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PROMOTING YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR IN EAST AFRICA

TCP TERMINAL REPORT

February 2019

SDGs:



Countries:

Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, United Republic of Tanzania, South Sudan and Uganda

Project Codes:

TCP/SFE/3601

FAO Contribution:

USD 444 000

Duration:

1 December 2016 - 30 November 2018

Contact Info:

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Implementing Partners

East African Community (EAC) Secretariat; Ministries of Agriculture and Ministries of Labour and Youth in EAC Partner States.

Beneficiaries

EAC Secretariat, policy-makers in EAC Partner States and young men and women in EAC countries.

Country Programming Framework

Burundi

Outcome 1.1: Producers, especially youth and women, and the agricultural producers associations benefit from technical services and adequate support.

Output 1.1.1: The technical, managerial, management/risk reduction and organizational support services to production, including agricultural producers associations, youth and women are strengthened.

Kenya

Outcome 1: Agricultural-based livelihoods and sectors are supported by an enabling policy, strategy and investment environment that promotes equality and inclusivity.

Output 1.1: National-level institutional capacities to formulate and implement policies, legislation, strategies and investment programmes for agriculture, food security and nutrition, and Natural Resources Management strengthened.

Outcome 2: Productivity of medium and small-scale agricultural producers increased, diversified and aligned to markets.

Output 2.1: Improved productive capacity and reduced risk of medium and small-scale producers.

Rwanda

Outcome 3: Agribusiness development and value chain is enhanced.

Output 3.1: Policy and regulatory framework on private sector investment, entrepreneurship, and access to markets and finance developed.

Uganda

Outcome 1: Sustainable production and productivity of agriculture, forestry and fisheries commodities for men, women and youth in targeted populations increased.

Output 1.1: Availability and equitable access by targeted men, women and youth to production assets, knowledge and services for production increased.

United Republic of Tanzania

Outcome A2: Smallholder farmers and traders successfully engaged in marketing and commercialization of agricultural produce.

Output A2.1: Capacities of ministries, departments and agencies improved to promote entrepreneurship skills of smallholder farmers and traders (including youth and women).

Agribusiness service providers have improved capacity to offer services/products for value addition in selected value chains, based on smallholder farmers' needs, including women and young farmers.





BACKGROUND

Youth represent about 45 percent (48 million) of the total population of the East African Community (EAC) Region. Many of the disadvantaged youth live in rural communities. Limited economic opportunities in rural areas make it difficult to secure decent and productive employment, hence the need to create viable economic opportunities for rural youth in the agricultural sector. Involving youth in agriculture, either through (self) employment or through entrepreneurship is increasingly seen as a potential solution to unemployment, food insecurity, rural poverty and migration. Moreover, the current estimated youth bulge offers an unprecedented opportunity for governments and partners to harness the energy for increased productivity and food security, inclusive economic development and social change. For rural youth, new business creation in the agriculture sector can present an important and viable opportunity to find decent and productive work in the agricultural sector. Against this background, FAO Subregional Office for Eastern Africa (SFE), in close collaboration with the EAC Secretariat, implemented this project.

Within the broader context of the African Union Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods, the project aimed to contribute to reducing rural poverty and to boosting economic growth by supporting the creation of better opportunities for youth in the agricultural sector. During the inception phase of the project, it was agreed to focus on three outputs: i) Documenting best youth agribusiness models and mapping out opportunities for investment on youth in the agricultural sector; ii) Enhancing the capacity of the EAC Secretariat, Partner States and project beneficiaries to develop and implement youth-in-agriculture initiatives; and iii) Designing a mechanism for the mobilization and recognition of EAC youth champions in the agricultural sector. The project was consistent with identified priority areas for promoting youth employment defined in the EAC 2016-2021 Youth Policy.

IMPACT

It is expected that the project will contribute to increasing opportunities for young people in EAC Partner States to directly work or do business in the agricultural sector. More specifically, the production and validation of the regional youth agribusiness models report, the provision of relevant training, and the development of a regional strategy for rural employment will increase the ability of the EAC Secretariat to develop and implement youth-in-agriculture initiatives in the future. In addition, the profiling of Best Youth Agribusiness Models across EAC Partner States was an exemplary approach to recognizing successful youth-led agribusinesses, enhancing youth mobilization, improving farming techniques, and introducing a new vision of agribusiness and peer knowledge/skills sharing of innovative farming techniques to end hunger and poverty in Africa.

ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS

Sixteen youth champions-in-agriculture from the six EAC Partner States participated in a one-month training course at Songhai Regional Center in Benin, focusing on agricultural entrepreneurship and value chain development in integrated ecosystems. During the course the trainees developed business plans for expanding their businesses, and had an opportunity to build business/support networks. In addition, based on a set of criteria, the participants were provided with small grants, ranging from USD 2 000 to USD 5 000, which they used towards growing their businesses and sharing the knowledge gained at Songhai Regional Center with fellow youth in their respective communities.

The EAC was supported through the development of a Concept Note for a follow-up project and a Strategy on Youth in Agriculture.

The best six youth champions-in-agriculture (one from each beneficiary country) were recognized and awarded during an award ceremony, which was organized on the occasion of the High Level Forum of the EAC 11th meeting of the Sectoral Council on Agriculture and Food Security on 16 June 2018 in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania. The six youth champions also received support to participate in an Africa-wide Conference on “Youth Employment in Agriculture as a Solid Solution to ending Hunger and Poverty in Africa: Engaging through Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and Entrepreneurship” in Kigali, Rwanda, which took place on 20 and 21 August 2018.

IMPLEMENTATION OF WORK PLAN

Most of the project activities were implemented, in spite of some challenges encountered. These included delays in the recruitment of an international consultant; and lengthy consultations for technical, legal and procurement clearances for the payment of grants, which held up the implementation of project activities. It was therefore necessary to implement a ten-month no-cost extension, to enable reprogramming and provide sufficient time for the activities to be completed.

FOLLOW-UP FOR GOVERNMENT ATTENTION

With the development of the Concept Note for a follow-up project, it is recommended that the EAC Secretariat approach potential donors for funding to assist in developing and implementing the follow-up project. It is also recommended that donor funding be sought to assist in providing specialized skills development in agriculture/agribusiness in modern approaches to farmers, which address skills pitfalls in agribusiness, and are aligned with demand-driven capacity needs identified in benchmarking exercises. In addition, it is advised that youth peer learning/training/study tours be facilitated through cross-visits to best youth agribusinesses within and outside EAC Partner States. Finally, although individual countries have developed National Youth Policies, there is a need to formulate youth in agribusiness policies and strategies, with an emphasis on gender mainstreaming, which is key to promoting and optimizing the performance of youth-in-agriculture and agribusiness, by mitigating the negative cultural beliefs on women's participation in public activities, including agribusiness.

SUSTAINABILITY

1. Capacity development

The project built capacity through key training sessions on agricultural entrepreneurship and value chain development, using an integrated approach, to further promote youth uptake of commercial agriculture.

2. Gender equality

The training sessions and recognition mechanism ensured that both young men and women had equal opportunity to participate.

3. Environmental sustainability

The young beneficiaries were exposed to the zero waste approach practised at Songhai Regional Center, which enabled them to consider how they could mainstream environmental sustainability in their businesses.

4. Human Rights-based Approach (HRBA) – in particular Right to Food and Decent Work

The project supported human rights principles, particularly the right to decent work. Young entrepreneurs were trained and exposed to practical examples (at Songhai Regional Center) on how to develop viable businesses along selected value chains, in order to generate decent employment opportunities.

5. Technological sustainability

Good practices were documented and disseminated.



DOCUMENTS AND OUTREACH PRODUCTS

- ❑ Conceptual Framework for developing a strategy for promoting youth employment in EAC region.
- ❑ Conceptual Framework on the development and functionality of a database and web-portal clearing house mechanism for EAC youth-in-agriculture.
- ❑ Outline on developing agribusiness plan for 16 EAC youth champions-in-agriculture.
- ❑ Grant Appraisal framework and a detailed report for 16 EAC youth champions-in-agriculture.
- ❑ Updated Project Brief: Promoting Youth Employment in the Agricultural Sector in East Africa.
- ❑ Succinct profile on six EAC youth champions-in-agriculture.
- ❑ Regional Report on Best Youth Agribusiness Models in EAC Partner States.
- ❑ Regional Programme Concept Note: Promoting Youth Employment-in-Agriculture in EAC Region.
- ❑ Incubation Training at Songhai for EAC Youth-in-Agriculture.
- ❑ EAC Regional Grant Award at 11th Sectoral Council Meeting on Agriculture and Food Security.
- ❑ Recognition Session of EAC Youth-in-Agriculture at FAO/AU Africa-Wide Kigali Youth Conference.
- ❑ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H66qkF95Xdo&feature=youtu.be>

ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS - LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Expected Impact	Rural poverty is reduced and economic growth is boosted by supporting the creation of better opportunities for youth in the agricultural sector		
Outcome	The capacity of the target countries and the EAC Secretariat to develop and implement youth-in-agriculture initiatives is enhanced		
	Indicators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Availability and dissemination of comprehensive information on opportunities and challenges for decent employment for youth in the agricultural sector for policy-makers. 2. Availability of a subregional strategy for youth employment in agriculture and implementation arrangements. 3. Delivery of country-level support and capacity development. 	
	Baseline	Not readily available	
	End Target	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Country-level forums organized to compile comprehensive information on opportunities and challenges for decent employment for youth in the agricultural sector for policy-makers. 2. Subregional strategy for youth employment in agriculture drafted with technical inputs from FAO. 3. National reports identifying best models for engaging youth in agriculture produced by each of the six EAC Partner States. 	
	Comments and follow-up action to be taken	The End Targets were successfully achieved. In addition, the six EAC Partner States selected three youths per country to participate in a training course at Songhai Regional Center, Benin. The development and validation of the regional youth agribusiness models report, relevant training and the development of a regional strategy for rural employment will increase the ability of the EAC Secretariat to develop and implement youth-in-agriculture initiatives in the future.	
Output 1	Documenting best youth agribusiness models and mapping out opportunities for investment on youth in the agricultural sector		
	Indicators	Target	Achieved
	Production of a report on agribusiness models	At least one regional report on youth agribusiness models produced	Yes
Baseline	No consolidated report of agribusiness models		
Comments	A consolidated regional report on EAC Best Youth Agribusiness Models was produced and validated through a workshop in August 2018. Prior to the regional report, each of the EAC Partner States undertook an exercise of identifying business models that appeared to work at national level. The output will inform national, subregional and continent-wide policy and programmatic initiatives addressing youth employment by integrating youth-in-agriculture and agribusiness as a new driver to achieving national, continental and global development agenda, by seeing agriculture as a sector for investment and job-creation opportunity. These agribusiness models could be replicated, adapted and scaled up by grooming a critical mass of youth towards transforming Africa's agricultural sector to drive inclusive growth and prosperity.		
Activity 1.1	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	National documentation exercises on Best Youth Agribusiness Models were conducted in each EAC Partner State, with national validation workshops held between April and May 2018. A consolidated regional report, EAC Best Youth Agribusiness Models, was then compiled.	
Activity 1.2	Activity Title		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	The regional report was validated during a workshop held on 28 and 29 August 2018.	

Output 2	Enhancing capacity of EAC Secretariat, Partner States and project beneficiaries to develop and implement youth-in- agriculture initiatives		
	Indicators	Target	Achieved
	Delivery of a regional strategy and capacity-development activities	A regional strategy is produced, and training is conducted for 16 EAC youth in sustainable agro-ecological practices at Songhai Regional Center	Yes
Baseline	No sector specific strategy available		
Comments	Both a regional strategy was developed, and training was conducted for youth in sustainable agro-ecological practices.		
Activity 2.1	Formulate a Regional Strategy for EAC Promoting Decent Rural Employment in Agriculture		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	The project formulated a Regional Strategy for EAC Secretariat Promoting Decent Rural Employment in Agriculture, and a Regional Programme Conceptual Framework was also designed.	
Activity 2.2	Provide capacity training for EAC Youth in sustainable agro-ecological practices		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	The project supported 16 EAC youth to participate in a one-month incubation training course in Agribusiness and Sustainable Agro-ecological Practice in May 2018 at Songhai Regional Center in Benin. The training focused on mind-set change, integrated farming approach, and Zero Emissions Research and Initiatives (ZERI).	
Output 3	Designing a mechanism for the mobilization and recognition of EAC youth champions in the agricultural sector		
	Indicators	Target	Achieved
	A Concept Note with detailed selection criteria	Conceptual document created to enhance access to information, resources and employment opportunities, and associated grant scheme modalities	Yes
Baseline	No conceptual document available.		
Comments	The Concept Note was developed in consultation with the project steering committee and the EAC Secretariat.		
Activity 3.1	Formulate a conceptual document on the operations and functionality of a database and clearing house mechanism for mobilization and recognition for EAC youth access to information, resources, and agricultural-driven employment opportunities		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	The project formulated a conceptual document to operationalize a database and clearing house mechanism for mobilization and recognition for EAC youth access to information, resources, and agricultural-driven employment opportunities. The idea was to create a dynamic database, but given that the project had a limited lifetime, the building of such a database was included in the Concept Note/Proposal for the proposed follow-up project.	
Activity 3.2	Review grant-scheme modalities for adaptation at country and subregional levels		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	Of the 16 youth champions-in-agriculture identified as project beneficiaries, an assessment process was led by project country teams, using 20% of their business plans and 80% of the field agribusiness/farming activities, based on a subset of selection criteria. It is recommended that the number of beneficiaries in future projects be expanded, given the pool of youth in the subregion.	

Marketing, Outreach and Reporting Unit,
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About the Marketing, Outreach and Reporting Unit, Business Development and Resource Mobilization Division (PSR)

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