
2015 Annual Report

YPARD's Year in Review | April of 2016





YPARD Global coordination unit
Young Professionals for Agricultural Development

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Our Key achievements



“YPARD stands out among youth networks in the agricultural space, for both the breadth of their network globally and sector wise, but also in the quality of the people who are involved. By engaging with the YPARD network, you have access to learn from and collaborate with true leaders and inspiring individuals engaged in addressing agriculture and food systems more holistically.”

Elizabeth Beall, Committee on World Food Security



Capacity development of approximately 1200 YPARD representatives and members through targeted webinars and trainings.



Meaningful inclusion of youth at key development conferences with over 250 active youth participants onsite as key speakers and innovators, and hundreds of followers online.



Launching of the YPARD face to face, online and blended mentoring programs.



From developing a youth strategy to taking part in its implementation; conducting research on youth aspirations with the CGIAR Dryland Systems research program.



More opportunities, information, networking and value for members with 196.434 visits on the website, 11.621 members registered on ypard.net and nearly 1500 items posted.



Youth sitting in agricultural development management committees all over the world.



Stronger national and regional representation with dozens of activities implemented at the national level and some exciting regional initiatives taking shape.



A growing, vibrant online and on the ground network

Since its inception, YPARD has grown rapidly, demonstrating the need and value that young professionals see in a youth focused network. YPARD national representatives are making waves in their countries, mobilizing youth in agriculture, focusing action on specific issues and making their voices heard. YPARD membership is spread across the globe with 11 621 registered members, from 187 countries.

These numbers belie the ripple effect of messages shared through social media, which has quickly become the primary vehicle for information sharing and dissemination. For example, in Bangladesh there are 194 registered members on the website but over 1510 YPARD Bangladesh Facebook members. The Nigeria Facebook group alone has 15,000 members.

While the numbers on social media are impressive, they miss out on many rural youth who cannot easily get online who we must continue to make an effort to reach. In Sri Lanka, the YPARD representative brings them printed copies of the YPARD newsletter. In Armenia, the message is spread through local networks. We must not take it for granted that all young people are online and purely online approaches miss out on too many rural youth and thus too much potential and opportunity.

Tackling Youth Unemployment

High youth unemployment in many countries has raised the attention and sense of urgency among policymakers. We are working to turn this challenge into an opportunity, as a 'demographic dividend'. The Arab Spring, in particular, has demonstrated the changes that motivated youth can bring about. YPARD supports local youth-led initiatives; enabling youth to identify topics of concern and respond to the challenges with locally identified solutions. A YPARD Mediterranean group grew out of the [GFAR Mediterranean dialogues](#), to look specifically at issues facing that region and how young people can organize themselves to tackle challenges and create momentum in the agricultural sector.

Boosting entrepreneurship through mentorship

Entrepreneurship is one solution for job creation. YPARD has used [mentorship](#) as a means of supporting budding entrepreneurs with very impressive results thus far. We are piloting face to face, purely online and blended (conference) mentoring to see what works best for YPARD members. The effectiveness of these approaches will be assessed and the most effective method scaled up, with the support of our partners. We recognize that not all young people are entrepreneurs. Our mentoring program also supports other areas of work (in policy, research etc) where young people play a crucial role in agriculture.

Youth input into policy debates and discussions

Increasingly more youth are being invited to provide input on national, regional and global levels. YPARD's role in partnership with IFSA, GAEA and with support from CIFOR on the [youth in landscapes initiative](#) at the Global Landscapes Forum has created a dynamic and innovative youth led program, for capacity development of young professionals and truly engaging methods for youth input into discussions.

Advising on youth strategies

Increasingly organizations are assessing their approach to incorporating, working with and planning for youth engagement in agriculture. Youth strategies are becoming more common and much can be learned from the experience of integrating gender. At the same time we know that gender and youth cannot be lumped together and that youth are not a homogenous group. We need more information and thus more age-disaggregated research. One youth strategy that YPARD has contributed to is the [CGIAR Research Program on Dryland Systems Youth strategy](#).

Increasing the attractiveness of agriculture

Frequently debated and often voiced in the terms of how to make agriculture 'sexy or cool', many point to improving

the status of agriculture, changing perceptions and bringing role models into the spotlight. We recognize that profitability remains at heart, and generating good incomes is the start to changing perceptions. YPARD has developed a series of role models over the years, as part of the [showcase: "portraits of young professionals in agricultural development"](#). Young farmers, researchers, policy analysts, etc tell their success stories in agriculture, to inform and inspire their peers on the range of opportunities in the sector.

Read further to see the exciting initiatives taking place at local, national, regional and global level and what YPARD has accomplished in 2015!

Creating linkages between young people and policymakers



ADVISING ON YOUTH STRATEGIES

YPARD is recognized as the central youth-led partner towards enhanced global strategic and collective support to the youth in agriculture within the CGIAR and GFAR: two major global partners and forums for agricultural research for development.

Advising on youth strategies in the CGIAR

YPARD contributed to the [Youth Strategy 2014-2017](#) of the CGIAR Research Program on Dryland Systems'. YPARD continued its work with ICARDA, conducting a [study](#) on youth aspirations in dryland areas to inform further programme development of the CRP. In addition, YPARD led the discussion on the integration of [youth in the CGIAR Strategic Results Framework](#) as well as contributed to the youth in the CGIAR meeting organised by the CGIAR Consortium. Action went further on national level: YPARD India in collaboration with ICARDA and the governments of India and Afghanistan are working on capacity development strategies for young Afghan agricultural graduates in India. A farmers field day was organised on climate smart agriculture with the CGIAR research program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security, South Asia (CCAFS), CIMMYT, Central Soil Salinity research institute (CSSRI) and Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). In Nigeria, the YPARD team was solicited by IFPRI to get young people's insights in the context of a national research work on climate change adaptation.

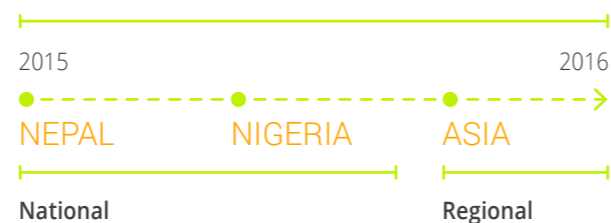
Involving youth as key stakeholders and agents of change within the Global Forum in Agricultural Research (GFAR)

6 YPARD members participated to the Global Forum's Constituent Assembly (CA) as representatives of youth at global and regional level to ensure continued youth support within GFAR constituents' collective action. A presentation on "youth for the future" was made and partnerships were developed on regional level to support youth inclusion in regional activities.

CGIAR national consultations and the GCARD3 process

Eight YPARD members took part in the GCARD3 regional consultations in Asia, part of APAARI's High Level Policy Dialogue. YPARD representatives took part in CGIAR national consultations on the CRPs in [Nigeria](#) and [Nepal](#), in 2015, with more invitations planned for 2016. This opened up inter-generational discussions with senior scientists and policy makers on youth involvement in future programs; the importance of investing in young people and solutions for making opportunities available and mainstreaming youth into research and extension pathways. Some follow up includes YPARD Philippines meeting with the head of Infomediary Campaign of Philippine Rice Research Institute (IRRI) to discuss creating a policy seminar based on the findings of the campaign of empowering high school students to become information providers to rice farming communities.

GCARD3 Consultations



Youth in national agricultural institutions - YPARD Nepal participated in the [Institutional Social Audit 2015 of LI-BIRD](#): the Local Initiative for Biodiversity Research and Development, and discussed collaborations on youth related projects. LI-BIRD committed to including youth-empowerment projects in its strategic plan including internship, mentorship and other learning opportunities. In Zambia, the national team mobilized its members to become youth focal points in their own institutions, as well as mobilising young professionals in these institutions to take action.



YOUTH SIT IN MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES

YPARD's Youth representatives sit in agricultural development management committees all over the world.

YPARD representatives provide new viewpoints, advice and experience on youth related issues to different boards and advisory committees. YPARD continues to have representatives on the **GFAR Steering Committee**, the EFARD Management Team and on [FORAGRO's board](#). The YPARD Malawi representative sits in the [AIIN](#) - Agribusiness Incubator Network (AAIN)'s board, YPARD Zambia is an interim member of the AU-ECOSOCC Committee and the YPARD Philippines [joins the Coalition](#) for Agricultural Modernization in the Philippines Board.



Special National highlights

The YPARD Kenya representative is fully engaged in the strategic development of the CNC: the non-state actors coalition and the implementation of the CAADP Results Framework. YPARD supports the establishment of policies which will ensure inclusion of Youth and Women in global agricultural fora. YPARD and Africa Youth Initiative for Climate Change (AYICC) were the 2 youth-led organisations selected to join the secretariat of CNC. YPARD Kenya contributed to the 1st annual report, reflecting on youth issues in the CAADP and its results framework. YPARD Kenya represents youth in the Agricultural Council of Kenya (AgCK) which is recognized by the government of Kenya as the focal point for the CAADP implementation.

Creating linkages between young people and policymakers



MEANINGFUL YOUTH INCLUSION IN GLOBAL POLICY DEBATES

YPARD inclusion in policy debates pivots on strong and equipped youth delegations at key conferences voicing their specific needs and engaging constructively in agricultural development discussions. Hundreds of young professionals were empowered through online and on-the-ground activities organized with partners, around six major global development conferences.

Youth in Landscapes initiative (YIL)

The YIL Initiative focused on uniting 50 young innovators (aged 18 – 35) to develop 5 real-world solutions to land-use challenges in partnership with organizations working on the ground, prior to the Global Landscapes Forum (GLF), COP21, Paris. This included an intensive leadership development and project accelerator workshop. Each group pitched their solution to a dragon's den of business, policy and science experts for feedback. The program also included a mentoring program pairing senior and youth delegates to attend GLF/COP conference sessions together.

Key results

- **150 applications**, including 2min video pitches published online to promote outstanding youth-led initiatives.
- **50 empowered young innovators** have shared [their stories](#) online.
- **22 youth mentored** during the GLF among which 5 enrolled in a 12 month program.
- **A vibrant dragons den** spotlighting 5 concrete solutions to landscapes challenges tackled by partner organizations.
- **An impactful youth closing speech** - Salina Abraham, our youth representative in the closing plenary was one of the most celebrated speakers at the Global Landscapes Forum. Asking members of the audience who were under 30 years old to stand, she urged delegates to concretely integrate youth into their work. Achim Steiner, UNEP Executive Director and UN Under-Secretary-General, took the message to heart and invited Abraham to take her seat alongside ministers and leaders in the final plenary. Read the full transcript of her speech and watch the video [here](#).
- **A wide media coverage:** +120 blog posts by the end of the event, 2008 newsletter subscriptions, [videos](#), [podcast](#), [pictures](#) by a professional journalist and photographer, articles in Huffington post and Hook Magazine.



World Forestry Congress (WFC) youth program

YPARD was a strategic implementation partner of the WFC youth program, including workshops, roundtables, speeches, contests and youth panellists, leading to youth recommendations at the closing ceremony and in the policy brief. This joint effort strengthened multi-sectoral partnership with leading student-led associations and FAO. FAO subsequently sought IFSA and YPARD expertise on mentoring as a legacy of this congress.

42nd Committee for Food Security (CFS)

For the first time, youth and talent development was featured in the CFS. YPARD advised on event formulation, identified panellists and facilitators and collaborated on communications. YPARD helped to frame three events that brought strong youth innovators to the sessions and encouraged member states to listen to what youth in their countries have to say. This included CFS Special Youth Event, CFS Youth for Food Security and Nutrition (Y4FSN) Idea Incubator and the [MyFood30 session](#). 400 young people from over 35 countries completed the MyFood30 survey and shared their views on the future of our agri-food systems in: [MyFood30: Growing tomorrow's agri-food talent](#). YPARD and SDC contributed to the CFS [background case studies](#) for the event. [Powerful testimonials](#) from the innovators were published on [ypard.net](#).

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More information: www.ypard.net/news/cfs-42-youth-talent.

South-North Mediterranean Dialogues

Over 20 YPARD delegates from 11 countries in the Southern and Northern Mediterranean contributed to the preparatory meetings and the final 2015 Mediterranean Global congress. The youth session was well attended, facilitated and co-chaired by youth representatives which brought concrete recommendations to the closing session. This team built a formal YPARD Mediterranean chapter around three key activities: a youth Mediterranean forum, a series of testimonials of young people in the Mediterranean region and youth's representation in the Mediterranean Foundation.

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Read: [Generation Now – No Longer Left Behind - When the Mediterranean youth takes the lead](#)

World Farmer Organisation (WFO)

YPARD Italy presented at the WFO's General Assembly on technology attracting young people in the sector. YPARD and WFO have continued to pursue their long-term youth guest contributions in WFO's monthly newsletter.

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Read: [How can technology reduce the gap between youth and agriculture?](#)

Global Forum for Innovations in Agriculture (GFIA)

YPARD representatives attended the GFIA to explore new funding and partnering opportunities and to broaden the YPARD stakeholder base.



“Being able to reach out to the world is not as easy as the 21st century optimists often declare. There are many distractions out there, most communication portals have it all. This is where YPARD comes in. YPARD knows how to make your story float within the heavy flow and traffic of stories, all competing for the attention of the 21st century humans. Effective promotion and outreach is not the strength of many project proponents – the XIV WFC Youth program was fortunate to have YPARD as a partner. In addition to having a well-established youth network, YPARD was resourceful in reaching out to many young people who otherwise wouldn't have been involved. The science and practice of communication as well as conceptualizing youth programs are added strength of having YPARD all the way to Durban! Thank you YPARD!”

Yemi Adeyeye, Youth Liaison - XIV World Forestry Congress, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Creating linkages between young people and policymakers



YOUTH INCLUSION IN NATIONAL AND REGIONAL POLICY DEBATES

Panafrican congress

YPARD Burundi was invited to a meeting of heads of state to discuss panafrican resolutions. The summit recognized the need to prepare the leaders of tomorrow. YPARD expressed the need to take rural youth and young farmers in consideration, as well as their specific financial and legal needs for support.

1st Croatian Rural Parliament

“How to keep youth in rural areas”- Two YPARD Croatia members actively participated in field workshops and round tables with 228 stakeholders in rural development. YPARD Croatia member Toni Bartulin is now a trainee in the Cabinet of Commissioner Karmenu Vella; Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, European Commission, thanks to networking and contacts made during this meeting. In November 2015 the Croatian rural development network helped to develop the European Rural Manifesto, which was adopted, calling on governments and civil society to meet youth needs and enable young people to participate in political processes as well as the development of Rural Youth Parliaments at national and European level.

Second Murdoch Commission Report

YPARD China young researchers in CAAS together with the food security delegation of Murdoch University, Australia met with Deputy Director of International Cooperation Department of Ministry of Agriculture, Director of CIMMYT Beijing office, and CAAS leaders. Chinese youth participation in modern agriculture and CSA model and Little Donkey Farm experience were documented in the report.

Additional meetings where YPARD members were supported by partners to attend: Thought For Food Global Summit 2015, the World business council on sustainable development, the International conference on research evidence and research-policy linkages for adaptation to climate change, YPARD Africa at the Agri-business Incubation Conference and Expo-2015.

YOUTH VOICES IN ONLINE AGRICULTURE COALITIONS

YPARD has built strong long-lasting online partnerships that provide youth with the means to share their experiences, voice their opinions and needs, and connect with supporting individuals and organisations. These partners include Farming First, Food Tank, E-Agriculture, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and World Farmers Organization (WFO)

Farming first

YPARD joined the Farming First coalition to share youth perspectives through guest contributions. [Five testimonials](#) on specific topics were published in 2015 and viewed over 850 times. Also, Farming First TV spoke to the YPARD Director about what can be done to bring more young people into policy discussions around agriculture; the [video](#) got over 500 views.

Food Tank

YPARD spoke with Food Tank on how it empowers the [future players of the food system](#).

E-Agriculture

YPARD global and national thematic experts contributed to the E-Agriculture Forum and its participatory discussion on “[Communication for Development, community media and ICTs for family farming and rural development](#)”. A policy brief was issued.

United Nations Environment Programme

UNEP in Paris invited YPARD members to showcase their innovative work in the agricultural sector.

Read: [YPARD members: Displaying your efforts to the world through a UNEP-convened platform!](#)

World Farmers Organization

7 Youth Guest contributions were made on WFO's newsletters and website and during their Tweetchat.

Access to capacity development



YPARD MENTORING PROGRAMME

YPARD launched a global mentoring programme to unlock the potential of young agriculturalists by connecting them with senior agricultural professionals in business, research, extension services and ICT. YPARD is testing three types of mentoring programs during the pilot phase to determine the most suitable format to scale up:

- A** A purely face-to-face mentoring programme in one member country.
- B** A purely online mentoring programme for women in agribusiness.
- C** A blended face-to-face and online program in partnership with the Global Landscapes Forum.

This propelled national chapters to implement their own mentoring program. 150 young professionals were mentored in 2015.

1. YPARD's Pilot Mentoring Program in Kenya

Mentees and mentors were recruited through a detailed online application process and matching. A partnership was formed with AWARD whose training materials were adapted for young professionals, focusing on soft skill development. A face to face mentoring orientation workshop was implemented with coaching and goal setting. The programme runs until June 2016 after which assessment and plans for scaling up will be developed. Key numbers: 150 applications, 15 mentors-mentees pairs, 30 testimonials. Early assessments indicate mentees improved their farming and agriculture related activities as well as confidence, networking and presentation skills. An interactive platform was created to enable long term sharing of experiences among the mentees and mentors.

2. Online Young Women Agribusiness mentoring

An [Online mentoring program for women in agribusiness](#) provided 14 YPARD female entrepreneurs a place in the November 2015 intake of the Cherie Blair Foundation's 'Women in Business' online mentoring program. They will

spend 12 months working virtually with a mentor to achieve key business goals. Mentees additionally build business and digital literacy skills through the Foundation's online trainings.

3. Youth in Landscapes Mentoring Program

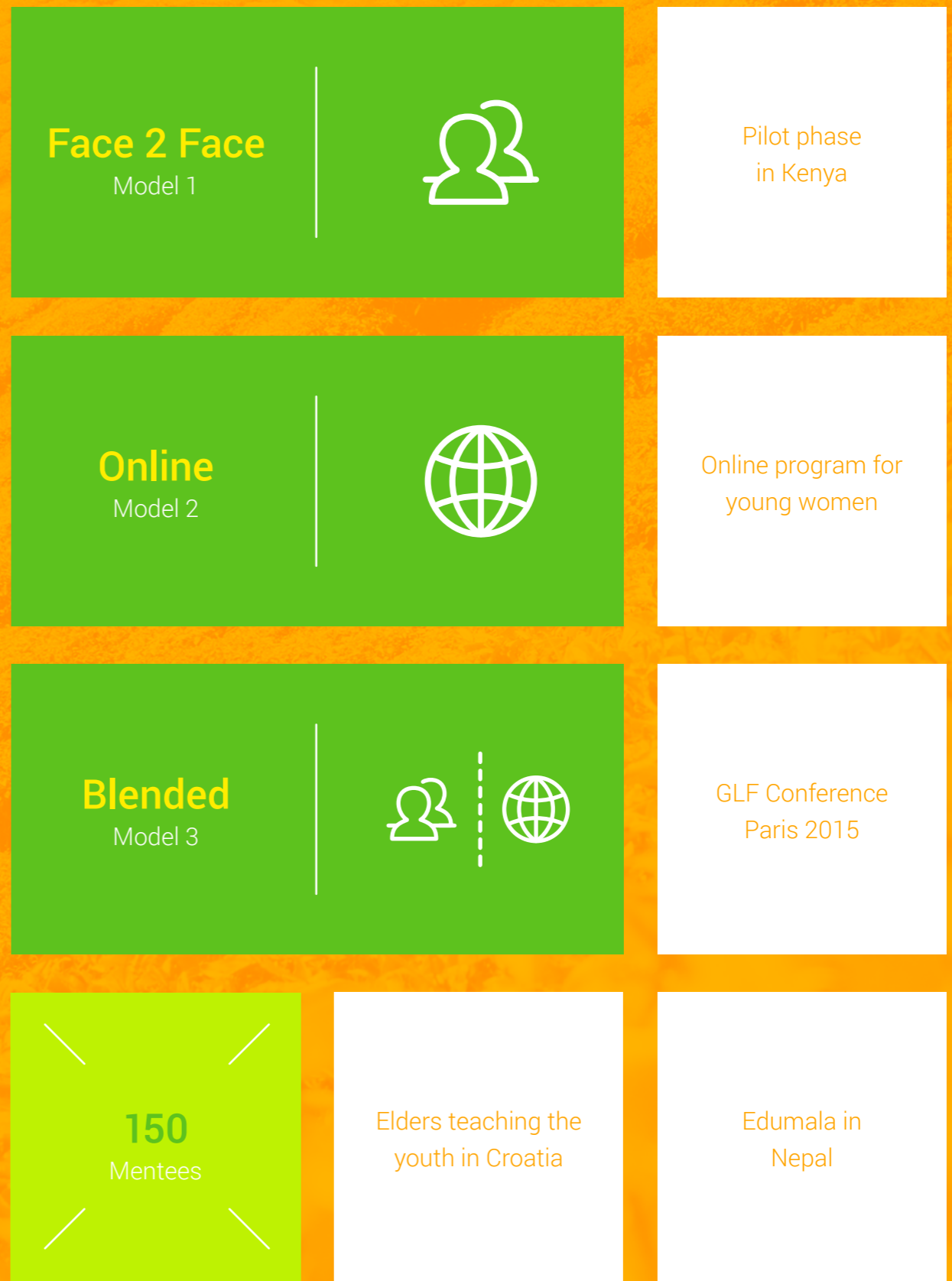
It capitalises on the face-to-face aspect of conferences, by pairing junior and senior delegates and encouraging them to attend a GLF session together. Following an extensive application and selection process, 22 youth from 17 countries were partnered with senior professionals from business, government, NGOs and research institutions. A subset of these pairs was chosen to co-design a tailored 6-12 month [mentoring program](#), during a design sprint workshop prior to the conference.

4. YPARD Nepal implemented EduMala Mentoring Program

The program uses the skills and expertise from YPARD Nepal members and their contacts. It focuses on soft skills: blog posts and social media, proposal writing, social event management, coordination with local/national agencies, scientific article reading, analysing, and writing. Beginning in January 2016, 5 mentors and 114 mentees will join, covering 6 modules at 2 weeks per module. www.edumala.com

5. YPARD Croatia on the project "Elders teaching the youth" project

YPARD Croatia and the "Elders teaching the youth" project a mentorship project run by the local youth association "Trokut mladih Kaštela", included field workshops by local senior farmers, from fruit and vegetable growing to viticulture, wine production and medicinal herbs. 70 young participants with no or low agricultural background benefited. YPARD Croatia undertook media and local media coverage of the event through local TV and radio interviews and the websites of Kaštela city and Split-dalmatia county which also provide funding. 10 participants started farming on their family land and there is interest for a second phase from the senior mentors and the city of Kaštela has approved additional funding for 2016.



Access to capacity development



TRAININGS AND WEBINAR SERIES

2015 focused on increasing capacity building for stronger youth leadership. Specific skills were identified by representatives and members, together with key youth partners. Several online and face-to-face trainings were conducted focusing on the art of fundraising, communications and rural entrepreneurship.

YPARD 2015 Webinar series

The series comprised 4 sessions on skills identified as a priority by YPARD representatives (+70 people) to enhance their role and work in agricultural development. It included: [captivating your audience through powerful presentations](#), [the principals of fundraising](#), [the art of crowdfunding](#), [mobilizing a team using social media](#). 220 people attended the live sessions and the youtube recording had 550 views.

GLFCO21 Youth in Landscapes programme

GLFCO21 Youth in Landscapes capacity development programme provided young professionals with a webinar series and 4 day workshop on developing ideas to tackle landscapes challenges and included networking skills, pitching an idea, facilitating and understanding landscapes. The 4 webinars gathered over 400 views on youtube and 50 innovators were trained face-to-face.

GCARD3 Social Media training

GCARD3 processes included a regional consultation where six YPARD members benefitted from a social media training which enhanced their ability to take part in face-to-face dialogues as well as online exchanges: [YPARD presence at GCARD3 Social Media Training in Bangkok](#). Two members from YPARD Philippines subsequently organized a national training based on what they had learned – a key example of impact in training where trainees became trainers.

YPARD Social media training to Agtrain






YPARD delivered a [social media training](#) to Agtrain, an international PhD program, to boost students' ability to share their experiences and knowledge as students and future professionals. Ten students were trained. It boosted work

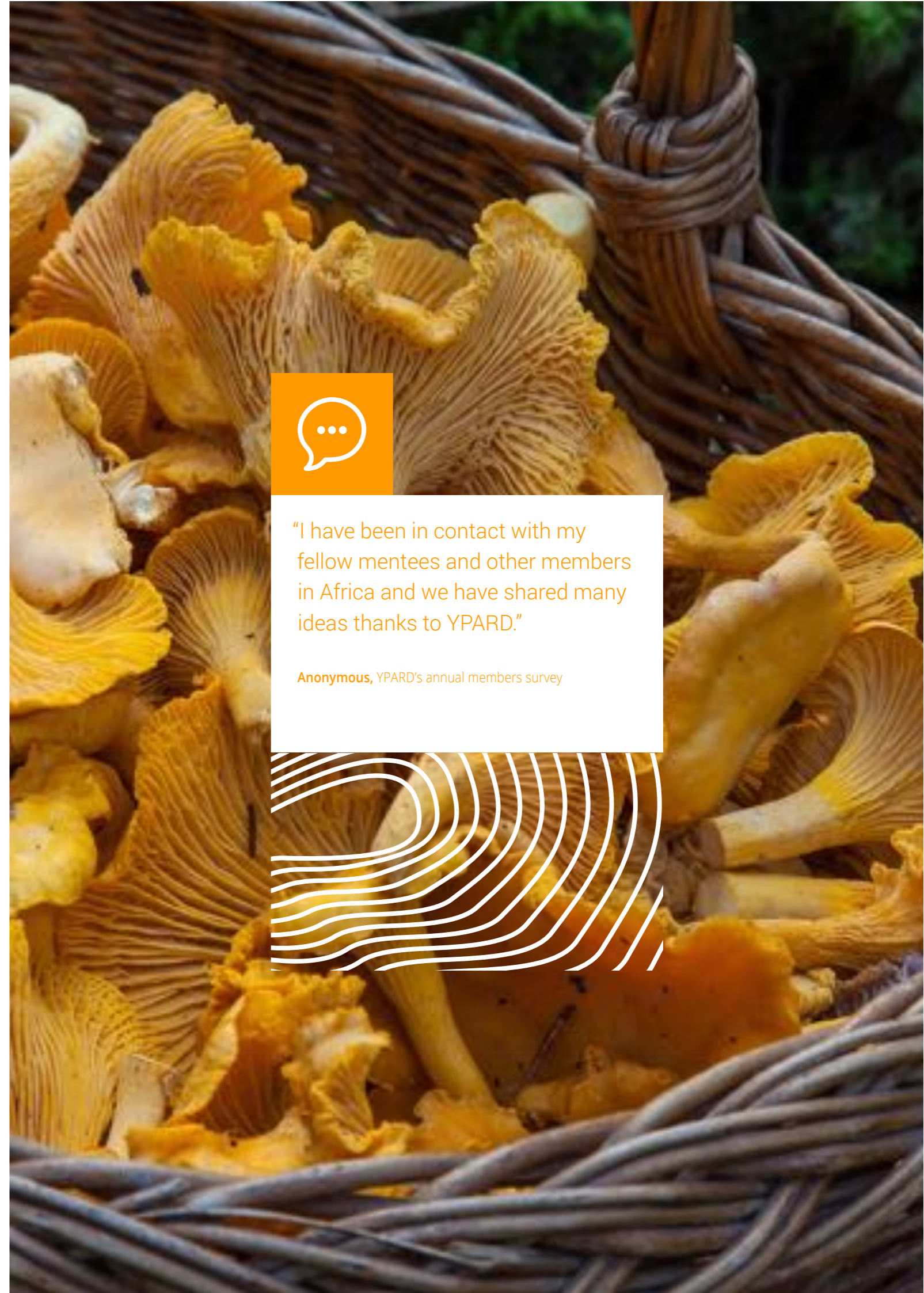
on the [agtrain blog](#), activity on social media and interaction with the YPARD community.

Farming First's communications coaching

Farming First and YPARD developed a youth guest contributor series where young professionals benefit from mentoring on how to write articles effectively. Five YPARD members were coached in 2015, generating over 850 views on their articles.

The numbers

	Webinars 8
	Face-to-face trainings 4
	Communications coaching 5
	Participants live +400
	Views on youtube +1000



“I have been in contact with my fellow mentees and other members in Africa and we have shared many ideas thanks to YPARD.”

Anonymous, YPARD's annual members survey



Access to capacity development



Special National highlights

- **YPARD Vietnam organized two workshops on Cassava** in December 2015 in Tay Ninh province, Vietnam on Integrative Pest Management and Control. More than 100 cassava farmers and agricultural officers at local agricultural promotion stations took part. The workshop and training course enabled farmers, local officers and agricultural scientists to exchange and share experiences.
- Additional trainings include a **National Youth Forum on Agro-based Entrepreneurship Development (#NYFAED15)** in Nepal with 40 young professionals from agricultural extension and research, farming and marketing, as well as in finance and public policy, a **social media training** in Bangladesh by WorldFish, for 5 YPARD Bangladesh members, **3 trainings of 80 young people** in total, **in agricultural practices and projects management** in Cameroon; YPARD Iran organized English courses.


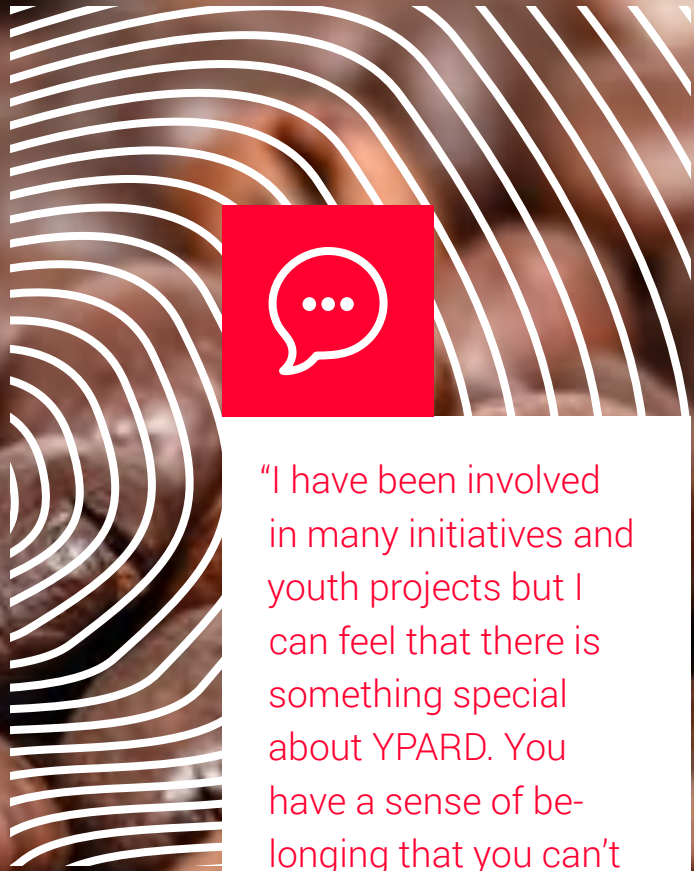
- **27th International Leadership Workshop for Rural Youth**, in Herrsching, Germany, YPARD secured 15 spots for YPARD Europe members for 12 days of learning about leadership, teamwork, skill building, cooperation, negotiation, conflict management, communication and presentation techniques, evaluation methods. Knowledge, experience and ideas were exchanged with various individuals around the world. A side event was organized by YPARDIans which brought together people interested in joining the YPARD movement.

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Read: [Sharing with the world – inspired and motivated for the future.](#)

- **YPARD Asia-Pacific** co-organized the **APEC Food Security Training and Workshop** in September 2015 in Beijing. Over 30 young researchers and policy makers in food security from APEC and other Asian countries joined the training. A partnership with Forum on Food Security and Nutrition (FSN) of FAO was established with an online discussion which YPARD Asia-Pacific plans to make an annual event. News was published in Xinhua net, CAAS and All of CAAS website.

- A foresight training was delivered in partnership with GFAR during the 1st YPARD Asia Conference. 40 young researchers, graduate students, farmer organization coordinators joined the foresight training, discussing the future of YPARD Asia, challenges and opportunities.

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Read: [Food Security and Nutrition in APEC Economies. Sharing lessons learned and looking into the future.](#)



“I have been involved in many initiatives and youth projects but I can feel that there is something special about YPARD. You have a sense of belonging that you can't find anywhere else.”

Assem Abu Hatab, YPARD Egypt representative

AGVOCACY FOR YOUTH CAPACITY BUILDING

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Giving youth access to capacity building is about creating the next generation of agricultural leaders, thinkers, and entrepreneurs.

Talent Development in Agriculture

A call to action – YPARD is part of a coalition [calling for stronger support](#) to young talents. The “Talent development in agriculture: Growing ambitions for agricultural professionals” Read: [“PERFECT” opportunities for youth in Agriculture - Bridging the knowledge gap in Farming through the Radio.](#) The group of actors continue to share activities and ideas.

The Tropical Agriculture Platform's Capacity Development Expert Group Workshop

The workshop was attended by the YPARD SC Chair to advocate for stronger youth-focused capacity development. She wrote An Open Letter from the YPARD SC Chair, Nidhi Nagabhatla: [We are growing and we are known!](#)



At YPARD, promoting agriculture moves from simply branding agriculture as ‘cool’, moving towards generating more youth involvement in thematic discussions and talking honestly about available opportunities and youth specific challenges in the sector.

Some activities for this are: foresight to enable youth to shape their future; targeting young women for inclusion; engaging youth in educational reform that is relevant for the sector; YPARD as a hub for interactions, networking and bringing together different perspectives; promoting success stories and understanding youth aspirations; celebrations through public media channels.

FORESIGHT: ENABLING YOUNG PEOPLE TO UNDERSTAND AND INFLUENCE CHANGE

The YPARD foresight ambassador was selected based on a keen interest in mobilising youth in foresight activities. He worked with the global foresight platform and facilitated workshops, under the coaching of GFAR Senior foresight officer.

Read: “Training the trainers: Participatory prospective analysis for forest tenure analysis in Uganda” + “Collaborative Foresight: Finding solutions to youth unemployment in East Africa through agriculture”.

Foresight practices were also used to draw the way forward for YPARD Asia itself. The team was trained to use foresight methods during their strategic planning meeting. Read: *Becoming the change they want to see: Asia and Pacific Youth in Agriculture.*

ENGAGING YOUNG WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

Women at YPARD - YPARD is striving to engage young women into agricultural development discussions and actions. Women represent 31.1% of YPARD community against 29.9% in 2014. Young women take a lead role; by representing 50.6% of YPARD Team in 2015 (YPARD team includes country representatives, regional coordinators, coordination unit and steering committee). They are given equal chance for opportunities and encouraged to apply.

“Young women and Youth’s Gender Perspectives in Agricultural Development” testimonial series spotlighted young professionals’ experiences of women’s empowerment in agricultural development. From research to private sector, mass media to civil society, the series features “gender champions” from different regions of the world. This is part of YPARD’s work as youth catalyst in the GAP: Gender in Agriculture Partnership. The series records +2750 views.

International Women’s Day – Young beekeeping entrepreneur Tshepiso Marumo, from Botswana, was featured as a female role model in agriculture, with one hundred views. YPARD contributed to the World Farmers’ Organization (WFO) Women Twitter Chat on women’s land rights.

Read: Talking about Women Farmers.

Two young women give their views on closing the gender gap in farming under climate change - Two YPARD representatives provided perspectives on “Closing the Gender Gap in Farming Under Climate Change” at the CCAFS event in March, 2015. They wrote a blog post: *It’s time to mainstream youth* and featured on the *CCAFS Video* which attracted one thousand views.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS SHAPING AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

YPARD France conducted research and presented on the new professional working in climate change at the agrinatura/YPARD side event on capacity development, in Montpellier, March, 2015. This presentation was subsequently shared with GCHERA’s Conference on “Agricultural Higher Education in the 21st Century” to deans and professors of international universities. YPARD took part in GCHERA’s general assembly to explore ways of better involving young professionals in curricula reform. GLF Youth innovators also provided feedback to the new European Masters ACT: Agriculture and Climate Change.

Read: The Role of Young professionals in Shaping Agricultural Education + Global discussions on agricultural curricula: Where are Africa and South East Asia? + Youth innovators invited to give feedback on European Masters Program.

Young professionals’ involvement into discussions towards better agricultural education:



ENGAGING WITH STUDENTS

IAAS-YPARD Campaign

Four IAAS role models to feature their personal stories on why they decided to shape their lives though agriculture. This series has more than 1800 views. Three YPARD members took part in the 2015 IAAS World Congress, networking and learning from students in agriculture.

Read: What do you eat when you cook beef in Belgium? YPARD had a stall and is planning stronger partnerships with IAAS at national and global levels.

Agriculture promotion in schools

YPARD national chapters encouraged student to get involved in agriculture.

- YPARD Nigeria organized an awareness campaign at Ebonyi State University with the IAAS Nigeria Chapter, reaching out to over 200 students in attendance. Members of the academic community shared their experience in the agriculture sector.
- YPARD Cameroon organized a competition among students from three secondary schools with key national partners to create a project in which they can build their career in agriculture. Students demonstrated how food processing could be a suitable business after their studies.
- YPARD Cameroon organized a pilot project called “**School vegetable Garden**” in 5 primary and secondary education schools in North-west Cameroon, with the Cameroon Association for Active Youth (CAMAAY). YPARD members spent nine months training and teaching students on agricultural practices and to grow what they eat.
- YPARD Rwanda organized a visit with alumni of an agri school in the eastern province of Rwanda (EAV Gitwe) and secondary students to explore establishing a joint initiative for business support for young entrepreneurs. They are seeking to develop awareness about the need for role models and sensitizing youth on digital marketing to share their stories.

“Thank you for bringing so much optimism and fresh view. We need more of this as mainstream media tends to show only negative sides of agriculture, low income, problems... I’m glad YPARD flips the story. Good luck guys!”

Director of Union of Croatian innovators after the YPARD conference



2015 Annual Report

Promoting agriculture



AGRICULTURE IN SOCIETY: USING RADIO AND NEW MEDIA

Radio

Several country chapters use radio to promote agriculture and create awareness on youth challenges. YPARD Burundi contributed in the program: KUKIVI by the UMUCO FM radio at Ngozi. For two hours, the YPARD Burundi representative held discussions on youth in the agro-pastoral sector, their challenges and to better promote agriculture among the youth. Better access to land and financial mechanisms were particularly highlighted, such as the need to develop clubs for young producers and agripreneurs. YPARD Rwanda is also in touch with national radios and run a monthly program with a national NGO, on an online show called: “Our Agriculture”.

Movie and Documentaries

YPARD Switzerland developed a short film: “Ein Beruf in der Landwirtschaft – Warum nicht?”/“A job in agriculture, why not?” The objective was to contribute to public debates of agricultural professions, to show view points on why young people are reluctant to work in the agricultural sector. A public viewing was held at YPARD Switzerland’s annual event and at the “Swiss Agro forum” a Swiss platform for the agriculture and food sector. The short movie gives more visibility to YPARD Switzerland and in 2016, it is planned to make it available to the public and for use in higher education. YPARD Cameroon is planning to film one evidence-based documentary based on success stories on young people in agriculture.

STUDIES ON YOUTH ASPIRATIONS

YPARD and HAFI supported by the CGIAR’s Dryland Systems Research Program conducted a pilot study on ‘Youth and Agriculture in the Drylands’ to better understand the realities, viewpoints, aspirations and challenges of rural youth living in the agricultural dryland areas of Midelt, Morocco.

The aim is to provide a diagnostic analysis for policy makers and researchers to better take into account the specific situations of youth engaging in the three agricultural livelihoods systems of dry areas, namely ‘irrigated’, ‘rainfed’ and

‘pastoral’. Additionally it will unearth external factors that have implications on youth’s choices and decisions (e.g. the decision to stay in their current place or to migrate), and their overall contribution and participation in agricultural development.

The survey applied a purposeful sampling approach with 100 in-depth interviews with rural youth (with 69 young men and 31 young women). In addition key informant interviews were conducted and participatory approach during focus group discussions (FGDs) to get youths to draw the ‘village of their dreams’ where they could have a more comfortable life with their own families and farm better. The data is being analysed and the final report will be available in June 2016.

YPARD collaborated with The International Center for Food Industry Excellence (ICFIE) on their survey on perceptions and aspirations of youth who migrate. This survey provided a better understanding of the relation between migration, perception, and aspirations.

YPARD Burkina Faso organized an [advocacy day for the new generation to take over agriculture](#), supported by IITA support. YPARD members discussed employment issues and related solutions such as using value chain, innovation and new technologies to involve the youth. The lack of finance, innovation centres and ICTs hampers the development and access to markets at national, regional and international level.

YPARD Burundi, Kenya and Tanzania contributed to SID international (Society for International Development) – West Africa’s workshop on youth, employment, agricultural transformations and the strengthening of policy dialogues. It was highlighted that age-disaggregated data is needed to better target youth needs. YPARD Burundi presented a paper on the final compilation of the discussions

Promoting agriculture



CELEBRATION DAYS: YOUTH-IN-AGRICULTURE JOIN THE MOVEMENT

YPARD members took part in key online celebrations to emphasize the interconnection between agriculture, water, soil scarcity and human development. These included Twitter chats, e-discussions with partners, photo contests and other ICT4D events like hackathons at global, regional and national level. Check out our celebrations!

World Water Day

YPARD launched a Youth-in-Ag Selfie Contest combined with a social media campaign. The selfies and youth messages on the importance of water for agricultural development reached thousands of followers on twitter. 58 pictures were published in an online album.

International Year of Soils

YPARD representatives contributed to the Shamba Shape Up and CIAT's TalkSoil Tweet Chat as topic experts leading to more awareness about the role of young people in tackling soil management challenges and the rise of innovative ideas.

International Youth Day

YPARD Steering Committee sent a message to YPARD community to celebrate youth in agriculture. The NEPAL chapter together with Agriyouthnepal and IAAS organized a one day forum on Agriculture Education to provide opportunities and prevent brain drain.

Onsite celebrations organized at the national level

To sensitize young people and get them interested in agriculture, YPARD Togo and Switzerland participated in their respective national fairs.


Read: *From Lomé's agricultural fair to "What's Up": when Togolese young professionals get together + YPARD Switzerland Event organized the FiBL Frick.*

What they say about YPARD



93%
of YPARD members think that
YPARD contributes to a positive
image of agriculture

*Based on YPARD annual members survey



"It was my first chance to participate in an event with YPARD, I got to see how they are active and enthusiastic. We worked well as a group and were able to make our voice heard among the congress participants and to me that was the most valuable achievement. Other than that, we got the chance to see other cultures up close. I loved it!"

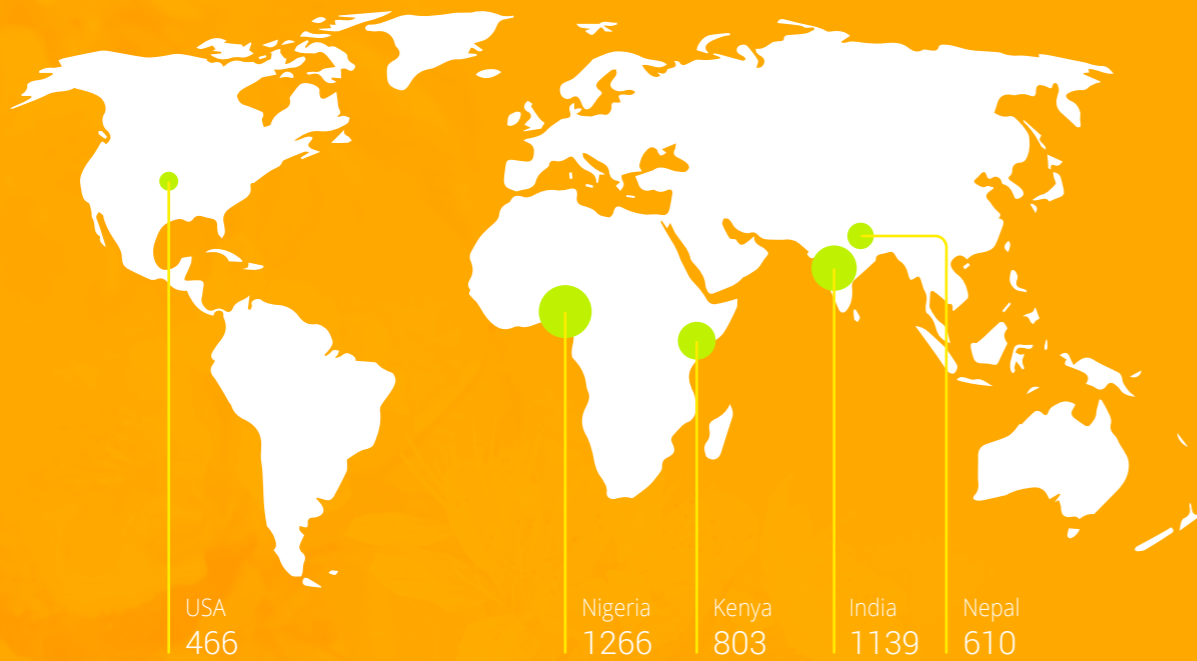
Ms. Malak Tlais, Beirut, Lebanon



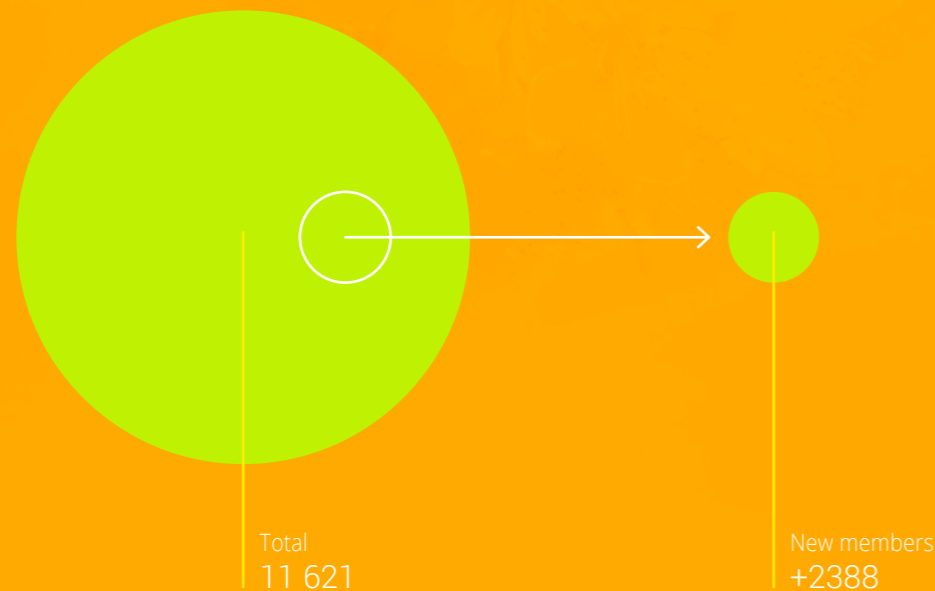


Key Numbers

Top 5 country memberships



Total members registered on ypard.net by December 2015



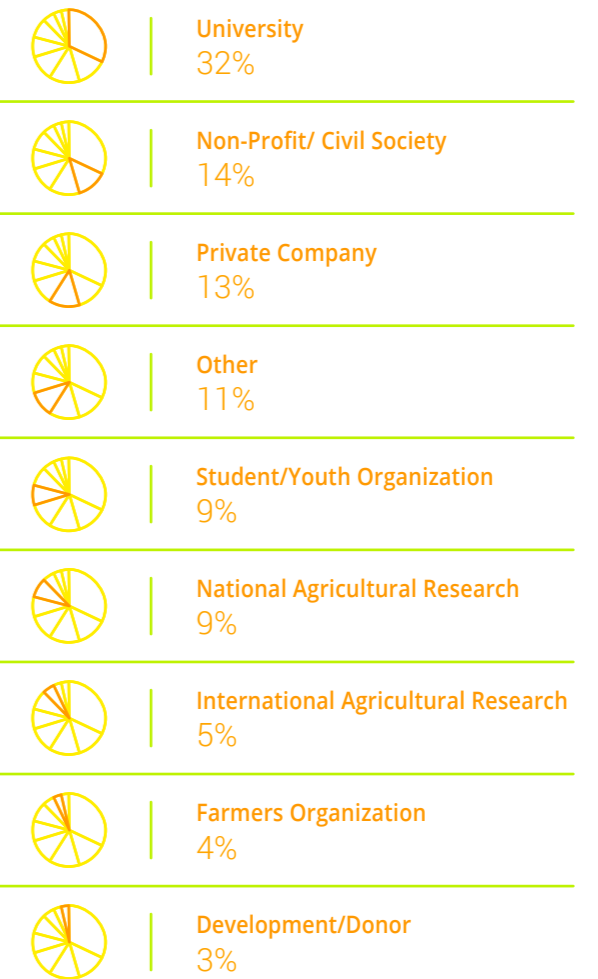
Exchanging information and connecting people remain a central objective, with national chapters increasingly taking the lead. The network is expanding with strengthened young professionals thanks to better access to appropriate information and communications tools.

YPARD MEMBERSHIP

YPARD membership reached 11 621 registered members from 187 countries, on ypard.net, in 2015. social media mobilizes large audiences by becoming the primary vehicle for information sharing and dissemination. For example, in Bangladesh there are 194 registered members on the ypard website but over 1510 YPARD Bangladesh Facebook members. The Nigeria Facebook group alone has 14,300 members. Many YPARD Country chapters have now an active Facebook group.

The top stakeholders are 32% from universities, 14% from NGOs/civil society and 13% from the private sector.

Stakeholders representation



*Based on YPARD annual survey

Exchanging information and connecting people



ONSITE MEMBERS ACTIVITIES

Networking events

These events boost membership and promotion of YPARD in countries, with growing local representatives and building YPARD where it is not yet strongly developed. Events include the promotion of YPARD in universities and at career fairs. Young people are happy to learn about a platform that provides them insight in opportunities and some claim that they are slowly starting to change their previous negative perception about agriculture as a career choice. The biggest interest is on exchange programs and foreign study opportunities. Universities show an interest in collaborating with YPARD national countries on future activities.



Special National highlights

- YPARD Spain visited universities to present YPARD to students and forums, advertised within University websites, YPARD Spain Facebook and special posters. Pamphlets in Spanish were printed and distributed to participants. The meeting was highly interactive and participants demonstrated a big interest in YPARD activities. The Dean of the agricultural school will advertise YPARD-Spain at the next national meeting of "Asociacion de Agroingenieria". The second strategic meeting was held in the Universidad Politécnica de Catalunya where YPARD was presented and discussed with the student association to explore potential opportunities for collaboration. The students were pro-active and the exchange of ideas was fruitful, opening new ways of collaboration. The secretary of the Agricultural School of the University of Leon said YPARD-Spain can be a great association to make agricultural students more interconnected throughout the country and create synergies between universities to make students more aware of the importance of what they are studying. Discussions were held on formally registering YPARD-Spain as an association in Spain, to access government funds and partake in activities.

For YPARD Philippines, 2015 was a year of building foundations. Much time was devoted to the task of processing government registration which will continue into 2016. YPARD Philippines has explored connections with national agencies in agriculture (e.g. Philippine Rice Research Institute, Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture, University of the Philippines Los Banos, Coalition for Agricultural Modernization in the Philippines, Let's Do It Philippines, Asian Development Bank). Further cementing these connections will be the key focus in 2016. YPARD Philippines Vision Casting – Building the Team in March 2015 served to kick-start the new chapter.

Onsite thematic visits and info sharing meetings

At least twenty-five national face-to-face meetings were held in Egypt, Azerbaijan, Nigeria, the Philippines, Brasil, Pakistan, Italy, Cameroon, Iran, Togo, Hungary, India, Croatia, Zimbabwe, Azerbaijan, Burkina Faso, Spain, Burundi, oftentimes involving hundreds of people. These include gathering for special events like International Youth Day, salons, but also visits to farms on technical topics, exchange of information, views and technologies for farmers. (In India, 1000 farmers from different parts of the country explored climate change impacts on different fields). These are increasingly organized with key partners (Slow food network, CORY and national initiatives).



Special National highlights

- YPARD was strongly represented at Expo Milan. Meetings organised between YPARD Italy with Coldiretti: an Italian young farmers network demonstrated activities from baking a bread to making cheese. 10 YPARD members attended the Terra Madre Giovani - We Feed the Planet event: 4 days of discussions and workshops with farmers. Inspiration was found for new action in local communities, exchanging knowledge and experiences on sustainable food production, networking and creating solutions for feeding the world.
- YPARD China, CAAS and the Alliance of Global Young Leaders (GYL) organised a dialogue on supporting farmers with enterprises. 100 participants from universities in Beijing joined the Dialogue. Discussions were held on establishing an "E-agriculture" platform with marketing groups, distribution channels and 200 alumni from China and Europe. Entrepreneurs would offer capital support, platform management expertise and guidance to new young people starting mini-scale entrepreneurship on social media platforms. Youth representatives from GYL will visit village schools to share the outcomes and ideas. Links between GYL and YPARD were established with one GYL member joining YPARD China as an intern.

Traditional media

Traditional media also plays a key role in sharing information on YPARD and increasing membership. It includes articles in national newspapers, radio, online video interviews and participation in TV programs.



Special National highlights

- YPARD Croatia secured 6 articles (one every two months) in a Youth in Ag column initiated by the YPARD national representative in a Dairy Magazine in Croatia. The column reports on YPARD Croatia activities, plans, and success stories of young dairy farmers. Several media outlets covered YPARD Croatia's conference "Youth and agriculture: Experiences and Perspectives"; 2 newspaper articles and interviews were published in both regional and national newspapers and on 5 new partners' websites. Radio interviews were also conducted after the conference: two YPARD Croatia members spoke about their family farms and other youth associations in which they are active; the YPARD Croatia representative spoke about her future farm and about YPARD. Interviews on the local TV channel covered YPARD and the mentorship project "Elders teaching the youth". Visibility of YPARD was increased, membership increased by 120 members in Croatia and more youth in agriculture topics were covered in the media. Organisations reached out for invitations to meetings and youth organisations contacted them for future collaboration.

2015 Annual Report

Exchanging information and connecting people



“YPARD is useful to share information among young people, but also, YPARD is crucial to educate young people and seed in their mind that there is alternative achievement to very personal success. It is not about money; young people have to realize that there are people around, who suffer from poverty in China and globally. We have a role to play. YPARD is crucial to raise awareness about this and make young people dream, beyond their personal achievements”

Wuyi Lu, YPARD local representative in Nanjing, China

Top 3 reasons to join YPARD:

1

To increase professional network
85%

2

To support the idea of promoting youth engagement in ag development
81%

3

To find capacity development opportunities
75%

YPARD is most valuable for:



Promoting agriculture among the youth
30%



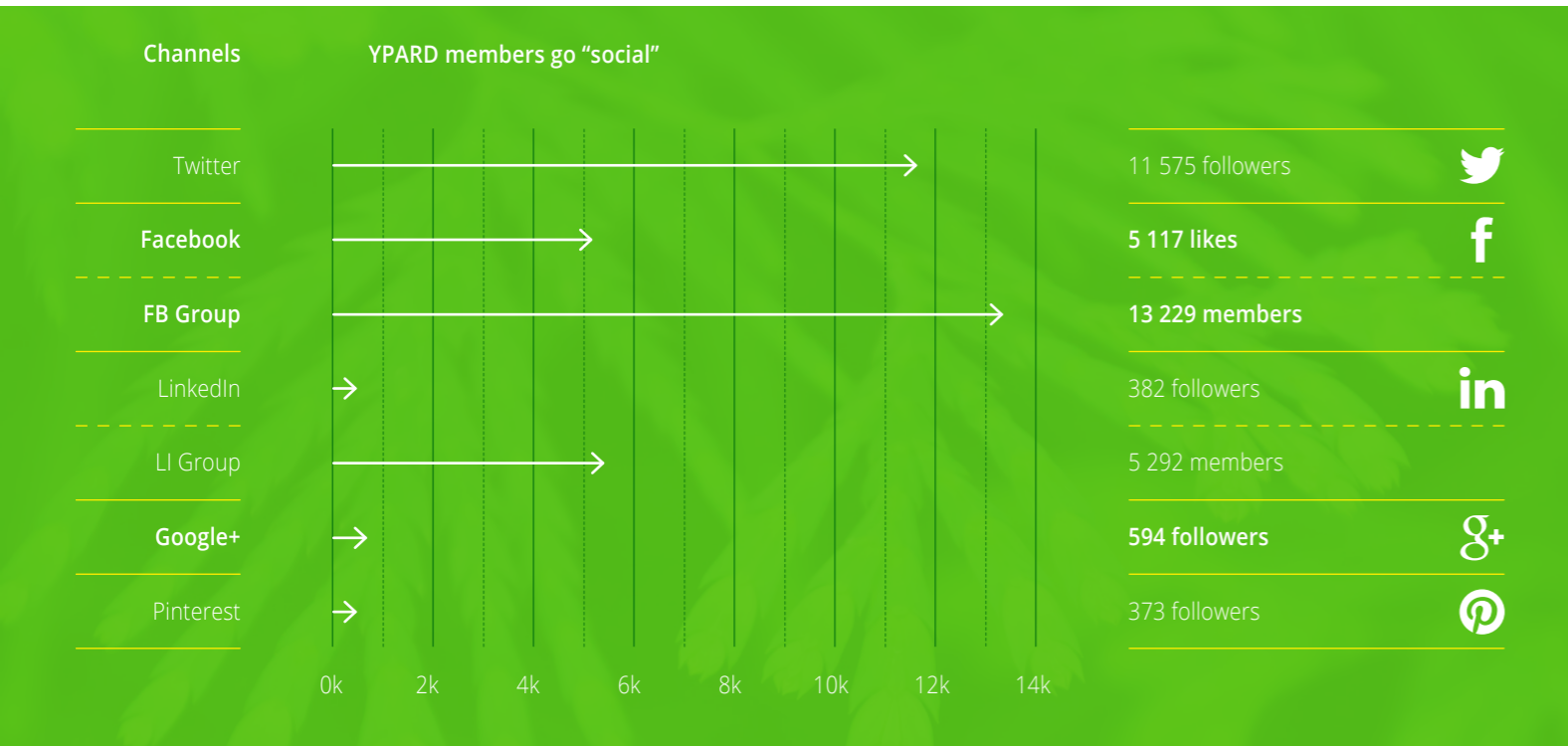
Funding opportunities
24%



Capacity development information
20%

*data based on YPARD annual members survey

2015 Annual Report
 Exchanging information and
 connecting people



11 575 followers

5 117 likes

13 229 members

382 followers

5 292 members

594 followers

373 followers

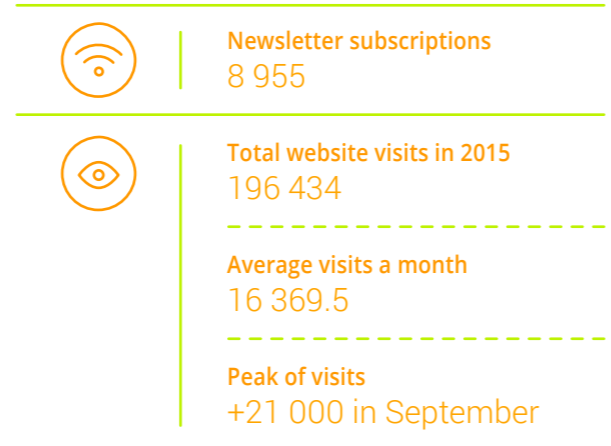
YPARD'S INFORMATION SERVICES

YPARD provides daily information on jobs, opportunities, funding and blog posts. The website has more user-friendly features with a social media login, map, information filtering options and new thematic pages.

YPARD information services are boosted by active social media dissemination. Social media play a key role in connecting with members, interacting and nurturing the community feeling. The YPARD SMT (social media team) is a growing army of 264 information intermediaries and discussants who help reach out to more people and engage in valuable discussions for youth empowerment in the sector.

YPARD national facebook groups enable the sharing of information which are contextually relevant and in their own language.

Outreach of YPARD Website



"Meeting young farmers from all around the world and exchanging experiences and ideas on building sustainable food production was priceless."

Matija Žulj, young farmer and entrepreneur, after Terra Madre Giovani - WFTP event in Milan



“Thanks to YPARD I got the opportunity to meet such a large number of young people who share great passion for agriculture, exchange experiences and knowledge. This was eye opening event and I truly believe in youth power now”

Dorian Šiljan, young farmer and NGO director, after Terra Madre Giovani - WFTP event in Milan

Exchanging information and connecting people



Benefitting from YPARD:

- **23% of YPARD annual survey respondents participated in a YPARD event** - policy discussions or capacity development opportunities, at global, regional and national level, where they took an active role and learned from the experience.
- **23% gained an opportunity thanks to YPARD** – onsite opportunities, webinars, partners training, youth delegations in policy debates, online publishing etc
- **46% increased their network through YPARD**
- **27% people increased their network with older people through YPARD**

*data based on YPARD annual members survey

PROFESSIONAL NETWORKING

YPARD encouraged members to participate to Agrivivo (now called Agriprofil), guiding 539 YPARD members to register in Aug 2013 and 1 000 members in Aug. 2015, a 50% increase in two years.

What members say about YPARD network:

“YPARD is the one of the successful youth network in the sector of Agriculture I have known till the date”

“I’m really impressed with YPARD’s achievement so far and I’m proud to be a member.”

“YPARD is doing great. Ever since I joined the online blogging platform, I never regretted it for a second. Gracias’
‘We are happy for the information received through YPARD because it allows us to reach the grass root with updated information”

“YPARD is a great avenue to expand one’s network in the sector of agriculture and also to learn from the seasoned scientists.”

“I met so many young people in Germany last year during the international Leadership training for rural youth ypard representatives were many from different countries and it motivated me to join such a big network.”

“I was able to connect with a number of young professionals during the conferences, whom some of them we are currently having collaboration with.”

“A number of the youth in the northern region have joined YPARD because of me, as I hold the post of the technical adviser of the consultancy firm; I have used it as a platform to increase the awareness about YPARD activities of all the organizations we delivery services to.”

“Through the forum, I have interacted with young farmers from different countries who are also doing the similar farming.”

“I am able to interact with my fellow farmers from other countries and learning a lot from them.”

“I’ve come in contact with a few number of young professionals and the sharing of experience is always amazing to listen. Hope it shall increase this year.”

YPARD: a sustainable platform



YPARD is strengthening its team with additional support on a global level and the outstanding rise of YPARD Country chapters. YPARD's main challenge to sustain the platform is to ensure funds necessary to meet the needs of a fast growing community.

THOSE WHO JOINED THE YPARD TEAM IN 2015

New YPARD Steering Committee Chair

Nidhi Nagabhatla, Officer at the United Nations University

YPARD Steering Committee members

Sithembile Ndema Mwamakamba, young international development professional with experience in policy advocacy, agriculture development, poverty reduction, youth development and gender mainstreaming, working with FANRPAN.

Christine Gould, Senior Public Policy Manager at Syngenta and Founder of Thought For Food, a program focused on mobilizing a new generation of university students on how to feed 9 billion people by 2050.

YPARD Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)'s new regional coordinator

José Antonio Arana Salazar, social communicator and journalist, CIAT, Colombia

Mentoring Coordinator

Michelle Kovacevic, project manager and facilitator with a passion for improving youth engagement in national and global fora.

Youth- leader communications champion

In the YPARD Global Coordination Unit, every member has to be a true youth leader in order to help uplift the community, on an international level, with insightful contributions, support, and passion for the topic.

Emmie Kio Wachira actively takes part in mentoring and empowering YPARD members with strong capacities, through communications activities.

Three (3) new communications interns

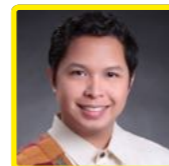
Marc Ghislain Bappa and **Gwladys Mabah** and **Elcah Barasa** (English and French speakers)

Eight (8) new country representatives

From Asia, Africa, Europe, Latin America and the Middle East.



Germaine
Togo



Jim
Philippines



Karolin
Sweden



Malak
Lebanon



Muhammad
Indonesia



Sylvia
Uganda



Mirjana
Bosnia and Herzegovina



Virginia
Italy

GLOBAL MANAGEMENT

Challenges and lessons learned on the global level

Wanting to be everywhere and be involved in everything related to youth in agriculture but understanding that this is not possible. As the leading network on youth and agriculture, YPARD is often sought out for support for bringing youth to events, bringing young professionals voices into discussions, contributing to meetings and discussions on youth inclusion and traveling to different youth focused events, worldwide. This stretches an already overstretched staff at the global and regional levels. The business plan has shaped the direction that YPARD will follow, and we must be selective in choosing where to expend our efforts.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Assessing impact of the network is crucial to ensuring that the right mechanisms and approaches are benefitting the members to the maximum effect possible. Measuring the impact of networks is however, notoriously challenging. YPARD uses different mechanisms to monitor and evaluate its activities:

1. Using the indicators outlined in the logframe of the business plan, YPARD is able to monitor and evaluate their annual activities. Challenges remain of obtaining enough information of activities happening on national level. At times communications can breakdown between different parties, which can lead to misinformation or not accurately capturing all of the exciting activities.
2. Use of Google analytics for measurements on the website and social media discussions;
3. The annual survey on activities and purpose, which garnered 328 respondents for 2015;
4. Staff evaluations which are currently being implemented at the global coordination and regional coordinators and will also cover national representatives in 2016.

YPARD Official Video in four languages!

Discover the YPARD official video in English, French, Spanish and Chinese. They have more than a thousand views on youtube: www.ypard.net/2015-march-16/releasing-ypard-official-video.



REGIONAL STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS

YPARD Asia

There were many milestones in 2015 with the 1st YPARD Asia and Pacific Development Plan (2015-2018), an organizational chart and the 1st YPARD Asia Conference in September 2015 in Beijing. During this meeting YPARD Asia was extended to encompass the Pacific region as well (YPARD AP) and the YPARD AP Executive Committee was established with 9 Country Representatives. YPARD AP is becoming THE voice for young professionals in ARD in Asia and Pacific.

Read: *Becoming the change they want to see: Asia and Pacific Youth in Agriculture; Highlights of the 1st YPARD Asia and Pacific Conference.*

YPARD Europe

YPARD Europe is in a transition period as it changes hosting organizations. Regional events are limited but European national chapters are continuing to remain active and will join forces around the Tropentag 2016 in Vienna.

YPARD LAC

A regional database on organizations that develop youth projects in the rural sector in LAC was developed so that discussions can begin with potential partners on planning work related to young professionals.

YPARD Africa

YPARD Africa members have contributed to a research proposal for Horizon 2020. This proposal cuts across 6 countries in Africa and sees national chapters working together.

NATIONAL WORKING GROUPS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

To get activities going, many country representatives developed a stronger structure to allow smooth running of activities across the country. National Working Groups were created to ensure that efforts across the country to achieve YPARD objectives are cohesive and unified. YPARD national chapters focused on strengthening their working groups which can have around 20 to 30 people and include local partnerships. The teams are a source of inspiration and dedication. YPARD national work focuses on key interventions for contextually specific challenges that fit within YPARD's business plan.

Activities include attending stakeholder meetings, engaging members through social media and traditional media, addressing language barriers, providing a youth perspective in research work and giving young people a voice in policy discussion. Meetings are organised to get Youth-in-agriculture's experiences and perspectives which help to structure YPARD's strategy and plans, and help with team building, fundraising, visibility and increasing membership. Teams have developed stronger means of communications through What's app, skype and conference calls, and emails. Some meet four to six times a year to discuss current and planned activities as well as strategy development.

Some outstanding work has been done, securing hosting arrangements for national chapters, some registering formally at national level, and MoUs and partnerships developed. Some national representatives secured funding for activities through sponsorship for participation at events, funds for activities and co-sharing costs for trainings. in further need of strengthening.



Special National highlights

- YPARD Switzerland organized its first annual event which brought together more than 30 national YPARD members and representatives of partner institutions, providing opportunities for exchange. A World café was also held where participants were asked to contribute their perspectives on YPARD Switzerland, what they expect from it and what it should serve for. The outputs were used to further shape strategy and activity planning. These meetings help the core group to better understand the expectations of YPARD's member base.
 - A coordination meeting was held to assess YPARD activities in Cameroon. In April 2015 a national coordination unit was developed consisting of 8 YPARD active members with specific tasks: cooperation and partnership, communication and knowledge management, programme and project officers and a monitoring and evaluation unit. An annual meeting was held to assess progress throughout the year, how to participate in YPARD's 10th Anniversary and appreciate the hard work of YPARD Cameroon active members.
 - As national chapters have increased their member mobilization online, there is a major challenge in translating involvement **from the Facebook Groups down to the ground level.**
 - In Asia, the regional coordination unit was established with Country Representatives. As a result regional activities gained much momentum but national activities were impacted by the **limited time of country representatives.**
 - In some countries, the policy in all government (public) schools requires that any organisation acquires a **letter of authorisation** from the Minister of General Education for them to undertake any activities at schools. This requires additional work with partner organizations to get the authorization.
 - **Some youth still hesitate to tell their stories**, it is key to build their confidence and integrate them in a localized approach.
 - Getting youth involved and **getting youth to stay in agriculture** are two different things entirely. Various methods and strategies are required to achieve both. Our audience includes those who have found agriculture as that goldmine but needed to see reasons to keep digging.
- Challenges on national level**
- The biggest challenge is to keep things running with **little resources and little (voluntary) free time** for YPARD activities, particularly in those countries which suffered natural and political instability.
 - It is hard to **build YPARD from scratch on national level:** giving YPARD a human face and gathering committed team members.
 - The barriers for **fund transfer to national chapters** because of the lack of hosting organizations is also a key issue. Also, the delay of the transfers between the regional and national units sometimes impacts the implementation of the activities.

YPARD: a sustainable platform



"I think one of the major challenges as the country representative is building the group from the ground up. It's hard to get the commitment of people when they have not seen any accomplishments yet done by the group; and it's hard to start doing activities because organizations will not work with a group who has no legal entity. It's like a chicken and egg situation."

Jim Cano, YPARD Philippines representative



Lessons learned on national level

- National chapters emphasize the need for more effective **strategic planning, teamwork and linking with local partners and networks** to face the challenges of a volunteer-based network and increasing grassroots activities with optimized youth involvement.
- An **annual event** is an excellent platform for national chapters to become more visible. With an interesting program we attract not only YPARD members but also representatives from relevant institutions to come together to exchange and to get to know each other better.
- Media has the power – national chapters feel they need to work more on social networking and media involvement - When having a hard time, and feeling lost in some activity planning, it is valuable to **ask more experienced YPARD family members for advice or some help**.
- Several national chapters expressed the need and will to focus on **mentorship programs** more, and **on on-the-field activities** with partner youth associations and agriculture institutions more generally.
- Entire teams from the **National Working Groups down to Local Representatives** who volunteer their time and resources to ensure activities run smoothly are key. In some countries, every member of the team spends at least one day every week on YPARD activities. Sometimes the commitment dwindles but they readily pick up their task when they are needed.
- **National representatives recognize the need to publish more articles in national media** (not only local) and to report their activities and opportunities online.
- **Members need to be more stimulated to write and share their stories** – more incentives need to be created.
- More **"fun" activities** have to be generated to highlight good practice examples and make agriculture more attractive. Short field visits and study trips are on the rise.

National representatives have excelled at bringing activities to the ground level and making YPARD activities relevant for local youth, enabling them to contribute towards change in their future. Building core groups of small teams at national level is important for having the capacity to work on specific activities. While national events are important, sub-national or local activities and spread of information is even more critical to each young people in rural or semi-rural areas.

A way forward is through the "recruitment" of local representatives in different regions of a country, able to transmit news of their region to everyone in the group and exchange information. This has proven successful in countries like Nepal and Nigeria.

The funding and in-kind support of local partners makes a difference on national level, such as the seed-funding received from YPARD regional units. This support plays a significant role in motivating and bringing more members on board.



How are we investing in young people? Are we actually investing in young people and are institutions adopting the focus they need?

From the dragons den at the Global Landscapes Forum to an active role in broadcasting young women's voices in the Gender and Agriculture Partnership, to career fairs and discussions on educational development, the breadth of activities that YPARD is engaged in mirrors the complexity of the youth in agriculture sector.

But this is a small fraction of what is needed. We need many partners to come together to create systematic approaches to these problems. We need more youth targeted funding for youth programs and youth led solutions. We need context specific responses and in all of this, we need youth as part of this planning and implementing, leading the response.

Let's celebrate what's been done in the last ten years, but let's use this to look to the future and see what we can do together.



