

YOUTH!

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World Farmers' Organisation

via del Tritone, 102
00187 Roma

TEL +39 06 42 74 11 58
MAIL info@wfo-oma.org
WEB www.wfo-oma.org



THE TREND OF GENERATIONAL RENEWAL IN AGRICULTURE

Dr Nteranya Sanginga

DIRECTOR GENERAL,
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
TROPICAL AGRICULTURE (IITA)

As a farm boy growing up in the DR Congo, I have experienced how farming can be a backbreaking and labor-intensive chore for my family and the millions of African smallholder farmers. That's why I chose not to be a farmer.

But these days, things are changing for the better. Agriculture is now being modernized and receiving the attention that would make it as the next driver of development in sub-Saharan Africa. One that will ensure that Africa becomes the next bread basket of the world and encourage the productive engagement of marginal groups such as women and youth in agricultural value chains. And that can help transform the sector into a more vibrant and attractive occupation for the teeming African youths.

The average age of a farmer anywhere in the world is 60 years old. For a very important sector that feeds the world and ensures our food and nutritional security, this is an alarming piece of statistics and is a cause for concern. But government leaders, policymakers, development workers, and other important stakeholders are now sitting up and listening. We realize that if we do not do something drastic to address the situation now, the agricultural sector will continue to fall into disarray and the smallholder farmer, who is the bedrock of our food systems, will always remain just that—someone who will always need to be propped by research and development organizations such as the [International Institute of Tropical Agriculture](#) (IITA) and its network of sister organizations in the [CGIAR](#).

There are many exceptions, but generally the agricultural sector in the developing regions has always been seen as a backward occupation dominated by the old and practiced not as a business.



Dr Nteranya Sanginga became the Director General of the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) based in Ibadan, Nigeria, in November 2011. Before joining IITA, he was the executive director of the Tropical Soil Biology and Fertility (TSBF) Institute of the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) from 2003 to 2011.

He has more than 30 years of experience in agricultural research and development, particularly in applied microbial ecology, plant nutrition, and integrated natural resources management in Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia, having worked with the University of Zimbabwe, IITA, International Atomic Energy Agency in Austria, and CIAT- TSBF. As a research administrator and leader, he has strong skills in research management, situation analysis, resource mobilization and project management, developing partnerships and institutional linkages, institution building, managing complex structures and systems, and capacity building. He played a major role in the creation of the Consortium for Improving Agriculture-based Livelihoods in Central Africa (CIALCA).

He is a board member of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel, administered by UNEP; advises the Global Environment Facility on sustainable land management global issues; is a member of the editorial board of Applied Ecology Journal; and an occasional editor for Soil Biology and Biochemistry, Biology and Fertility of Soil, Plant and Soil, Nutrient Cycling in agroecosystems, Soil Science Society of American Journal, African Crop Science Journal, and Nigeria Journal of Soil Science.

He has trained more than 30 PhD candidates at the National University of Congo, School of Agriculture and University of Zimbabwe, who now hold leadership positions in their countries. Dr Sanginga had worked at IITA from 1989 to 2002 in various capacities: as principal scientist and head, soil microbiology unit; project coordinator; and multidisciplinary program leader. He did his postgraduate training at IITA and his PhD in Agronomy/Soil Microbiology under a joint program between IITA and the Institut Facultaire des Sciences Agronomiques, Yangambi, DR Congo, in 1981-1984. He has published more than 120 research articles in peer-reviewed international journals and was honored with the International Foundation for Science Sven Brohult Award for contribution to agricultural and agroforestry research.

Looking at sub-Saharan Africa alone, the continent produces so much food but it is sad to realize that the continent still spends over US\$35 billion on food importation yearly. Africa has vast arable lands for agricultural production, favourable climate, and is endowed with human resources that can be used to transform agriculture into a modern, exciting, and profitable venture using various innovative approaches and ideas. Young people present a huge goldmine that can provide the needed brain and brawn to modernize an ageing sector that needs to be immediately resuscitated if we are to ensure that the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) are reached by 2030 and no one is left behind in this effort.

This problem is not peculiar to Africa alone but is a global phenomenon. An average youth in the world today, because of negative perceptions about agriculture, would prefer getting an underpaid white collar job in the city any time. The youth do not see the myriad of business, social, and economic opportunities inherent in agriculture. This trend has to change if we want to revive interest in agriculture and ensure that we keep our youths productive.

The young people need to take over from the retiring and ageing farmers and introduce innovative practices including the latest technologies that would make the sector more lucrative and attractive to other youths.

Stakeholders, policymakers in the agricultural sector, and communities should rise up to the challenge by helping change the mindset of young people about agriculture. The youth need to be made to see agriculture as a profitable business that can make money, create employment, and provide a playing field for practicing what they learned from school, whether they finished math or history or communication. Matched with opportunity and resources, this mindset change would help transform agriculture and result in productivity growth and job creation. This game changing approach involves providing the youth with opportunities to see how agriculture can work for them through educational visits and tours to successful agribusiness enterprises.

Using the [IITA Youth Agripreneurs](#) (IYA) as a case study, the change in perception towards agriculture, for example, has stimulated the interest of many young people from diverse educational backgrounds to go into agriculture. For example, an IYA member who is a graduate of history and diplomatic studies has become the best maize grower in northern Nigeria. And a graduate of communication and media studies is now one of the best catfish farmers operating on a large scale in Nigeria.

Akinwumi Adesina, the President of the [African Development Bank](#) (AfDB), likes to say “Africa’s future millionaires and billionaires will make their money from agriculture.” How will this happen if young people do not get the support and opportunities that would open the doors to a lucrative profession in agriculture? We need to help develop and groom these new agricultural entrepreneurs to take over from our ageing farmers.

The youth, being in a proverbial rush to urban areas for employment, can help accelerate the transformations that would lead to better lives and communities. Moreover, agriculture has been the weak link in terms of productivity growth across the continent – that means there is an enormous upside to doing agriculture better.

Knowledge needs pollinators. Extension services in Africa need to be upgraded, so why not train young people who are natural communicators to help spread the message that “Agriculture is cool and useful”. That’s what agriculture has to be for the young.

IITA’s Agripreneur campaign is hinged on our version of a Silicon Valley hackathon. Incubators are created to allow youths to learn and exchange ideas of a practical nature – about how to keep accounts, make business reports, adopt new crops and farming techniques, the many possibilities in agricultural value chains including seed trading, food processing, weather forecasting, agricultural insurance, and marketing.

Another issue is the fear of the unknown in agriculture due to lack of awareness of the actual and potential opportunities available along the agricultural value chains. Opportunities abound in agriculture—it’s quite a long value chain. From production, to provision of services, to packaging, storage, extension, and much more recently, the application of ICTs to agriculture—these are identified pathways to youth involvement. The new generation of youth is ICT savvy and would like to explore the agricultural sector using the various ICT tools. All of these are new ways to get involved in the sector. The result is that individuals with many different skill sets can apply what they know to agriculture.

Young farmers are better trained and also perform better in terms of economic potential, farm size, and labour productivity. These findings underline the importance of providing support for the transfer of farm businesses from one generation to another and could help counter the declining numbers of young farmers in agriculture. Attracting new entrants to a sector characterized by low average income levels and various uncertainties is a challenge that needs to be urgently addressed to secure the future of farming and food supplies in the world.

We need programs and policies that would enable the youth to see farming as a business. Agriculture must be ‘cool’ to attract the youth. Call it agribusiness. Agricultural commodity value chains provide just that, a series of transactional opportunities that work to improve efficiency for all and reward the talented. This is a major catalyst for the youth and opens the door for professionalizing agriculture. This can start from the institutions of learning. The institutions should portray agriculture as a vibrant backbone of the world’s economy.

The issue of access of youths to key productive resources has made generational renewal in agriculture a problem.

Stakeholders in the sector should realise that institutional support, training, access to finance, land, favourable policies, and infrastructures, will help motivate the youths to take over the family farm business and operate on a commercial scale. Young people can choose to make agriculture a career if the government and other stakeholders subsidize young farmers, invest in infrastructure to improve farm-to-market access, and develop agricultural industries.

Another long-standing assumption is that young people are put off by hard, manual labour that characterizes smallholder farming. The use of a cutlass and hoe is something that could be replaced with affordable machines which can make farming easier and faster. The accelerated uptake of

modern agricultural technologies would help, as these make agriculture more productive and profitable, and thus more attractive.

Financial support is important. Most youth start with nothing, so they need financing to make any headway in the sector. A flexible loan incentive for young farmers is a good idea, as is it a general investment in better infrastructure for rural farmers.

In conclusion, there should be a determined effort to ensure that the younger generations tap into the potentials of agriculture. That is the only way we can save the agriculture sector, ensure food security, and increase agricultural productivity when our ageing farmers are gone.



Photo credit: Courtesy of IITA/CGIAR

Generational Renewal in Agriculture: SHIFTING FROM SINGULAR MEASURES TO A STRUCTURAL APPROACH IN SUPPORTING YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Maria Letizia Gardoni
PRESIDENT OF
COLDIRETTI GIOVANI,
ITALY

I am strongly convinced that youth is needed in the agricultural sector as well as in all other economic sectors.

A country that is willing to grow and to be innovative requires youth engagement.

Italy is more and more acknowledging this demand and, in fact, in the recent years, we have been witnesses of a phenomenon characterized by the youth returning to agriculture. A 12 percent increase of young people, under 35 years old, are indeed choosing a life in agriculture and to become agripreneurs.

There are 49,543 farms in Italy run by young farmers, which represent 7.9 percent of the total owners in the sector. This figure shows the clear recognition of my country at the highest rank among EU countries for having the majority of youth-led farms.

Our path has been not easy and much more is required to be done. The results we have reached are the direct consequence of our tremendous efforts, willingness to do and creativity.

Nowadays, being a young farmer means being an entrepreneur which competes in the global markets, as the main actor who is able to operate in a complex multi-sectorial contemporary economy.

A young farmer is indeed an agronomist, veterinarian, meteorologist, artisan, ICTs specialist, expert of economic, marketing, digital dynamics, a passionate spirit and an innovator.

A crucial moment for the Italian agricultural sector has been the adoption of a specific legislation aimed at recognizing and modernizing the agricultural sector in the country (L. 228/2001). The law has literally revolutionized the Italian landscape of agriculture upholding the principle of multifunctional agriculture. Multifunctionality refers to all the activities connected with agricultural practices which add services to cultivation practices and livestock production. It has allowed to free to the full potential values of new generations while interpreting through innovative ways the diverse opportunities of the rural world.

The transition to the concept and reality of multifunctional agriculture has resulted in the fact that nowadays in Italy 70 percent of the farms run by young

entrepreneurs, aged under 35, are currently operating in a variety of activities. These include the food processing of agricultural products, direct selling, educational farms ("fattorie didattiche"), organic farming and urban management of parks, gardens, streets, landscape or production of renewable energy.

Managerial skills youth has demonstrated to acquire during the years have allowed youth-led farms to make a significant difference in terms of farm's size, registering an increase of more than 54 percent compared to the previous years. As regards the farm's income, more than 75 percent has been achieved whereas employment's rate exceed 50 percent of the total new job opportunities.

Acknowledging their skills and potentials, young farmers should be considered as key interlocutors contributing enormously to the development of the European agricultural model aimed at reflecting diversification, competitiveness, innovation, multifunctionality and sustainability.

Nevertheless, the work of young farmers has been threatened by several major challenges. Access to agricultural inputs, access to finance, bureaucracy, lack of services and infrastructures and limits to the commercialization of agricultural products are only few obstacles young farmers have been dealing with.

Being a farmer means, above all, being an entrepreneur.

Starting up a farm requires a clear and accurate business plan combining different elements such as a farm's structure and organization, opportunities, risks, hazards and needs of the area where the farm is located.

Moreover, access and availability of public and private resources contribute to the complexity of the framework in which youth-led farms are actively working.

Another range of compelling issues small-scale local farms have been facing, in order to guarantee the survival of these farms, consists in barriers to

reach a consolidate and competitive position within the market and in the lack of visibility.

Italy, as many other countries in the world, is experiencing a dramatic trend in agriculture: during the first period after the establishment, young farms fail easily at a high rate. This is the reason why I strongly believe that generational renewal in agriculture will be possible only overcoming the logic of subsistence farming shifting to a new agricultural policy.

This will aim at operating in a holistic manner addressing various issues, such as access to land, social contribution systems, access to finance, capacity-building of farmers.

Young farmers are fully aware of the challenges of the 21st century and they are ready to play a key role in ensuring sustainable food production while protecting biodiversity, safeguarding the environment and managing the landscapes, forests and oceans, in the framework of the recently adopted 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

65 out of the 169 SDG targets reference young people explicitly or implicitly, with a focus on empowerment, participation and/or well-being. There are 20 youth-specific targets spread over six key SDGs: Goal 2 (hunger), Goal 4 (education), Goal 5 (gender equality), Goal 8 (decent work), Goal 10 (inequality)

and Goal 13 (climate change).

Young people's involvement is also key if the call for participation, inclusion, accountability and revitalized global engagement embedded in Goals 16 (peaceful, just and inclusive societies) and 17 (partnerships and implementation) is to be achieved.

A modern approach of our farms to markets and its dynamic features is needed.

Today, we are the main players of a revolutionary phenomenon occurring in our fields. We are not merely food producers but we also produce healthy and nutritious food that our consumers are more and more requesting and appreciating. For this reason, we have to exploit all the ways and means to promote and increase consumers' awareness of the importance of the value of farmers' production which is made of a mixture of culture, tradition, knowledge, education and growth.

An invaluable heritage is indeed captured in everything we produce.

Agricultural and food heritage needs custodians and innovators. Young generations of agripreneurs are the most qualified interpreters of this cultural change.



Maria Letizia Gardoni with Roberto Moncalvo, National President of Coldiretti, and Maurizio Martina, Italian Minister of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies

EFFORTS OF JA GROUP FOR SECURING AND DEVELOPING YOUNG FARMERS

Promoting Generation Shift in The Era of Rapidly Aging Farmers

Ryuichiro Yoshizawa

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DIVISION,
AGRICULTURAL POLICY DEPARTMENT, CENTRAL
UNION OF AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES (JA ZENCHU)



Introduction

Average age is 67 years old. This is the realistic picture of the farmers supporting Japanese agriculture and supplying 130 million Japanese people with food. The number of full-time farmers in Japan is 1.75 million in 2015, which is 300,000 or 15% less than the number of farmers in 2010. There are growing concerns about rapid decline in the number of farmers as they are aging.

A significant decrease in farmers would potentially weaken the base for agricultural production, valuable human resources and traditional farming technique which have been carried on through generations. We are facing the immediate issues in transition from older generations to younger ones.

A decrease of farmers also causes depopulation and decline in rural areas where agriculture is a key industry. Entry of younger generations in agriculture is necessary to not only ensure national food security by increasing self-sufficiency, but also to sustain and energize local communities by making farming more attractive.

In this article, I will explain the situation and issues with regard to the younger generation's engagement in agriculture in Japan, where rural farming communities have been facing super-rapid aging, and then I will introduce JA groups' efforts to address those issues and to encourage young farmers.

Overview and Issues about New Farmers

Currently, approximately 60,000 farmers enter into agriculture every year, but only 20,000 of them are younger than 50 years old. The majority of the new entrants are people in their 50's who left their previous jobs and started farming. Even

among the new farmers who are younger than 50, only 3,000 have newly acquired land, and the majority of the others inherited farmland from their parents or got employment at farms.

One of the reasons why it is hard for younger generation to start farming is the large amount of capital needed to purchase farmland, as well as the difficulty in accumulating experience and skills. Negative images of farming such as low income and hard working environment also contribute to the lack of interest in farming.

However, in reality, there are many young farmers who have taken over farmlands from retired farmers. Many of them have expanded their operation to increase productivity, and others are making efforts to increase value of their products through processing. In order to increase the number of newcomers, it is necessary to help them overcome the challenges to start farming, as well as to improve the image of agriculture by disseminating positive information.

For these reasons, Japanese government has launched a program for new farmers to provide financial assistance (maximum \$15,000 annually for 5 years) to ensure their income in the early stages of their farming operation. The government also provides various support programs, such as interest-free loan, as well as assistance for the purchase of machinery and the construction of facilities.

JA group has been putting efforts to increase the number of young farmers by stabilizing their management capabilities, while utilizing government supports, so that they can see the bright prospects for farming. Our major approaches will be introduced below.

Approaches of JA group for Supporting Young Farmers

The first approach is intensive dissemination of information about how to become a farmer as well as establishment of a comprehensive support system called "Support Program Package for New Farmers."

This package consists of the following four parts, namely: 1) recruiting through consulting events for entering into farming and opening consulting counters at each JA; 2) start-up training workshops by JAs in cooperation with local farmers; 3) support for new farmers including arrangement for farmland, assistance for developing farming plans, support for introduction of machinery and facilities, and financial support; and 4) support for stable management practices including monitoring and readjustment of farming plans, management consulting based on production and sales data analysis, and promoting their participation in local communities and farmer's groups. All of this support is provided through the comprehensive framework.

This comprehensive framework - from recruiting to settling down - helps new farmers prepare for engagement in farming, and JAs with well-developed framework have been more successful in bringing new farmers. Considering it takes about five to ten years to stabilize farm management, it is important to provide young farmer with follow-up assistance.

The second approach is to accumulate farmland for leading farmers to improve productivity. Given the great majority of the Japanese farmers are small-scale family farmers and the elder ones have been retiring, it's important to accumulate their land for leading farmers, which enables them to expand their operation, lower their costs, and increase their farm income. JAs are engaged in the coordination between leading farmers and retiring farmers to help them rent and sale their farmland.

In addition to those approaches by JAs, I would like to introduce the ones by JA Youth, National Council of Agricultural Co-operative Youth Associations. JA Youth consists of 60,000 young farmers under the age of 45. Its activities include promotion of local people's understanding in and support for agriculture and food by mainly focusing on the next generation - children. Those activities contribute to the improved image of agriculture and farmers.

JA youth also formulates a policy agenda named "the Policy Book," which contains policy recommendations to the government and lawmakers with regard to the issues and challenges related to daily farming accompanied with their own action plans to achieve those goals. JA Youth contributes to networking among young farmers, which helps them share information, cooperate, and promote friendly competition and mutual development. JA Youth not only contributes to improvement of each member's farm management, but also works as a fora where young farmers can share their best practices on both farming and local activities to improve the image of agriculture and revitalize rural communities. This helps new farmers draw their own goals.

Conclusion

In order to increase the number of new farmers, it is important to overcome the negative image of agriculture, by developing attractive models of profitable farm management in each region. To this end, it is important to encourage friendly competition among farmers for further improvement of farming skills, management, and creativity.

At the same time, it is also important to disseminate and advertise the information about those attractive farming models and stimulate interest in agriculture to encourage younger generations to enter into agriculture and become a farmer.

Although the efforts introduced in this article are still in the development stage and have not implemented in some of the JAs and local areas, we will continue our efforts to expand best practices nationwide with support for new farmers, to create an environment where motivated young new farmers can prosper well into the future.



MENTORSHIP PROGRAM IN KENYA PAIRS YOUTH WITH EXPERIENCE FOR RENEWED AGRICULTURE SECTOR

Courtney Paisley
DIRECTOR OF YPARD,
A FARMING FIRST SUPPORTER.

Switch your eyes and ears off, for a moment, to the on-going discourse about agriculture as an “ageing sector” that doesn’t attract the youth anymore. Instead, step into YPARD: a vibrant international network of young professionals for agricultural development, which counts thousands of members all around the world.

We are living in an era in which rapid urbanization has led to a decline in rural populations, and for the first time ever the majority of the world’s population lives in a city. The UN World Health Organization predicts that “by 2030, 6 out of every 10 people will live in a city, and by 2050, this proportion will increase to 7 out of 10 people”. This means that more young people than ever before are moving to cities and towns to find work, leaving few behind to work in rural areas.

But at YPARD, we know there is a new generation of young professionals in agriculture that is moving to centre stage. They have the ideas and ambition to become successful entrepreneurs, farmers, researchers and policy makers, but they are often held back by the lack of access to networks, skills and financing.

By joining our network, our members themselves recognized how much they benefit from engaging and connecting with senior agricultural professionals in business, research, extension services and ICT to help them reach their full potential in agricultural development.



That is why in 2015, after thorough studies of different mentoring models, a YPARD Pilot mentoring program was launched. Its aim was to unlock the talent of young agriculturalists, learning from the experience of seniors and cementing strong relationships between the two. Several models were tested, including face-to-face mentorship in Kenya. This was run in collaboration with African Women in Agricultural Research for Development (AWARD).

15 mentees, from an initial pool of 150 applicants, were paired and matched with 15 mentors. Over the course of the year they had one on one sessions with their mentors, and were equipped with skills in communication, conflict resolution, networking as well as on farm management practices.

After just one year, with the help of their mentors, the mentees have made outstanding progress. A graduation ceremony closed the program and the mentees shared some inspiring achievements.

With the help of his mentor Dr. Justus Ochieng, Duncan [Cheruiyot](#) successfully applied and received a PhD scholarship to study at the International Center of Insect Physiology and Ecology (icipe) in Nairobi, where he intends to assess the agronomic and phytochemical properties of Brachiaria grass for use in management of cereal stem borer in a ‘push-pull’ technology.

“Without YPARD, I wouldn’t have a mentor, a great listener and an adviser,” commented Duncan. “Now, I have a development journal and a Purpose Road Map (PRM), which is a guide for my personal, interpersonal and academic/professional development.”

Esther Ndichu’s tomato greenhouse farming project has benefited enormously from the advice of her mentor, Nicholas Korir. He helped her fight fusarium wilt - a soil borne disease that previously claimed around 30% of her production. “I have come to learn that consistent communication with my mentor has played a very big role in success of my farming,” Esther said.

"This being my first greenhouse it had a lot of challenges which, if I had no advice from my mentor, I probably would have given up along the way." She successfully supplied tomatoes to her local area in a time of scarcity.

Emily Ongus, wants to design a new consultancy service for farmers, and her mentor, Patricia Wangui of the Zeitz Foundation has connected her to extension officers. "Young people must be taught how to think, not what to think," comments Patricia. "Mentoring only provides guidance that, if well followed, it can lead to mentees achieving their full potential."

Allan has been able to register his agricultural services business and attend a series of leadership and agriculture conferences, with the support of his mentor, Franklin. "YPARD has influenced the way I network, the way I take agriculture, and has helped me embark on a lifetime journey in capacity building, to help youth in East Africa embrace agriculture and use it as a tool to effectively mitigate unemployment and positively contribute towards the growing economy," says Allan. "It's said that a person may need a doctor once a year, an engineer once every three months, but a farmer at least three times a day. I want to see YPARD reach more countries and impact agriculture with magnitudes measurable on a global scale."

YPARD is currently looking at upscaling this mentorship initiative. The mentorship program evaluation report will be released early September. The new generation of agriculturists is shaping up and maturing to ensure the future of agriculture and sustainable livelihoods; inter-generational discussions and actions is key to their development.

For more information on YPARD's mentoring program visit:
<http://www.ypard.net/mentoring>



CHANGING THE IMAGE OF AGRICULTURE TO THE YOUTH

Akaki Rose

MEMBER OF WFO WOMEN'S COMMITTEE,
MEMBER OF THE UGANDA NATIONAL
FARMER'S FEDERATION



The issue of succession has been commonly discussed in areas of politics, administrative positions and the general administration of the estates of a family. However, generational succession in agriculture has until recently gone unnoticed and yet this is necessary for maintaining steady food production. The youth are required to take over from the aging and retiring farmers and yet they are not very much interested in participating in agriculture. This is more so with the youths in developing countries. Most of them neither see much prospects in agriculture nor see it as an active and profitable profession. They think of agriculture as backbreaking labour and give little room for career development.

Furthermore, currently around the world, we are living in an era where rapid urbanization has attracted an exodus of the youth from the rural to the cities and towns leaving fewer young farmers engaging in agriculture.

With an aging population of farmers, it has become clear that agriculture needs to attract more young people. This has become a global challenge. For instance, in Sub-Saharan Africa, the average age of farmers is around 55 years of old. This is because there are hardly any youths engaged in farming together with their parents. I have witnessed in one location where there were two progressive farms each with a lorry, a tractor and a grinding mill collapse when the elderly owners passed on. The children who should have taken over to carry on the business had migrated to the city to do petty jobs. They had negative attitude towards agriculture. They only came back to scramble for the assets. The tractor and the lorry were taken for hire while the grinding mills worked and when they broke down they were never repaired at all because whatever proceeds were realized from them were not saved. They are now standing in the respective compounds as scrap.

Today's youth are tomorrow's farmers. Maintaining their in-

terest in farming is vital to food security. In developing countries, the youth make up about one fifth of the population. In Uganda, for instance, 77% of the population is under 30 years of age. Thus, the youth are 3/4 of the overall population! This implies that it is mainly the elderly who are managing the farms.

How do we reignite the love for farming in the youth when they do not see farming as a profitable profession that gives no career path? How can we use agriculture to reverse the trend of the youth flocking to towns and cities to look for greener pastures?

Changing the image of agriculture to the youth can be done if the respective stakeholders make an effort in the right direction.

Most importantly, youths should be made aware that agriculture means more than subsistence farming. The youth can explore career options in communication technologies, marketing, quality assurance, urban agriculture projects food processing, environmental science, etc. Therefore, farmers and policy makers should promote agriculture as an intellectually stimulating and economically sustainable career and make employment opportunities in agriculture and food system attractive to the youth.

Secondly, when making policies, young farmers should be involved. This can make them comfortably implement them.

Another way of giving the youth a chance is to use the media such as newspapers or television where enterprising young farmers can tell their stories and demonstrate that farming is a rewarding career and that there is a role for young farmers in the agriculture industry.

New technologies that can help mitigate the effects of climate change and grow more food with less inputs are avail-

lable. This however requires extension services. In a family farm, the younger generation can help introduce these new technologies while also learning from traditional methods. This will offer perfect fusion of new and traditional practices in agriculture.

The increased use of mobile phones and ICT can also change the youths' perception on agriculture. Apart from using ICT to educate and train the youth who are unable to attend higher educational institutions, it can be used as a tool to spread knowledge, build networks and find employment. In addition, use of ICT can reduce the cost of transacting business, thus increasing agriculture's profitability.

Governments in developing countries where the youths' population is highest need to invest in policies and practices that provide access to land, as this is often scarce and diffi-

cult to access by the youth. It is very comforting when you are farming in a land you call your own. You carry on with your engagements without fear that someone will come and dictate on the kind of crop you should grow.

The availability of land coupled with the enabling policies will determine whether a high proportion youth, especially in developing countries are gainfully employed in agriculture or join the ranks of the jobless.

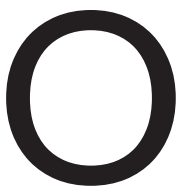
The availability of the youths in the agricultural sector needs to be urgently addressed. Parents need to involve their children in the family farms so that they can take over in case of any eventualities. I want to go to a farm and hear the owner saying, "I am a third generation farmer in this farm". This only works if children are involved in the farming practices from the onset.



FARM SUCCESSION PROCESS A BIG LEAP OF FAITH

Jenna Syrjälä

THE CENTRAL UNION OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS AND FOREST OWNERS (MTK), FINLAND



nce lost, a viable agriculture-based community is hard or even impossible to rebuild. Farming brings many forms of work to rural areas, and farmers are key citizens in their own rural communities. Schools, shops and other services follow people, or in this case, do not leave the rural areas if there are sufficient amounts of people needing them. Scaling out to a global context, continuous stream of people leaving countryside puts cities under huge pressure, and even helps to spark some of

the most unfortunate and unwanted side-effects; growth of radical political movements and racism. For the sake of stability, one can only wonder why the part of rural areas and viable farms often seems overlooked or underestimated. Modern farming in general offers less work to farmers, as we are heading towards ever growing farm sizes and ever fewer amount of farmers, but seasonal and full-time workers, among other supporting entrepreneurs are much needed. Farmers are aging fast, and only 6,5% of EU's farmers are younger than 35 years. How can we ensure diverse and sustainable food production when the younger generation is losing interest in farming? Young people interested in entering the sector should be seen as an asset, and the societal conditions around farm succession should enable the succession with reasonable conditions when the timing is right.

Succession as part of farm's life cycle

What kind of a life cycle does a farm have in one generation? Do farms grow, invest and innovate more at the hands of young farmers? What happens in the farms' development during the later years of the farmers' career, especially as the farmer ages close to or even well over typical age of retirement? European Commissions' "Needs of young farmers" -report from November 2015 notes that, combined with the typical high investments needed in the start-up phase, prolonged generational renewal can reduce the interest of young farmers in entering the sector. The multiplicative effect that farms bring to their surrounding area is the biggest on the early years after succession. Statistics from Finland, for example, clearly show that young farmers under the age of 35 invest more, (78% more compared to farmers over 35) have bigger farms (24% more hectares) employ more, (19% more labor hours) have bigger turnover, (28%) and bigger net income (24%).

Elements of a successful generation change

Success in family farming revolves around the family dynamics; recognizing and cherishing skills and natural areas of interest, seeking development in the areas and aspects that are more difficult to tackle, allowing room for new ideas and communicating with great trust and an air of openness. The idea of becoming a farmer grows gradually in some people, while others seem to have certainty of their future as farmers from the moment they learn to walk. When the decision is

made, or the farmer-to-be begins to contemplate over the possibility of becoming one, how to proceed?

First and foremost, I think it's most important to throw all the taboos out in the open and have a series of good, long conversations with the current operating farmer(s). Why did they become farmers in the first place? How do they feel about owning the farm and seeing it being taken over by the next generation, doing things their own way? Is the new generation really allowed to rethink processes and even the entire sector of production for the farm? Is there an atmosphere of mutual trust, and how gradually should the decision-making process be transferred to the next generation? Assuming that people know each other's feelings without talking, is about as detrimental in family farming as it is in marriage. How about the actual life on the farm, is it going to be a lovely, big multi-generational family, working together and even sharing housing, or are there other opportunities to live and work in harmony? What about other family members, maybe siblings, how do they feel about the new generation and their ideas? Is there some unspoken pressure to maintain the farm or its buildings as they have been for the last 10 or 300 years? Farms, after all, represent something permanent in a changing world for many people, and it might come a surprise on how many people, both inside and outside the family, are interested in the farms future. How much talk is needed to create an atmosphere of trust is entirely up to the families themselves, but I would dare to say it is more than you would first imagine. Moreover, the atmosphere is really worth keeping, because sooner or later the relationships will be tested. New family members, financial worries and struggle over long working hours each bring the relationships to the test time and again. Succession on a family farm, especially when carried out between parents and children, is definitely a second take on teenage years, only more trying.

It is very important to give the successor a realistic view of the farms current



Continuity is a key part of farming and general life on a countryside. Succession process is an important phase of farm's life cycle and it is important to pay enough attention to planning the process. How to carry out a successful succession process on a today's farm? Why is a timely succession process such a crucial part of the sectors well-being, dynamics and innovativeness?

situation and market prospects for future. Based on the knowledge in hand, the successor has to make decisions, develop the business and maybe introduce new ways of doing things. The market information preceding the succession must never come only from the previous generation, because it is always biased. Reliable sources of market information and projections on common fields of production, or unbiased, realistic evaluations in less occupied or pioneering sectors of production are something to look for. Suitable education helps to remove obstacles, whether it is obtained through practicing the profession or a more academic path. Moreover, lifelong learning process sure does not end when you become a farmer, so developing oneself through any available, interesting, related course is the best way to keep yourself motivated in the profession.

Being in charge may a surprise

When generations work alongside each other on a farm, the successor(s) usually gets a good idea of the workload that comes along with the farm. However, there are some things you can never really prepare the younger generation for, and maybe the biggest is the pressure of being the one in charge. The workload and all the different chores can be practiced, but only after you are financially fully in charge of the farm, you get the pressure that follows. The one in charge cannot leave the farm at crucial times, and he or she is always the one steering the ship when something or someone fails, often a foot deep in the mud. Worries over quickly changing operational environment and difficulties in creating sufficient income for one's family are many farmers' constant companions. Preparing for the strain is not easy, but can be done to some extent with a good, planned succession process, where the successor takes over the responsibilities one by one.

What attracts young people to the sector?

Reasons to becoming a farmer are probably the whole lifestyle, its versatility, being part of traditions, love of nature, desire to create one's own livelihood through entrepreneurship and seeing the profession of a farmer as a way to implement very concrete things with one's own hands. Having found the reasons to becoming a farmer, there is always a bunch of unpleasant things that the choice ahead will cause. There are some downsides in being a farmer, but some of them can also be tackled by networking with friends and other farmers. Farming used to be a more social profession, and nowadays-young farmers might find themselves lonely. We are social creatures after all, so networking with other farmers and like-minded people near and far is just as crucial part of farming as networking with dealers, suppliers, buyers and customers. Friends who understand the seasonal nature of farming and long hours are usually the best ones to turn to when the profession shows its' downsides. Maintaining social contacts with friends both old and new can be tricky when you first become a farmer, but it is never more important.

Here is my advice to decision makers and aspiring family farmers:

- Generational renewals increase the dynamicity of the farming sector as well as the sectors' potential for positive spillover.
- Succession planning on farm-level is a long, timely and delicate process that requires an open discussion with all family members.
- Advice and help is out there for the taking! Network, study and rely on friends and family.



MOM, I WANT TO BE A FARMER

Myriam Perez

DUMOULIN YPARD FRANCE
REPRESENTATIVE

It is not the usual statement of a little child nor the dreamed sentence for a mother... However it is thanks to farmers that we can eat each day, and we should all be thankful and respectful to them... But there are no famous farmers to inspire societies' recognition for this noble occupation. What leads kids to dream of being a farmer while the rest of the society is nurturing a negative image of agriculture? You'll never see on the news: "farmer achieves to grow high quality tomatoes without a single drop of pesticides nor chemical manure". Still I can assure you that there are hundreds of farmers that do so.

In the last 10 years the number of farms in France has decreased of 10% as an average (reference 1). What makes it even more astonishing is that the European Union gives subsidies for every newcomer into agriculture! (Reference 1bis). But once again, despite these incentives, farmer's sons or daughters don't want to farm... At least they don't want to, in the way their parents did. The present surface of a farm is by far too big. We are still suffering from the productivity model that was prone after the second world war. Newcomers dream of a piece of land to take care of. They dream about making Mother Nature give them back the fruit of their work, and of their care. They dream about selling their products in a sustainable way, and therefore having an impact on the economy and environmental degradation we are suffering from too. Yet, farming on small scale is often a challenge in generating enough revenue and building sustainable livelihoods. Is sustainable agriculture a naïve and idealistic dream, proper to kids' imagination?

It seems that the ones that are making a step further and realizing the dream, in France, are women (page 5, reference 2): women above 40 years old. Would it be because they have had the chance to see the limits of the system - a system that lets no option but to be either swamped by business as usual either disruptive and outstandingly creative and innovative? Usually, these women have worked, they have raised their children, and they still work. Also, when we are young we want to change the world by making a revolution, a big idea, a boom of energy, one shot. As we grow up, we value small contributions and we appreciate the huge impact - when put together - they actually make.

Every day brings its load of hard yet enjoyable work; like the little ants that work, they go to the roots, work and work again till winter comes.

I feel there is something to do to create a trend of proud new generations in agriculture. But not from the governments side only, as we all often hear - although governments' support is indeed a key! Thanks to YPARD: an international network of young professionals for young professionals for agricultural development, young people can now have a better idea about what working in agriculture means.

YPARD communicates about what being a farmer is and can be, through series of portraits of young professionals in agriculture who have a success story to share. It also shows the range of opportunities that exist in the agricultural sector beyond being a farmer. Indeed, the sector needs a new generation of farmers but also of researchers, policy developers, social entrepreneurs, extensionists etc. All these stakeholders hold and create agricultural development. It is crucial that renewed and more collective manpower be ensured so that the current knowledge keeps being transmitted from one another while more cohesive innovations is integrated, to enable our societies to adapt and confront a changing environment.

But beyond that I feel there are values that need to come back to our daily life: effort and sacrifice for the common wealth - that is what agriculture means to me. Our thriving international youth community helps to generate and nurture this "culture" of the working together, on an international level: we are willing to listen to each other and understand our mutual perspectives - our own values, needs, potential for opportunities, so that we join our forces and grow together. New generations of agriculturists are auto-shaping themselves on a local level but also globally so that they maintain their livelihoods and their environment, for the years to come.

NEWS



Food, Farming and the Environment in a Brave New World

Huffington Post UK

To say that UK farming is at a crossroads is an understatement. Food security, the rural economy and environmental management could all change beyond recognition after Brexit when the UK's relationship with the Common Agricultural Policy ends.

The challenge is this: can farmers, environmentalists, policy makers and new Defra Secretary Andrea Leadsom work together to create a domestic policy that is more efficient, better tailored, provides better bang for the taxpayer's buck, and delivers better outcomes for the environment?

http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/ross-murray2/food-farming-and-the-envi_b_10991614.html



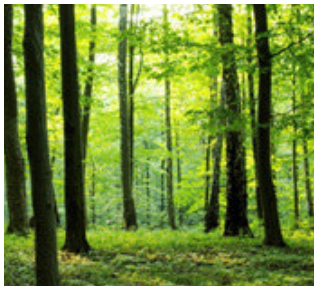
East Africa: New Innovation Seeks to Transform Agribusiness Through Farm Management System

All Africa

G-Dane Tech Limited has launched a game changing innovation for the Agribusiness Sector with a Farm management system to be used by farmers in Kenya. "Agriculture is the engine of economic growth in Kenya with 75% of Kenyans deriving their livelihoods from the sector, accounting for about 34% of the GDP. Only 20% of our land is arable which can be maximized through modern seeds and technology, financial, extension services and educating the farmers on smart farm practices, among other interventions," said a release issued after the launch.

farmers while safeguarding the EU internal market.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201607140495.html>



Can we feed the world without cutting forests? It can be done, says U.N.

Thomson Reuters Foundation

Agriculture is the biggest driver of deforestation globally fuelled by a growing demand for food, yet it is possible to feed the world without cutting forests, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said on Monday. Most forest loss occurs in the world's tropical regions, which lost 7 million hectares of forest a year between 2000 and 2010, while gaining 6 million hectares per year in agricultural land, FAO said in a report.

livelihoods and meet their nutritional needs."

<http://news.trust.org/item/20160718122401-lylax/?source=dpagehead>



Quinoa isn't a threat to food security. It's improving Peruvian farmers' lives

The Guardian

Trade in quinoa, the traditional Andean cereal loved by ethical foodies, has been accused of driving poverty in the region. In 2013, a Guardian article argued that rising prices, driven by western demand for the "super grain", meant poor people in the region could no longer afford to buy quinoa and that trade was "driving poverty" and putting food security at risk. However, a new study published in May by the International Trade Centre (ITC), the joint agency of the UN and World Trade Organisation based in Geneva, found the opposite was the case in Peru: high quinoa prices in fact improved the welfare of poor rural communities.

<https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/2016/jul/17/quinoa-threat-food-security-improving-peruvian-farmers-lives-superfood>



First farmers had diverse origins, DNA shows

BBC News

Researchers compared the genomes of ancient Neolithic skeletons from across the Near East, where farming began. The results shed light on a debate over whether farming spread out from a single source in the region, or whether multiple farmer groups spread their technology across Eurasia. The findings by an international team appear in the journal Science.

<http://science.sciencemag.org/lookup/doi/10.1126/science.aaf7943>



Fourteenth Session of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD 14) 17-22 July 2016 , Nairobi, Kenya

15-23 July 2016 Vienna, Wien, Austria

The 14th session of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD 14) will discuss the most appropriate means of delivering on the post-2015 development agenda, and will decide on UNCTAD's programme of work. The week-long meeting will bring together Heads of State and Government, Ministers and other prominent representatives of business, civil society and academia to tackle global trade and economic development issues. The session will include ministerial debates, high-level round tables, thematic events, a World Investment Forum and a Civil Society Forum. The UNCTAD global conference takes place once every four years. UNCTAD is a subsidiary organ of the UN General Assembly (UNGA). Twitter: #UNCTAD14.

Sixth Session of the UN-GGIM

1-5 August UN HQ, New York, USA

The Sixth Session of the UN Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) will bring together senior executives from national geospatial information, statistical authorities within Member States and international geospatial experts from across the globe to discuss the global geospatial information agenda. The Committee will address, among other issues: activities related to sustainable development and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; geospatial information and services for disasters; determination of global fundamental geospatial data themes; trends in national institutional arrangements in global geospatial information management; adoption and implementation of standards for the global geospatial information community; integration of geospatial, statistical and other related information; and application of geospatial information to land administration and management. The formal session of the Committee of Experts will convene from 3-5 August 2016, and will be preceded by a number of related side events on 1-2 August 2016.



Seventh Meeting of the Regular Process for World Ocean Assessment

3-9 August 2016 UN HQ, New York, USA

The seventh meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole on the Regular Process (Regular Process) for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects (World Ocean Assessment), will convene from 3-9 August. The objective for the Regular Process is to improve understanding of the oceans and to develop a global mechanism for delivering science-based information to decision makers and the public. The Regular Process has met since 2011 and is responsible for the preparation of the World Ocean Assessment. A summary of the first Assessment was released in 2015.





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