



CTA Youth Strategy

2013 - 2017



About CTA

The Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) is a joint international institution of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States and the European Union (EU). Its mission is to advance food and nutritional security, increase prosperity and encourage sound natural resource management in ACP countries. It provides access to information and knowledge, facilitates policy dialogue and strengthens the capacity of agricultural and rural development institutions and communities.

CTA operates under the framework of the Cotonou Agreement and is funded by the EU.

For more information on CTA visit www.cta.int

Acknowledgment

CTA would like to thank CTA staff, interns and internal team members who have coordinated the development of this strategy. CTA also thanks all the participants of the Strategic Youth Stakeholder Workshop held in Wageningen, Netherlands from November 12th-14th, 2012. Acknowledgements also go to Mrs Karen Batjes and Mr Bert Alkemade who facilitated the workshop and supported the process.

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Director's Foreword

CTA has been supporting and promoting youth engagement in agriculture for more than 15 years. However, this strategy is the first attempt to bring CTA's efforts into a comprehensive policy aligned with the three goals of the Centre's Strategic Plan 2011-2015.

The youth strategy is premised on CTA's firm conviction that the engagement of young people in agriculture is crucial to the development and modernisation of the sector. 70% of Africa's young population are rural and more than 50% of the ACP population are below 30 years old. Excluding this population group from agriculture policies and interventions would be disastrous to development of the sector.

The strategy identifies four main priority objectives for CTA on youth issues. The first is to promote evidence-based multi-sectoral policies on youth in agriculture and rural development, and, in particular, provide support to capacity building and youth engagement in policy dialogue. The second is to promote youth engagement in value chains, with focus on capacity building and supporting entrepreneurship.

Third, CTA will explore and promote increased use of ICTs for the youth by supporting networking and exchange of information through web-based knowledge sharing platforms and supporting youth ICT innovations.

Fourth, CTA will continue supporting young professionals in the agricultural sciences and innovation. This will include supporting young agricultural scientists and researchers as well as their networks through awareness raising, technical workshops, and facilitating mentorship programs that advance intergenerational learning and multi-sectoral linkage.

The common thread in all these areas is building capacity of the youth. Considering for example that 11 to 12 million young people enter the labour market every year in Africa, that many of them lack the necessary technical skills and business acumen, capacity building is of paramount importance. With the appropriate vocational training, young people will have a better chance to find decent work or start their own business. The growth of the non-farm rural economy is critical for creating jobs for the youth. The spread of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), such as mobile phone services, will not only provide jobs to the youth but will help to stimulate growth in the rural economy.

The strategy has been prepared following extensive consultations, including youth representatives. CTA recognises that partnerships are indispensable in fully realising the goals set out in it.

Michael Hailu
Director, CTA



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Introduction

1.1 Rationale for a youth strategy

With its mission to advance food and nutritional security in ACP regions through the empowerment of agricultural and rural development organisations and networks, CTA has targeted youth as key stakeholders who can benefit from, and contribute to the increased performance of the agricultural sector. Youth have been a cross-cutting issue for the organisation going as far back as 1997. In its Strategic Plan 2011–2015, CTA seeks to ensure that young people:

- are encouraged, through various means, to get involved in agriculture;
- can seize opportunities created by ICT and contribute to the future of agriculture;
- are involved in CTA's programmes and partnership agreements.

In particular, the Strategic Plan will seek to ensure that young people involved in agriculture:

- are more fully engaged in agricultural value chains so that they enjoy greater benefits from them;
- are fully involved in agricultural and rural development policy-making;
- acquire relevant and adequate capacities.

Currently, CTA's interventions on youth are structured around:

- activities in three thematic areas (agricultural policies, agricultural science and education, youth and ICT);
- the involvement of interns and young professionals in programmatic activities;
- the inclusion of youth as beneficiaries in many of the Centre's activities and supported projects.

These activities have been implemented by various programmes, without an overarching institutional strategy on youth.

The development of the Youth Strategy represents an important attempt by CTA to take a more holistic and systematic approach to engaging young people in various activities which support and promote the development of the agricultural sector in ACP countries. Supporting youth engagement in agriculture has been called for by young people themselves, national governments and international institutions.

The Strategy will allow CTA to define clearly the priority areas of concern and focus its activities accordingly. It will also send a strong message to partners in ACP and EU countries, as well as to the international community, on the need for coordinated action in order to enhance efforts to support young people. It comes at an opportune time, with the Centre's Strategic Plan 2011–2015 stipulating that youth is a priority cross-cutting theme that merits a separate strategy.



1.2 Who are the ‘youth’?

1.2.1. Age range and diversity of the youth group

The United Nations defines youth as persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years. However, in many ACP countries the upper age limit is much higher, especially in relation to young farmers and rural youth.

In the framework of its activities, CTA will generally consider youth as those aged between 15 and 35 years inclusive¹. In the context of scientific and research activities, the age limit will be up to 40 years. However, CTA will continue to keep special interest and statistics for youth in the UN’s 15–24 age range, in order to contribute to international analysis on that group.

Apart from the age factor, CTA recognises the diversity of youth. Gender differentiation, for example, is an important element of youth programmes. Rural and urban youth face different agricultural challenges, and young people with disabilities also need specific attention.

1.2.2. Young women in agriculture

In developing countries, women have less access to education and other key resources than men. Young men are more likely to go to school or to benefit from secondary or tertiary education than young women, especially in rural areas². The educational opportunities of young women are often quickly constrained by pregnancy. An analysis by UNESCO of 89 countries reveals that in 74% of the countries, the agricultural tertiary education sector is dominated by men³. In ACP countries, which are mostly patriarchal, women have less access to land and credit and as a result, when engaged in agricultural activities, they have lower productivity and wages than men⁴. Given the important role they play in the sector, young women clearly deserve specific support.

1.3 Developing the Strategy

In developing this document, CTA consulted with its staff and Executive Board, key partners – including representatives of various youth groups – and national and international development agencies. A strategic youth stakeholder workshop was organised in November 2012 in the Netherlands, which gathered 25 external participants, 80% being

youth under 35 years old. Participants included young professionals, youth champions, young farmers, and representatives of organisations involved in ICT for development and knowledge management with an interest in agriculture and rural development. The Strategy represents a synthesis of perspectives gathered in these interactions.

1. In the African Youth Charter adopted by the African Union, the superior limit for a person to be considered as youth is 35 years old.

2. UNESCO, UIS Factsheet: Reaching out-of-school children is crucial for development, June 2012, No. 18; WORLD BANK, World Development Report 2012: Gender equality and development, World Bank, 2011

3. WORLD BANK, World Development Report 2012: Gender equality and development, September 2011.

4. Idem

2

Key youth issues
in agricultural and
rural development

2.1 Challenges

Most ACP countries have an overwhelmingly young population and this is a concern for policy-makers. Though youth are an asset, they face a variety of social and economic difficulties, notably unemployment. Yet agriculture, as a sector, offers solutions to youth unemployment, and is increasingly seen as offering a bright future for young people in ACP countries.

While many challenges in the agricultural sector impact on young people, there are some key challenges that directly influence, to an important extent, their engagement in the sector.

2.1.1. Negative mindset about agriculture

Agriculture is burdened with negative perceptions, linked in particular to its association with hard physical work, low wages, 'dirtiness' and uncertainty⁵. As a result, young people rarely choose it as a career, preferring white-collar professions. While the challenges of farming should not be underestimated, the shortage of success stories in the media and the slow pace of modernisation, perpetuate a negative mindset about the sector.

2.1.2. Unemployment, under-employment, working poverty

Youth employed in agriculture are less likely to make a decent living. Low income, underutilisation of skills and low productivity are some of the problems that they experience. In monetary terms, some of the lowest returns to labour can be found in Africa. Countries such as Malawi, Mozambique, Angola, Ethiopia and Burkina Faso have recorded earnings of less than US \$300/year.

This is further compounded by the high level of unemployment. In its 2011 report on youth employment, the International Labour Organization (ILO) noted that in all regions of the world, youth unemployment rates are significantly higher than adult rates, with young people often struggling to enter the labour market because they lack the required practical skills.



5. Kruijssen F, Youth engagement in agricultural research, 2009

6. A Call for Stronger Support for Youth Involvement in Agriculture and ICTs, ARDYIS Project, CTA 2011



2.1.3. Challenges of agricultural education

The availability of an adequately educated workforce for the agricultural sector is limited by low school enrolment, with few young people motivated to pursue agricultural studies at university level. Youth themselves regret that agriculture is taught with minimum enthusiasm in primary and secondary schools, and see tertiary level agricultural courses as needing more resources and curriculum improvements⁶. There are few opportunities for young farmers, rural youth and other young professionals to improve their skills in agri-business and use new technologies.

2.1.4. Unfavourable conditions in rural areas and rural exodus

With life in rural areas characterised by limited industrialisation and a lack of economic opportunities and infrastructure, including educational facilities, it is of vital importance to modernise these regions. Providing agricultural and non-agricultural capacity building and other opportunities to rural youth is crucial in helping to reduce rural exodus.

2.1 Challenges

2.1.5. Limited youth voices in policy-making processes

There is a lack of an enabling environment, in terms of appropriate policies, laws and regulations, to facilitate the engagement of youth in agriculture. There are also few policy instruments to ensure that they have a voice. This is particularly the case in the agricultural sector⁷.

2.1.6. Limited access to assets

Other key issues young people face relate to their access to assets, such as land, water, credit, equipment and services. Farming is not usually possible without land, and traditionally, land belongs to adults. Due to their age, young people seldom have access to collateral in order to apply for credit. Creating conditions to give young people easier access to such assets is therefore crucial.

2.1.7. Young people's health impacts on agricultural production

Diseases or illnesses that affect young people constitute a severe threat for agricultural production. HIV/AIDS, for example, has reduced the availability of young labour, caused changes in crop choice and led to the loss of traditional agricultural knowledge⁸. These threats are highest in rural areas where there is less information on preventive measures, inadequate medical systems, and where cultural constraints often force girls to early marriage.

2.2 Opportunities

Notwithstanding the above challenges, various factors work in favour of improving youth engagement in agriculture.

2.2.1. Renewed interest in agriculture and in fostering youth engagement in the sector

In 2008, the World Bank released its flagship development report on agriculture, advocating for a “new agriculture for the development agenda”. It called for farmer groups and other civil society groups, including the youth, to have more say in setting the agricultural agenda⁹. Many national and regional ‘youth in agriculture’ initiatives have also been launched. These include: the

International Youth Innovation Fair; the development of the Pacific Youth in Agriculture Strategy by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community; the development of ‘youth in agriculture’ projects by FANRPAN; the launch of a project on ‘Facilitating Youth Access to Agricultural Activities’ by FAO and IFAD, as well as the revitalisation of the Young Professionals’ Platform for Agricultural Research for Development (YPARD) network.

2.2.2.**Young people's willingness to engage in agriculture**

Contrary to widespread perceptions, many young people are willing to enter the agricultural sector, and modernise it through technical innovation, if they are supported. They have expressed this on various occasions, including the international meeting “Giving Youth a Voice” organised by CTA in 2004 and in a statement made by rural youth during the 2012 International Farmers’ Forum in Italy:

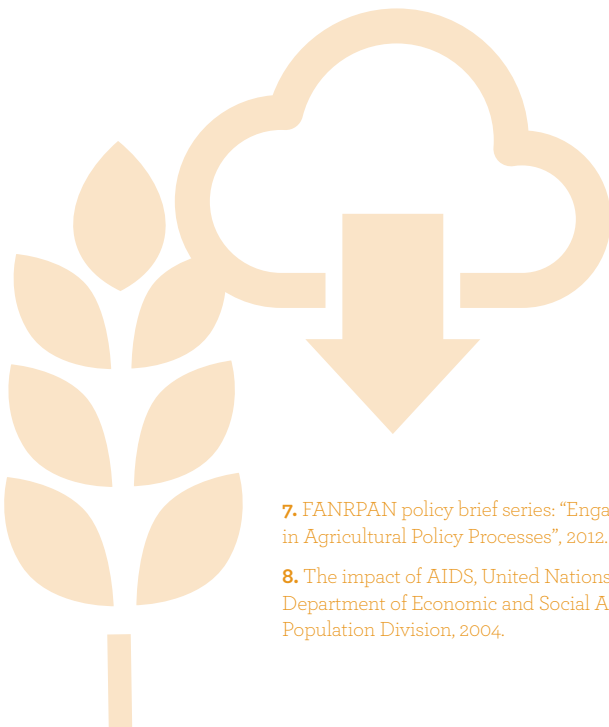
Young people in the ACP are also empowering themselves and their peers through the creation of youth-based organisations. Examples include the Ndola Youth Resource Centre (NYRC) in Zambia, the Savannah Young Farmers Network in Ghana, the Caribbean Agriculture Forum for the Young (CAFY) and the Pacific Youth in Agriculture Network. However, most of these organisations need support in order to achieve their goals.

2.2.3**Increased use of ICT in agriculture**

Use of ICTs in rural areas encourages young people’s engagement in agriculture. ICTs allow improved outreach to youth through web 2.0 related platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, can support the transformation of agricultural value chains, improve the image of agriculture and widen young people’s interest in it. A number of youth-led ICT applications and businesses are already emerging, including Kenya’s M-Farm company, which promotes access and transparency in agricultural markets, and the development of agricultural applications in youth-led ICT incubators, such as K-Lab in Rwanda and CTIC in Senegal.

2.2.4**Other opportunities: urbanisation and community life.**

ACP societies are increasingly urbanised and this can support young people’s engagement in farm and non-farm activities. Urban agriculture and small, urban agri-businesses for crop processing and value addition are creating new opportunities for young people. The benefits of community life and activities (including religious activities) are another incentive for youth involvement in agriculture. In ACP regions, family agriculture is strongly developed and contributes to food security, with land often being owned by families.



7. FANRPAN policy brief series: “Engaging Youth in Agricultural Policy Processes”, 2012.

8. The impact of AIDS, United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2004.

9. World Development Report, Agriculture for development, 2007

3

Purpose of
the strategy

The goal and objectives of the Youth Strategy closely derive from CTA's mandate and mission identified in the Strategic Plan 2011–2015.

3.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Youth Strategy is to boost the engagement of young people in agriculture and rural development (ARD) for the growth of ACP agricultural economies and to improve youth livelihoods. It will achieve this by facilitating the

development of targeted policies, sustaining young professionals' engagement in ARD, enhancing their capacity to use ICT for agriculture, supporting their innovations, and ensuring that they reap full benefits from improved value chains.

3.2 CTA's commitment

In implementing its Youth Strategy, CTA will commit to the following:

- **Youth involvement in the development process**

CTA is committed to sustainable development and improving the quality of life of rural populations. The Centre will strive to facilitate the involvement of youth at all stages of the policy-making process and implementation of ARD policies across ACP countries.

- **Innovation**

CTA will strive to promote an enabling environment that fosters research and innovation among young people. This involves empowering various youth-based organisations, individual young people, institutions and other partner organisations, in developing innovations that meet the needs of agriculture and rural development in ACP countries.

- **Equality and gender sensitivity**

CTA is committed to promoting equality among young women and young men in its various interventions. It will also be mindful of gender issues as they relate to young women and young men and will strive to empower them according to their respective needs.

- **Open dialogue**

CTA strives to have open dialogue on ARD issues. CTA is committed to serving as an honest broker, by bringing together and facilitating the exchange of information and dialogue in an effort to achieve sustainable solutions aimed at engaging youth in ARD.



4

CTA's
Engagement
With Youth

Although CTA did not formalise a holistic approach to youth, a number of its past activities were targeted at young people.

4.1 CTA's experience with youth during the first 20 years: 1984–2003

CTA's practical books on agriculture, whose readership was essentially students and their trainers/teachers, were an initial channel through which youth were targeted. Between 1984 and 1993, CTA organised a number of seminars, workshops and publications dealing with the challenges for agriculture and rural development as a result of demographic changes related to rising youth population.

Between 1997 and 1999, training sessions and study tours targeted young scientists in the Caribbean, young farmer leaders from Madagascar, western and Central Africa, and young researchers from ACP countries, to support their engagement in science communication, agricultural production and development.

4.2 CTA's recent experience with youth: 2004–2012

2004 marked a turning point for CTA in terms of addressing youth issues, with the organisation of its 7th ICT Observatory Meeting on the theme 'Giving youth a voice: can better connectivity initiatives targeting the ACP rural population make a difference to the young communities and if so, how?' Prior to this, a writing competition was organised for 18–30 year olds on the potential of ICTs to change lives in rural areas in ACP countries. The winners of this competition also participated in the ICT Observatory, where other issues such as youth employment, training

in rural areas, migration to the cities, HIV/AIDS, gender and the negative image of agriculture were discussed. Most importantly, the outputs of these discussions were compiled into policy recommendations that were delivered to ACP representatives in Brussels.

Many other activities have been organised on a more regular basis and on different issues since then. Important to be mentioned, a "Brussels Briefing" (one of CTA's key agricultural policy events) was devoted to the theme "Youth and rural development" in June 2010.





Currently, CTA youth interventions are structured around the involvement of interns and young professionals in programme activities, the inclusion of youth as beneficiaries of several projects, and specific activities on the following three thematic issues: youth in agricultural science; youth and ICTs; and youth in agricultural policies, as summarised below.

- **Supporting young professionals in agricultural science and tertiary education**

Through its Science, Technology and Innovation (ST&I) project, CTA has been actively supporting youth in agricultural science and innovative technologies for several years, in collaboration with other organisations such as:

- the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA);
- the Regional Universities' Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM);
- the African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resources Education (ANAFE).

The scientific contributions and technological innovations of African women and young professionals have been rewarded since then, through the Young Professionals and Women in Science competitions. The goal of these was to mobilise and motivate women and young professionals involved in agricultural research, raise their profiles and attract attention and resources (national and international) to support their work.

Several workshops were organised, including:

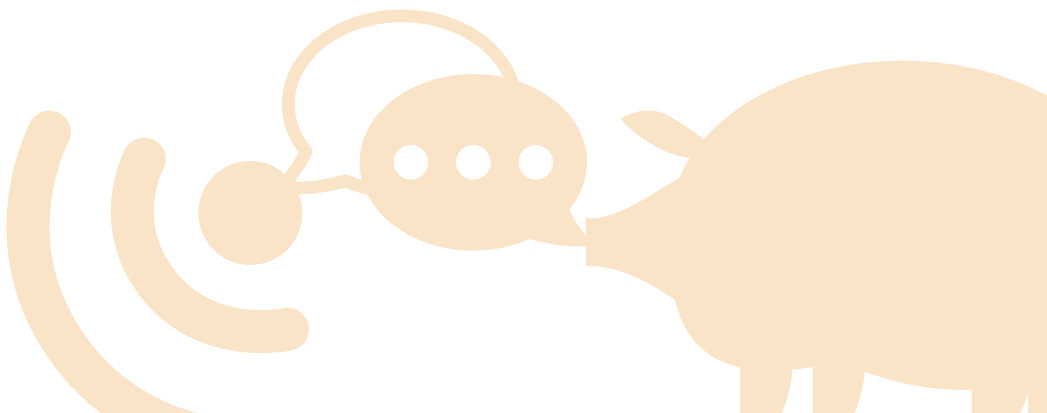
- the CTA/ATPS Youth and Employment/Wealth Creation Consultative Meeting, (April 2005, Kenya);
- the Caribbean Regional Youth Congress on Youth and Employment/Wealth Creation, (July 2006, Barbados).

CTA contributed to the launch of the African Youth Forum on Science and Technology (AYFST) and the Young Professionals' Platform for Agricultural Research for Development (YPARD). Other competitions or activities have also been organised, including in the Pacific. More information is available on <http://knowledge.cta.int/>.

- **Using ICT to raise youth awareness, capacity and opportunities in agriculture and rural areas**

As a follow-up to the youth and ICT activity organised in 2004, and taking into account its information, communication and knowledge management (ICKM) niche, CTA has put in place in 2010 the Agriculture, Rural Development and Youth in the Information Society (ARDYIS) project. ARDYIS is a framework of actions that promotes opportunities and capacities for youth in agriculture and rural development using ICTs. Several activities have since been implemented, including:

- the facilitation of networking (about 1200 people connected via its Facebook page, of whom 75% are under 35 years);
- awareness-raising (through workshops, information dissemination, etc.) on agricultural opportunities and the potential of ICTs for agriculture;
- training, booklet publication and organisation of competitions.



This project has started facilitating support to youth projects by CTA. Within that framework, a three year project has been launched, dubbed ‘Strengthening rural youth employment opportunities in agriculture and ICTs in Southern Africa’ (SOFIA). The project is managed by a consortium of youth organisations, including a farmer organisation and an ‘ICT for development’ rural centre. More information is available on <http://ardyis.cta.int>.

- **Supporting the development of youth-focused agricultural policies**

CTA has supported key regional organisations to implement or promote youth in agriculture policies. For example:

- the Pacific Agriculture and Forestry Policy Network has developed – now officially approved – a Pacific Youth and Agriculture Strategy 2011-2015, echoing the Voice of Pacific Youth.
- FANRPAN and CTA’s joint project on ‘Development of a Holistic Youth and Agriculture Policy Framework’. Major components are:
 - the generation of policy evidence;
 - stakeholder consultation
 - policy communication and engagement at the national, regional and continental levels.
- In the Caribbean, CTA is partnering with CAFAN, IICA, CARAPN and CAFY to develop youth-related policies under the Youth and Modernisation Pillar of the Caribbean Common Agricultural Policy. The publication *Choices – Caribbean Agriculture, Our Way* has been produced within the framework of these activities.

4.3 CTA’s comparative advantages

The CTA Strategic Plan identifies a number of attributes that collectively distinguish the Centre from international and regional organisations operating in ACP regions. They include: the CTA brand, unique ACP/EU status, staff mix and capacity, wide-ranging partnerships and networking skills. While all these attributes can be harnessed to support future, more ambitious interventions aimed at ACP youth, the two main advantages that will provide the backbone to CTA’s Youth Strategy are:

- its extensive network in the ACP regions, which includes policy-makers as well as representatives of civil societies and the research and academic communities.
- its wealth of experience, as outlined above, in youth and ICT, and in supporting youth in science and technologies and promoting youth in agricultural policies.

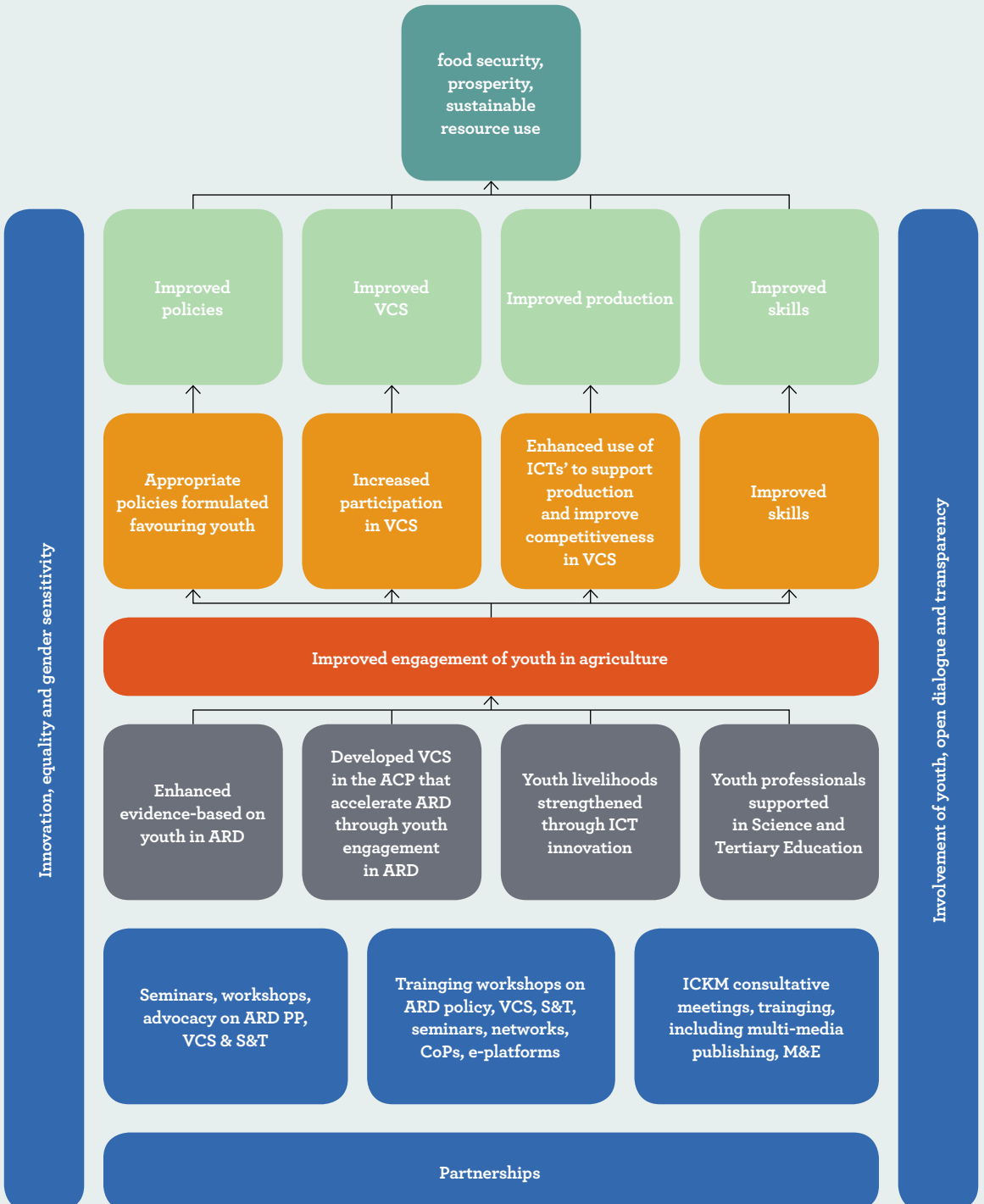


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Goals

The results framework the Centre has developed for its youth interventions is shown in the diagram, which also illustrates the impact pathway for the implementation of the Youth Strategy.

Over the next four years, CTA will make a concerted effort to drive its youth agenda by pursuing the following four strategic goals.



5.1

Goal 1: Promoting coherent, evidence- based policies on youth in agriculture and rural development

Rationale

Moving from policy statements to implementation of effective and holistic youth-focused actions in agriculture and development is a major challenge. When they exist, youth development programmes rarely include clear and detailed information on the visions and strategies to mobilise resources and policies for youth in agriculture. Policies should have cross-sectoral perspectives, in order to address the many challenges that can impact on their participation in agriculture, such as health, education and family issues. Youth should also be given the opportunity to lead in the implementation of initiatives targeting them.

In particular, the following challenges will have to be addressed:

- lack of a supportive policy environment to encourage and facilitate young people to engage in agriculture, natural resources management and rural development;
- insufficient tools, opportunities and consultation to achieve youth participation in policy debates, processes and decision-making;
- lack of information and awareness among young people about ongoing and emerging agricultural opportunities and policy issues;
- weak capacity among youth groups and organisations for policy development and advocacy and failure therefore, to capitalise on ongoing policy processes and issues.

CTA will address these challenges with two objectives that, together, will address youth leadership and evidence-based youth policies in agricultural and rural development.

Objective 1: To strengthen the capacity of youth-based organisations to engage in policy advocacy

The capacity of youth leaders and their respective organisations should be strengthened in order to ensure the successful involvement of youth in policy development and dialogue. This could be achieved through training workshops, exposure and cross-learning opportunities that will equip leaders and members of youth-based organisations with the necessary insights into multi-sectoral policy issues and processes.

CTA, in collaboration with its partners, will contribute to the capacity building of youth leaders and youth-based organisations by:

- conducting training needs assessments of potential youth leaders in agricultural policy;
- identifying local partners to conduct training of trainers on policy development, advocacy and leadership;
- encouraging youth organisations' representatives to attend key conferences for capacity building and networking;
- encouraging capacity building on resource mobilisation.



Objective 2: To promote the adoption of coherent, multi-sectoral, youth in agriculture policies

CTA will facilitate the formulation and implementation of youth in agricultural strategies and encourage organisations to ensure that those issues are on the international agenda. Specific attention must be paid to the linkages between the community, national and regional levels, as well as to the relationships between agriculture and other sectors (e.g. health and education).

To this end, CTA will undertake or support the following activities:

- initiate studies to identify policy gaps in existing youth in agriculture policies and initiatives in ACP countries;
- support multi-stakeholder dialogue concerning these policy gaps in order to develop and implement new policy options;
- raise the awareness of media organisations about youth and agriculture policy issues.

5.2

Goal 2: Enhance the engagement of youth in agricultural value chains

Rationale

The new CTA Strategy has selected value chains¹⁰ as a major theme; strengthening the involvement of youth, women and small-scale farmers in the chain is at its core.

The value chain approach offers more opportunities in agriculture for young people. In addition to engaging in production, they could become service providers in fields such as: ICT-driven extension services; market intermediation for groups of farmers (e.g. creating joint marketing activities for buying inputs or selling products), which could be ICT-based; market information services; grading and quality control; farm upgrading activities (e.g. construction and maintenance of greenhouses, installation of biogas digesters); financial intermediation; packaging activities; etc.

CTA will address this goal through two specific objectives, which are strongly linked to its Centre-wide objectives related to value chain strengthening. Particular attention will be paid to encouraging efforts which aim at promoting youth employment and enterprise creation along value chains.

Objective 1: To develop youth capacity in critical areas of priority ACP agricultural value chains

To seize the opportunities offered by ACP agricultural value chains, youth have to be made aware of them and have their capacity strengthened. CTA will support the enhancement of their capacity to operate in regional, priority value chains, and facilitate their engagement in multi-stakeholder dialogue.

¹⁰ In their famous handbook on value chains, Kaplinsky and Morris (2001) have defined a value chain as: 'the full range of activities which are required to bring a product or service from conception, through the different phases of production (involving a combination of physical

transformation and the input of various producer services), to delivery to final consumers, and final disposal after use'. This concept implies that market actors are connected along the chain to produce and deliver goods and services.

Objective 2: To facilitate the involvement of young entrepreneurs and organisations in value chains

Youth need to be supported to consider and undertake agricultural activities as a professionally managed, commercial business. They require knowledge and information on innovative and professional agri-business practices, and market niches and trends. CTA will collaborate with partners in supporting business development activities and funding for youth enterprises, through interventions such as:

- public-private partnerships that fully involve young people;
- analysis of regional priority value chains, to identify business opportunities and career positioning for young people;
- youth-focused resource platforms on regional priority value chains;
- encouraging frameworks for the implementation of new products and services by youth within agricultural value chains.

5.3

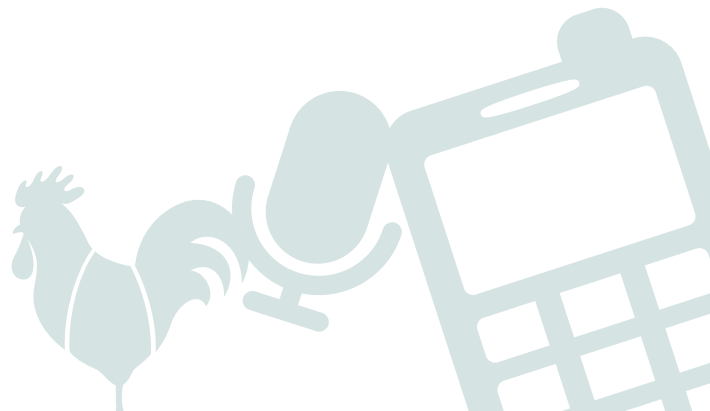
Goal 3: Enhance youth engagement in agriculture through ICT innovation, utilisation and knowledge management

Rationale

The development of ICT tools has at least three implications for engaging youth in agriculture. Firstly, it implies that there are increased opportunities to reach and encourage them to get engaged in agriculture by undertaking outreach through web 2.0 tools such as Facebook and Twitter, where they often meet and interact. Secondly, if adequately supported, young people can develop or provide software and ICT services for the agricultural sector, in order to increase its performance. Lastly, young farmers can tap into new communication technologies, more than in previous times to improve the management of their business and extend their access to markets. This goal will particularly support initiatives around these issues.

Objective 1: To enhance youth awareness of agricultural issues and opportunities through ICT tools

Most young people are not fully aware of the key ACP agricultural issues and of the various opportunities that the sector can offer, from fisheries to livestock and from pre-production to post-harvest. Similarly, they need to be encouraged to take up or keep agriculture as a career, and also need to be constantly informed of emerging opportunities (conferences, key publications, relevant open positions, etc.). In addition, there are not enough opportunities for ACP young people involved in agriculture to exchange knowledge and experiences.





To fulfil this objective, CTA will:

- strengthen existing web-based information and knowledge sharing platforms, including social media that target youth involvement in ARD. The creation of a central gateway, where information on all CTA's youth-related activities and platforms is available, will be considered;
- promote exchange of information and networking among young people;
- organise e-competitions, facilitate participation in conferences, produce publications and leaflets, and collaborate with the media.

Objective 2: To support and promote youth-led ICT innovations and entrepreneurship in agriculture

In order to motivate youth and attract more private and public-sector investment in youth-based projects or businesses, information and knowledge on successful youth-led ventures such as M-Farm¹¹ should be disseminated widely and in a timely fashion. This view is supported by the Youth Strategy workshop, and is in line with suggestions and recommendations received from the competition and workshop CTA organised in partnership with NEPAD on youth-focused ICT-based agricultural entrepreneurship in 2011¹².



CTA will strive to support youth enterprises and innovations aimed at bringing benefits to agriculture through ICT, and improve young people's livelihoods via various channels, including mentorship, internship, collaboration with business development organisations and open technology spaces. More specifically, CTA will:

- identify and promote, through various channels, innovators and success stories, and encourage open debate and networking on these issues;
- support the organisation of 'hackathons'¹³ and ICT competitions, by and for youth, with a focus on agriculture;
- support capacity building of young developers and service providers interested in investing their talents in the production of software and ICT platforms for agriculture;
- support exchange and networking opportunities linking farmers, agricultural stakeholders and young ICT developers.

For these activities, collaboration with ICT incubators and business organisations will be sought to complement CTA's efforts and ensure adequate follow-up.

Objective 3: To build and strengthen ICKM capacity of youth organisations engaged in ARD

Although ICT penetration has improved in ACP societies, adoption rates are still rather low, especially among young farmers and rural youth. There is a specific lack of ICT and agricultural business knowledge among youth who want to tap into ICT-led agricultural entrepreneurship. Enterprising individuals, through their respective organisations and youth champions, will be targeted, to support replication of technologies and to enhance impacts.

To address these challenges, CTA will:

- facilitate training for young farmers and their organisations, so that they can make use of ICT to undertake innovative marketing approaches and to operate their businesses more efficiently;
- support attendance to ICT-for-agriculture conferences and youth networking on these issues;
- support ICT training for rural youth resource centres.
- support the use of ICKM tools to facilitate agricultural knowledge transfer (traditional or new) among young people and elderly farmers.

11. www.mfarm.co.ke/ - M-Farm is a Kenyan company created by three young women, which, among others, delivers agricultural market information through mobile phones.

12. More information on <http://ardyis.cta.int>

13. A 'hackathon' (also known as a 'hack day', 'hackfest' or 'codefest') is an event in which computer programmers and others in the field of software development collaborate intensively on software projects. Hackathons typically last between a day and a week in length. Some hackathons are intended simply for educational or social purposes, although in many cases the goal is to create usable software. (Source Wikipedia)

5.4

Goal 4: Strengthen engagement of young professionals in agricultural science and tertiary education

Rationale

Innovation is urgently needed in ACP agriculture and the regions need to capitalise on existing scientific and technological advances (e.g. bioengineering, gene sequencing, nanotechnology, convergence of scientific disciplines, ICTs) that are available to drive agricultural transformation and enhance performance. New and improved varieties of crops and livestock, climate-smart production systems, sustainable use of agrobiodiversity, efficient use of water and other resources, and sustainable intensification are drivers of the much needed transformation.

Even though tapping into such scientific and technological advances may appear challenging for ACP economies, taking advantage of these innovations is easier than in the past¹⁴. Harnessing and mobilising the pool of young talent, which is eager to learn and apply new knowledge, can make this happen. The future development and transformation of the ACP agricultural sector depends, therefore, on the availability of a new generation of well trained, highly skilled, highly motivated and fully engaged young professionals.

Objective 1: Improve visibility and contribution of young professionals to science and evidence-based policy making for enhanced ARD

To enhance the engagement of young professionals in agricultural science and education, there is a need to improve the visibility of their intellectual contributions, which are often disregarded.

CTA will thus implement the following activities:

- support evidence gathering and awareness raising events on youth engagement in education, research, science and innovation;
- support platforms that facilitate participation of young professionals in curricula development/reform, science, research and innovation programmes;
- organise training workshops in scientific writing, research methods, communication and policy advocacy on ST&I for young professionals;
- promote and facilitate mentorship programmes/schemes that enhance intergenerational learning and multi-sectoral linkages.

Objective 2: To strengthen youth engagement in ST&I agenda setting

ACP young professionals are often under-represented or absent in forums where key policy or scientific agenda are set. Their issues and perspectives are weakly documented and they lack interaction spaces. CTA will implement the following activities to address these issues:

- support participation of young professionals in regional and international policy, education, research and science forums;
- Commission youth perspectives on ST&I issues and feed the outputs into policy and related debates;
- Support youth ARD and ST&I networks and facilitate their role as champions of institutional change.

¹⁴ C. Juma, *The new harvest: agricultural innovations in Africa*.

6

Implementation

6.1 Regional focus

In line with CTA's Strategic Plan 2011–2015, the Youth Strategy gives priority to regional-level interventions in addressing the four strategic goals and their respective specific objectives. For instance, regarding Goal 2 on the engagement of youth in value chains, CTA will give priority to regional value chains identified by bodies such as ECOWAS, CARICOM, SPC, etc. These include cereals, root crops, fruits, livestock and fisheries.

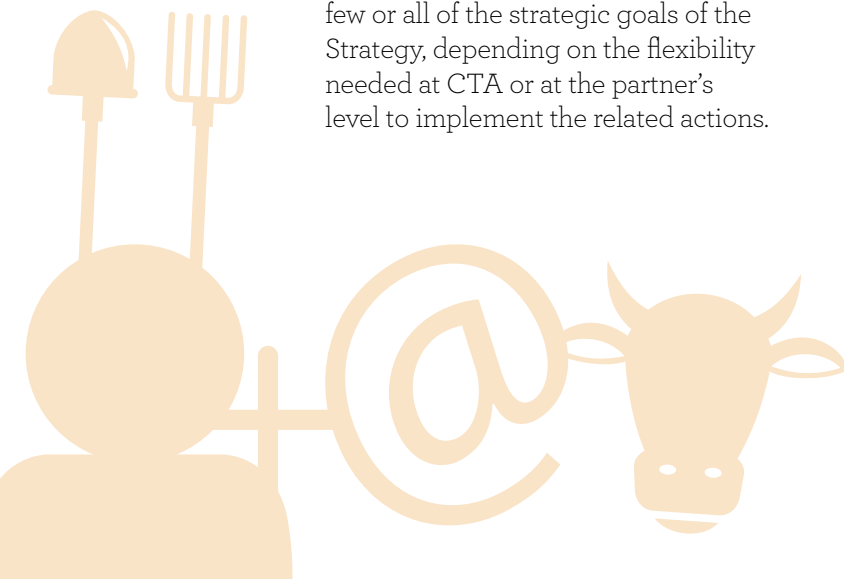
However, in order to identify and test innovations, CTA may support activities at national and local levels, before moving to promoting and favouring their up-scaling at regional or ACP-wide level. Indeed, it is only at micro-level that innovations can be developed and tested most effectively.

6.2 Partnerships

Partnerships will be key, not only for implementing projects supported by CTA, but also in order to fully cover areas that the organisation cannot directly address. CTA will strive to collaborate with key regional and international youth-led, or development organisations which have 'youth in ARD' as an important area of intervention. Some of these institutions cover in their operations, at national or international levels, many or all the various themes identified in the Strategy. Business development organisations, knowledge institutes and organisations working on ICT innovations may also be called upon. The partnerships may target one, a few or all of the strategic goals of the Strategy, depending on the flexibility needed at CTA or at the partner's level to implement the related actions.

CTA will be able to draw on an expanding pool of collaborating partner and/or stakeholder organisations, including:

- vocational institutes, universities and university networks – e.g. RUFORUM, ANAFE, UWI, USP;
- international, regional/continental and sub-regional research and development organisations – e.g. ASARECA, CARDI, CORAF/WECARD, FARA, GFAR;
- government and intergovernmental institutions – e.g. NEPAD, the African Union, CARICOM and Pacific Forum;



- national and regional development organisations working consistently on youth issues, including the Caribbean Farmer Network (CAFAN) and the Secretariat of Pacific Community (SPC – Land Resource Division), Yam Pukri in Burkina Faso, SangoNet in South Africa and TechSoup, which are very much engaged in youth activities.
- youth in ARD and ICT organisations: examples include Farmers Forum for Trade and Social Justice (FAFOTRAJ) in Malawi, Ndola Youth Resource Centre in Zambia, the Savannah Young Farmers Network (SYFN) in Ghana and the African Youth Foundation.
- ICT training or innovation organisations such as Klab in Rwanda, KINU in Tanzania, CTIC in Senegal, Akirachix (a pan-African network of women in technology), Ihub in Kenya, etc.
- national policymakers: ministries responsible for youth, ICT or agriculture; communications commissions, youth development agencies;
- international organisations – World Bank, ITU, FAO, IICD, IFAD, AFDB, CDB, ASDB;
- international and regional youth-led organisations/networks – e.g. YPARD, AYPST, REINet, AYP, CAFY;
- media and journalists networks.

The conditions for undertaking and implementing partnerships will be in line with CTA's overall Partnership Strategy.

6.3 Main-streaming gender in youth activities

The involvement of young women will receive particular attention in the implementation of all strategic goals of the Strategy, to complement CTA's engagement on women described in its specific Gender Strategy.

Also important are the following:

- ensuring that girls in rural areas benefit from programmes implemented;
- ensuring that ARD policies address issues specific to young women, reducing hindrances to their full participation;

- specific awareness-raising and capacity building activities that target young women;
- specific attention to young women in research issues and educational curricula, to identify and address issues that specifically relate to young women;
- women's use of ICT for agriculture and rural development.

The engagement of young women in agriculture will be adequately monitored.

6.4 Main-streaming youth in CTA programmes

One of the key rationales of this Strategy is the need to mainstream youth in CTA's programmes, as youth is a cross-cutting theme in the organisation's Strategic Plan. CTA will therefore make sure that all programmes and all key initiatives integrate young people as beneficiaries or target youth in ARD issues.

Currently, most supports for youth relate to Goals 1, 3 and 4, and are provided by the Policies, Markets and ICTs Programme, through:

- support for youth in agriculture (Goal 1);
- ICT-related support to youth through the specific, multi-annual ARDYIS project (Goal 3);
- support to young and women professionals in agricultural science and tertiary education (Goal 4);

These will be done notably through existing projects that address youth, as well as through the involvement of youth as beneficiaries of value chain projects.

The Knowledge Management and Communication (KMC) programme will also contribute to the rebranding of agriculture.

Strengthened linkages between the different youth projects in CTA's programmes will be realised through selected joint activities. An international conference on youth will be organised within this Strategy timeframe (2013–2017). A CTA youth web portal will be created and will act as a gateway to CTA online youth resources. Other specific, CTA-led youth activities will be identified.

A CTA youth focal point will serve as point of contact for facilitating the identification of, and reporting on, CTA youth activities.

As described below, the Learning Monitoring and Evaluation Unit and the Corporate Services will play specific roles in complementing CTA programmes' contributions.



6.5 Internships and junior staff positions

CTA has had an internship programme in place for some years, which helps young ACP and EU university graduates to consolidate their knowledge, gain hands-on international experience and exposure, and boost their career opportunities in ARD.

CTA has also been recruiting junior professionals for the operation of its programmes.

The Corporate Services will strengthen the involvement of young professionals in CTA programme implementation through innovative and cost-effective approaches.

6.6 Learning, monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring, evaluating and learning from the implementation of the CTA Youth Strategy will be coordinated by the CTA's LME unit in collaboration with the other programmes.

Major methods for learning and sharing experiences within CTA and its partners will include:

- a framework for capturing key indicators and data from:
 - youth initiatives implemented by CTA, including access to the youth web portal and other publications and the organisation of CTA youth events;
 - youth projects supported by CTA and implemented by partners;
 - the integration of youth as beneficiaries in initiatives implemented by CTA;

- exchanges on youth online spaces managed by CTA or by partners;
- International Youth Exchange and networking events;
- CTA online and offline publications on youth.

The involvement of young women as well as of youth in CTA programme implementation will also be captured as indicators.



Youth Stakeholder Workshop

November 14th -16th, 2012

In the framework of the development of the CTA's Youth Strategy 2013 - 2017, a workshop, bringing together youth-led organisations, young entrepreneurs in agriculture and ICT and institutions working in related fields, was organized. The purpose was to confront the potential intervention areas ideas identified by CTA with the principal stakeholders of the strategy: young people themselves.

The Strategic Youth Stakeholder Workshop took place in Wageningen, Netherlands, from November 12th-14th, 2012. It was attended by technical staff at CTA and 22 participants from Africa, the Caribbean, the Pacific as well as from institutions working at the international level.

Stakeholders represented include Yam-Pukri, CARICOM, Caribbean Regional Agricultural Policy Network (CARPAN), Biosecurity Authority of Fiji, Savannah Young Farmers Network, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN), Ndola Youth Resource Center, University of Nairobi, FAO, IFAD, Young Professionals' Platform for Agricultural Research for Development (YPARD), African Youth Forum (AYF), Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), SangoNet, and Caribbean Farmers Network (CaFAN).

The workshop allowed the review of major issues and existing initiatives related to youth in agriculture and rural development. It also provided the opportunity to consult key organisations working to support youth in ARD activities, as well as youth champions involved in these areas and organisations covering ICT for Development and Knowledge Management with interests in ARD activities.

It concluded with recommendations on the strategic focus areas, potential collaboration ideas, initiatives and partnerships for future actions. News from the workshop were tweeted live and allowed the workshop to be complemented with opinions on the different presentations and sessions.

Key Acronyms

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States
AFDB	African Development Bank
ANAPE	African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resources Education
ARD	Agriculture and Rural Development
ARDYIS	Agriculture, Rural Development and Youth in the Information Society (CTA Project)
ASARECA	The Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa
ASDB	Asian Development Bank
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CAFAN	Caribbean Farmer Network
CAFY	Caribbean Agricultural Forum for Youth
CARDI	Caribbean Agricultural Research & Development Institute
CARICOM	Caribbean Common Market
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CORAF/WECARD	The West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development
CTA	Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation
CTIC	Centre d'Innovation TIC (Senegal)
FAFOTRAJ	Farmers Forum for Trade and Social Justice
FANRPAN	Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (Africa)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FARA	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
GFAR	The Global Forum on Agricultural Research
ICKM	Information, Communication and Knowledge Management
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
IICD	Institute for International Cooperation and Development
KMC	Knowledge Management and Communication (CTA)
LME	Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit (CTA)
NEPAD	The New Partnership for Africa's Development
RUFORUM	Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture
SPC	The Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SYFN	Savannah Young Farmers Network
USP	The University of the South Pacific
UWI	The University of the West Indies
YPARD	Young Professionals' Platform for Agricultural Research for Development

