access to finance - Youth do not think of going to a bank as they have been told that banks will not attend to their needs. We need training to change the mentality of youth. Demystify the process of getting access to financing
- e) Cost of production/manufacturing is extremely high: Cost of labour: from lack of qualified labour force or high turnover after training your own labour force. The cost of logistics: transportation costs are high hence affecting margins which have an implication on loan qualification. Lack of Access to the right inputs, and where available they are expensive.
- f) Climate change: extreme weather change increases instances of droughts, floods, pests which raises the risk profile of the agricultural sector.

#### Identified priority action areas for youth inclusion in financial access:

- a) Institutions from GOVTs to NGOs (non-governmental organizations) need to champion access to factors of production for the youth agripreneurs. Youth lack access to factors of production - capital, land, etc.
- b) Develop Incubation centers for the youth: this helps the youth convert ideas to bankable businesses. The setting of such incubation centers is of paramount importance. Incubation facilities with value-adding capacity need to be made available to the youth as shared services where youth get user rights based on their needs. Also, access to business development services is key to helping them structure their agribusinesses formally.
- c) Train youth to be innovative, develop capacity, in the following areas: formalize businesses, production (using the right inputs and production techniques), keep records of production and access to markets etc. Value addition to increasing the value of goods and manage changes in climate. Youth need to give farming the attention it requires and stop doing it a side hustle. Make farming the main hustle.
- d) All stakeholders in the agri-food systems working with youth need to prioritize financial literacy - most youth lack financial literacy skills which prevent them from accessing available financing.
- e) Embracing mechanization - the initial cost outlay is high though the long-term benefits are clear. There is a need to have specialized financial products to address this.
- f) Collaboration and aggregation among youth farmers in the same sector to be able to achieve economies of scale to enable access to good market prices, reduce the cost of logistics and meet market demands.

We recommend the financial institutions, governments, and policymakers to help increase access to funding and business support services in the following capacities:

- a) Avail forums where there is the exchange of information between financial institutions and the youth. Platforms like AYA (African Youth Agripreneurs) are a powerful tool to facilitate such an engagement.
- b) Set up a guarantee fund to help de-risk lending to the youth.
- c) Govt to fund, develop and/or subsidize sectors that serve agribusiness - e.g. cost of diesel, good roads, reducing taxes on transport vehicles, etc.
- d) Development and promotion of cottage industries where youth agripreneurs can do value addition and light manufacturing.



## ACTION TRACKS

<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

## KEYWORDS

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Finance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Policy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Innovation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Data & Evidence
<input type="checkbox"/>	Human rights	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Governance
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Women & Youth Empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trade-offs
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Environment and Climate

## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/4

### Topic 3: Gender equality and inclusivity

#### Challenges highlighted:

- a) Domestic work burden preventing young women meaningful engagement
- b) Registration of agribusiness enterprises by youth is important for them to be recognized.
- c) Focus sometimes too strong on women, men are forgotten in the gender discussion – but need to be educated on gender issues as well.
- d) Lack of strong record-keeping and savings, guidance is needed on how to do monthly savings and establish record keeping.

#### Identified priority action areas for youth inclusion in gender equality and inclusivity:

- a) For agripreneurship support project/program, it would be great to have dedicated calls for young women. This perspective boosts young women's participation in project calls/applications, therefore, giving priority to them.
- b) Men need to be educated on gender issues and be involved in such discussions from the onset.
- c) Networks and groups that are formed need good governance that focuses on strengthening women in leadership/ raise capacity for leadership, especially of women.
- d) Provide support at the district/ parish level for women (and youth as well). This puts youth and women in the center because they are the main pillar of our community.

We recommend financial institutions, governments, and policymakers to help improve gender equality and inclusivity in the following capacities:

- a) Property and land ownership among women. Work on the negative impacts of cultural beliefs; educate and strengthen them.

### ACTION TRACKS

- Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
- Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
- Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
- Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
- Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

### KEYWORDS

- |                                     |                           |                                     |                         |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Finance                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Policy                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Innovation                | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Data & Evidence         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Human rights              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Governance              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Women & Youth Empowerment | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Trade-offs              |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            |                           | <input type="checkbox"/>            | Environment and Climate |

## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 4/4

### Topic 4: Accountability and political participation

Below are some of the key issues highlighted by the youth with proposed solutions, priority action areas, and policy recommendations.

Challenges highlighted:

- a) Corruption
- b) Lack of policies on utilization of available land (idle land)
- c) Restrictions to inter Africa Trade (Non-supporting policies)
- d) Lack of focus on youth-centered policies
- e) Lack of structure among rural youth in their respective local groups.
- f) Lack of transparency in government's activities with the youth.
- g) Lack of capacity building on policy: policy formulation and implementation.

Identified priority action areas for youth inclusion in gender equality and inclusivity:

- a) Government's activities with the youth need to be more transparent. To advocate for this, the youth need to have clear work plans for the different formal groups and good partnerships with relevant institutions to give them more weight in their advocacy efforts against the government.
- b) Youth to be educated on policies pertaining to land ownership and usage of land (i.e idle land), value chain regulations, inputs, and services.
- c) Capacity building on policy: policy formulation and implementation.
- d) Increase knowledge access of existing policies, the art of policymaking, and advocacy through translation to local languages.

### ACTION TRACKS

<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
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### KEYWORDS

<input type="checkbox"/>	Finance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Policy
<input type="checkbox"/>	Innovation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Data & Evidence
<input type="checkbox"/>	Human rights	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Governance
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Women & Youth Empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trade-offs
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	Environment and Climate

## AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

None

### ACTION TRACKS

- Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
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### KEYWORDS

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