



F@RMLETTER

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E-magazine:

Editorial	02
Farmellaneous	03
Best Practice	13
Farmatory	15
News&Events	18

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NUNZIA DE GIROLAMO,
MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE,
FOOD AND FORESTRY OF THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC



At the beginning of my term as Minister of Agriculture, I thought about the importance of youth and generational change in agriculture. The new generations can make a vital contribution to the revival of the sector, which, in turn, represents a valuable opportunity for young people themselves, as demonstrated by the dramatic figures relating to youth unemployment, they can not find appropriate job opportunities.

The primary sector, however, offers us many stories and examples of young people who have shown that it is possible to go beyond the economic crisis, creating success stories that are absolutely encouraging and uplifting. However, in order for these success stories to be scaled up, targeted responses are needed, especially to facilitate access to credit and land, two essential

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elements for those involved in agriculture.

Even within the new Common Agricultural Policy, there are important tools for young farmers. In particular, the possibility of ensuring an increase of 25% of the average value of direct payments and individual farmers for a period of 5 years, in the case of agricultural enterprises run by young entrepreneurs, at the European level, there is debate on whether to make this measure compulsory or optional. I have decided that in Italy we shall apply in it. Helping young people to enter the world of agriculture is essential not only for the future of the sector, but also in more general terms. We need good farming practices because we face great challenges at the international level, such as those related to population growth and the consequent increase in food demand. This perspective gives us another reason to understand how Italian agriculture is increasingly crucial to the future of the entire planet, and is therefore in need of young people to sustain it.



Young farmers in a global context

Joris Baecke,
CEJA President

As the President of CEJA, the European Council of Young Farmers, an affiliate member of the World Farming Organisation since 2012, I am pleased to have been

given this opportunity to write a column for June's WFO Newsletter and share CEJA's views on young farmers with you. CEJA joined the WFO as an affiliate member in order to have the opportunity to exchange with a network of farmers from all over the world. CEJA considers the WFO to be vital in the current international agricultural context, which is why

we believe it crucial for CEJA, and other young farmers, to be part of it. The WFO has a decisive role to play in farmer representation across the globe at a time where uncertainty is rife in the sector. Together, we represent those expected to feed the world's next generation, who deserve all the representation and support they can get – from every single

corner of the globe – and yet, who you know, are continuously underappreciated in our modern society.

As the European representative of young farmer interests, we are well aware of the many challenges which young farmers face – many of these are also faced by young farmer organisations, which have significant financial constraints. In this context, CEJA has strongly advocated the idea of favourable affiliated membership rates for national young farmer organisations. It is essential that young farmers from across the globe have access to such an important international platform, and the opportunity to exchange with colleagues from different parts of the world. It is for this reason that CEJA is eager to play an active part in the establishment and running of a WFO young farmer committee, which we encourage national organisations from across the globe to join and become active members in.

The WFO's young farmer committee will give young agri-entrepreneurs the opportunity to exchange with others on both best farming practices and agricultural policy issues, thereby learning from each other and working together for a stronger future for global agriculture. The need for generational renewal in the farming population is an issue which is common across the world – agriculture is essential for economic growth and job creation in rural areas, for environmental sustainability and nature conservation, and, of course, food security. Becoming a farmer can single-handedly lift someone out of poverty, wherever they may be in the world. Farming should be encouraged as a vocation and career opportunity, and access to farming and to agricultural education and training should be facilitated and available to all.

Agriculture is a sector which needs specific favourable accession policies, because of the barriers to entry which arise in the sector, wherever one may farm. These consist of access to land, access to credit, and low return on high investments

in the first years of the business. These are simple facts of life when starting a farm which are quite unique to employment in this sector, and therefore require universal accession policies which facilitate entry into farming, particularly for young people who have the skills and enthusiasm needed to modernise the sector, from all corners of the globe. These are CEJA's objectives at EU level, and we are pleased to say that we have achieved a significant increase in awareness of these issues, both publicly and politically, and the EU institutions are now negotiating specific, strong measures to encourage generational renewal in the farming population to be included in the new Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), 2014-2020. Just as CEJA raises the issue at EU level, the WFO is a great opportunity to raise these issues to key players at global level – such as the FAO, national farming organisations, UN bodies, etc.

For these reasons, I call upon all young farmers to seek not only representation on regional and national levels, but on an international level too via the WFO's new young farmer committee. Together, we can work towards a strong, sustainable future for the global agricultural sector.

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2014, International Year of Family Farming: Young Farmers and Afdi together in France!

Thomas Diemer,
*Treasurer of Young Farmers and
Vice President of AFDI (French
Farmers and International
Development)*

commitment was formalized on March 1st at the International Agricultural Show in Paris in the presence of Agriculture Minister, Stéphane Le Foll. The year 2014 promises to be eventful and international trade will benefit.

“Family farming: socially sustainable agriculture”

The concept of family farming emphasizes the structural link between the economic activity of women and men farmers and their family. It highlights the relationship farmers have with their territory, recalling that they are located there for the long term and that their family life is dependent on the value of their land. If the Family Farming concept covers different realities, many

commonalities unite farmers who recognize themselves as family farmers. Among them, the attachment to their land, the desire to feed their people and develop their craft are subjects that unite family farmers around the world, whatever their economic situation and their production choices. Young Farmers would like to bring to France, through AFDI, the International Year of Family Farming (AIAF) in 2014. As such, Thomas Diemer, Treasurer of Young Farmers and Vice President Afdi recalls that “defending and promoting family farming for Young Farmers, is not to defend a concept or a figment of the imagination, but rather a commitment to a diversified agriculture; new, sustainable agriculture that respects

Young Farmers and Afdi, along with many other agricultural organizations from all continents, have been requesting an International Year of Family Farming for the past 2 years. A commitment crowned with success, since 2014 has been recognized by the UN as the International Year of Family Farming. In France, this shared



By nature of their business, family farmers therefore have a decisive role in sustainable development since they have both a social, environmental and economic role.

In view of all these features, Young Farmers, in collaboration with Afdi, have worked towards the recognition for an International Year of Family Farming in France:

- The important role played by family farmers in developing territories and regional economies: job creation, planning, value creation, food security and autonomy.

- The importance of maintaining and / or developing tools to regulate agricultural markets at all levels (global, regional, local) to secure the income of farmers and give them a better visibility on the long term, but also to secure food for the population.

- The necessary support should benefit agriculture through policies across all related and relevant areas but also at the local level: support for investment, production aid, aid for modernization.

- Training and support for young people who want to become farmers.

- The importance of the establishment of binding mechanisms to limit the consumption of agricultural land, first working family farmers.

the environment, and is attractive and accessible to persons not from the agricultural sector. Agriculture that is anchored in the land and built by citizens, governed by farmers for farmers, agriculture that is independent from private financial interests (public or private large-scale investments that are made at the expense of peasants) agriculture for self-reliance and food security of the territory, agriculture creates jobs and is a dynamic engine of rural development. This type of agriculture protects the land biodiversity“

- Family Farming is a guarantee for sustainable food security

As demonstrated, soaring agricultural prices in 2007/2008 and the increasing dependence on agricultural food production, the agricultural capabilities of each nation must be strengthened. International food security therefore lies in the willingness of states to take advantage of their own food and agricultural resources.

This finding implies that each nation is aware of the vital role of family agriculture in global food production. In essence, the family farm is located on the long term in its territory and there is no relocating. It often provides access to food for inhabitants of the most remote areas and guarantees a balanced distribution of food production. Family farmers are the guarantors of

sustainable food security at the local level, but also has an impact on the international market.

- The Family Farming, a heavyweight in the global economy

45% of the world population practice family farming. It is the center of international economic activity and represents a major challenge in terms of employment. It can also be a wonderful means to fight against poverty and hunger, since nearly 50% of people suffering from hunger in the world are poor family farmers.

Addressing global challenges, farmers are now investing more than four times as much as governments in agriculture and the global food challenge. Redistribution of income is mainly on the national territory and farmers are therefore important players in dynamic growth and development.

- The civic dimension of family farming

Family agriculture occupies an important role in environmental land management. Family farmers, individually and collectively, accumulate invaluable knowledge of the land they cultivate. Their activities in the long term necessarily encourage respect of land and natural resources.

This knowledge of territories often gives family farmers a special role in the life of the community. Family Farming thus, undeniably has a civic dimension.



Young farmers in Argentina



Nicolás María Pinto, *President, Ateneo Sociedad Rural Argentina*

In Argentina, rural youth are called “lyceum”, which is the dictionary definition of cultural, scientific or literary. This is very logical, since the country had the first Athenian youth group of the Sociedad Rural Argentina, founded in 1956. This group was formed with the aim of training future leaders by providing its members technical, legal and political skills. The techniques used to implement this type of training was the literary debate clubs used at Oxford University. Some of the founders had studied at the university and replicated the idea.

Thus arises a group composed and governed by young people between 18 and 30 years old with the clear goal of becoming leaders, not only in the agricultural sector in Argentina, which is very important, but also political leaders.

One of the main functions of the SRA Ateneo has been, and still is, promoting and funding other youth groups, that is, other Athenians. This has been achieved in every city or town where there is a local rural society or association that has Athenaeum rural youth, whose goals are the same, train youth and create future leaders.

Today, there are many Athenians, and all are equally important. There are no divisions in our youth groups, the difference between them corresponds to the ease or ability to generate interesting and attractive things inciting more young people to join. Importantly, these groups are entirely voluntary, with a spirit of pro bono work and where members do not necessarily have to be professional farmers or have

careers related to agriculture. In our case, for example, our group is composed of lawyers, accountants, economists, architects, agronomists, industrial, political science graduates, veterinarians, etc.. No matter what each person studies, the variety actually generates more wealth within the group when working together.

All Athenians are interconnected and twice a year we get together in two major events. One event is a youth conference organized by CRA (one of the country’s trade entities) and the other event is organized by the Ateneo MRS. There you listen to political speakers and technicians, in addition to working together in group workshops where we mingle among all groups in order to get to know each other better.

Also through contacts made at the fluid

national lyceum, we work together with youths from MERCOSUR countries. In this region, there is FARM (Federation of Rural Associations of MERCOSUR), which has its own youth group. There the SRA Ateneo has always played an important role and has worked in the design and implementation of projects, the vast majority related to training and leadership training.

As you can see, these youth groups formed by students from various areas- but each with a great passion for the agricultural sector-provide their members a lot of tools and knowledge to later be exploited both in public life and in private life. The vast majority of people who did participate in such groups, learn the art of oratory and rhetoric, the ability to not get nervous when presenting a project in front of a large number of people, the ability to work in teams, the virtue of listening to each other and practice of leading and managing people. All these skills are required in any company and those who have participated in ateneos are more competitive in interviews when seeking employment. On the other hand, being in a constant learning environment, conversing with prominent personalities from politics, the economy and the agricultural sector, and receiving guidance when making decisions helps form criterion; being updated is very important when making decisions, and Ateneistas, despite their young age, are always aware of the latest developments and advancements.



YOUTH AND AGRICULTURE: UGANDAN EXPERIENCE

Denis Kabiito, *Project-coordinator,
Caritas Kasanaensis*

My name is Denis Kabiito, 29years old, a young farmer from Uganda. I cultivate 3 hectares of maize, one hectare of bananas, two hectare of coffee, as well as 40 free range chickens and 10 hybrid cows.

As a young agronomist University graduate, I looked for employment in a white collar sector but I later resorted farming as a hobby and realized it is something that I enjoy doing for the development of my nation and myself.

I am happy to be a farmer because;

1. I employ young people on the farm.
2. I feed the nation (supply maize and bananas to schools)
3. I earn a substantial amount of income from it.
4. And lastly, and most importantly, I see myself as one of the few other farmers in the world who contribute to contributing to global food security.

Thanks of my University qualifications, I had the opportunity to engage in rural agricultural extension in the catholic diocese of Kasana Luweero, which is 60km north of the capital city, Kampala. In Caritas Kasanaensis, as its programming officer, I am responsible for organizing farming households into groups and then into Associations with the aim of building a voice for the rural people in the area. Strong farmers' associations can have a powerful voice to influence politics and engage in grouped marketing and achieve other economies of scale.

Youth in agriculture

As I organize these farmers into groups and associations, we find that, Uganda's agriculture remains largely traditional, dominated by small holder subsistence farmers, with the level of investment being insufficient to make meaningful contributions to the livelihoods of farmers. More importantly, agriculture remains an unattractive occupation for



the youth.

Low or no profit margins from the subsistence farming system has pushed and exacerbated the migration of young people to towns in order to quench their thirst to make quick money. This leaves agriculture to the ageing farmers who contribute to its stagnation by using traditional methods leading to low productivity and thus food insecurity.

The population of Uganda is growing at a rate of 3.7 percent and currently the population is estimated to be 33 million people, with young people constituting about 78% of it. The World Bank report 2008 reports youth unemployment in

Uganda to be about 83%, ranking only second after Niger in the world.

Globally, the demand for food is growing rapidly but agricultural productivity of agriculture remain slow. However, as long as agriculture remains marginally rewarding, young men and women will drift away to more profitable sectors. "The most bizarre thing is that, the agricultural sector is currently a source of livelihood for the majority of Ugandans and employes an estimated 80 percent of the population. It also represents 24% of the GDP (DSIP2010).

Nature of the education system



The Ugandan agriculture curriculum trains most youths for white collar jobs which do not reflect the economic and social context. Consequently, a large number of young people are roaming the streets endlessly searching for non-existent jobs in an economy growing at a fast rate to absorb the growing number of unemployed youths in the country. A personal example, when we graduated from the University, there were 63 of us in the graduating class, but currently only 5 of us are employed directly in agriculture and are working in rural areas. The rest of our colleagues did not choose agriculture as their occupation, but remained on the streets in pursuit of white collar jobs that never materialized. Many subsequently resorted to going back to school, others went into other fields such as like banking, sales etc.

Neglect by government and society.

Youth take an aloof attitude to agriculture as it is neglected by the government and institutions. Youth do not own land and cannot easily access credit.. The youth are normally excluded in policy discussions relating to agriculture and rural market development.

In order to bring about meaningful rural development, agriculture must be increasingly oriented towards young generations. This is important because youth can play a significant role in acting as a catalyst for change for agriculture development, given their propensity and willingness to adapt to new ideas, concepts and have the energy to implement innovations.

Retaining youth in agriculture has

the overall aim of transforming the sector from purely subsistence to commercial farming. Therefore, strategic interventions to attract youth to the sector requires a multidisciplinary approach, and namely;

a) Changing the image and perception young people have of agriculture. Youth need to be educated and made aware of how farmers operate today. Farmers used to be educated, business –savvy entrepreneurs who possessed extensive training and knowledge. Government needs to support, young professionals or graduates from the schools of agriculture to initiate their own farms. We need to have more young people to like me, educated, employed but doing farming.

b) Role models and mentorship. The positive aspects of choosing agriculture should be emphasized to the youth. Young farmers should mentor the rest of the generation and explain the benefits of engaging in agriculture like; - owning your own business choosing when to work (I decide my own hours – in my case I use most of my weekends to work on my farm since during the week I am busy organizing farmers and engaging inffice work), and having a variety of daily responsibilities. These mentorships should be organized by society and government.

c) Change the curriculum. It is essential for the government to reform the education curriculum to be broad based and geared towards integrating vocational and practical training in education curricula. The European system of education produces well prepared and practical

farmers as opposed to our system that produces agriculturalists who distance themselves from being farmers and seek white collar jobs. This leaves the farming sector to those who engage in it by default (those who are born as farmers). The modification in the curriculum will change the mindset of the youth and motivate them to explore untapped opportunities in the agriculture sector.

d) Access to credit. Access to affordable credit is another important aspect for attracting the youth to farming. Young people tend to have fewer chances of obtaining credit or capital. Access is often tied to having colateral, usually in the form of land which the young people often do not possess. It is therefore, important that appropriate affordable financial packages are put in place by financial institutions to cater to the youth.

e) Farmer organizations. I currently organize 2000 farmers into groups and associations of which only 10% are youth. One important challenge I face is that, the youth are integrated with the old in these associations despite their often diverging interests and approaches. As farmer associations are formed, special interest groups should be considered in order to create harmony and benefit from common knowledge. The Ministry of Agriculture should also be engaged in setting up youth committees and look into ways of attracting and retaining the youth in the sector. The World Farmers' organisation (WFO) would be an important partner in this endeavor as well;

f) Mechanization. The youth being eager learn and as we move into a "dot.com" era, it is critical for the government to improve traditional methods of production to attract youth to agriculture by mechanizing agriculture.

When agriculture becomes a truly viable venture, we can be more than certain that the youth of Uganda will be enthusiastic in taking part in it. The challenge that we must take up as leaders, facilitators, policy makers and private sectors in Uganda's agriculture and Africa as a whole, is to build capacities of the youth and equip them with the tools to address the emerging requirements of agriculture. Ultimately, agriculture needs to be capable of offering prospects for viable income and a good quality of life.



Brazilian Rural Youth: Livelihood Perspectives

*Dirce Maria Slongo-Specialist
in Pedagogy and Sustainable
Development- ARCAFAR SUL*

*Daniela Nascimento- Unicafe's Advisory
by Trias Brazil*

Studies conducted in Brazil, Mendonca et al, 2008, indicate that, since 1990, family farmers are losing their successors, in addition, the systems of family farming has suffered from abandonment of production units. The lack of an adequate education system in the rural areas, and the intensive economic integration between urban and rural zones, represent some of

the causes contributing to the rural exodus.

In Brazil, rural youth and their families still suffer from prejudice and stereotypical images, depicting rural people as ignorant and not suitable to the standards dictated by urban society. Furthermore, the lack of infrastructure and investment in rural communities and properties of family farmers, generate low incomes earned from agricultural activities. As a result, young people have negative views about living in rural areas and working in agriculture.

In 2000, Brazil had over of 6, 1 million youth in the fields, which represented 18% of the total number of people living in rural areas. However, the IBGE census 2010, shows that the

population of young people has declined to 5,4 million people in the same areas. Comparing IBGE data from 2000 and 2010, Bianchini e Fuckner (2011), observed that in the state of Paraná, in southern Brazil, migratory movement has occurred mainly in the 15 to 24 year age group. Another important feature observed in this rural-urban migration process is the higher propensity of females to avoid agriculture, particularly, in the 15 to 19 year age category, due to the traditional process of land inheritance, which privileges young males.

The migratory process serve as an example for the entire country, which causes imbalance in the social tissue of rural areas, which leads to aging and masculinization of rural



society. Faced with this reality, the Brazilian government began providing specific support for youth through the National Program for the Strengthening of Family Agriculture (PRONAF), that provides micro-credit for investment in rural business. However, it still fails to respond to the needs of rural youth. Opportunities should be created to inspire young people to develop the agricultural sector, especially being able to earn a fair income, in order to have a dignified and sustainable life.

In order to mitigate the needs of rural youth in the south of Brazil, the Regional Association of Rural Family Houses of Southern Brazil - Arcafar Sul, coordinates a program which includes 73 Rural Family Houses in the states of Paraná, Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul. In these states, Arcafar promotes the capacity building of young people and teaches sustainable agricultural systems techniques. The students are trained to develop their own business projects, to be introduced in their farms, in the local communities or to

improve the family business.

ARCAFAR has been an important player in encouraging local youth to develop the regional economy without leaving their properties, and abandoning their families. Currently, research carried out by ARCAFAR showed that 95% of its students remain working in their farms, while the average in southern Brazil, shows that 85% of young people continue to develop rural activities.

The Arcafar's aim is to offer an integral education for rural youth, in order to expand their capacities to improve their quality of life and entrepreneurship in the rural zones. Although ARCAFAR provides technical and leadership training, it is known that students have financial difficulties to implement their projects at the end of the program. In an attempt to support their students, ARCAFAR has gone beyond its role as an educational organization. Through the support from Unicafe - Family Agriculture Cooperatives and Economy Solidarity Union - has

created a synergy between Arcafar and Cresol Baser (Central of Credits Cooperatives) a member of Unicafe. Both organizations have partnered in March 2013, and decided that Cresol will provide credit for investments for graduates who wish to implement their projects on their farms. The investments should increase the income of their families and start their professional life with prospects for a prosperous future.

Partnerships such as that between ARCAFAR and Cresol Baser, are important and should be replicated in different sectors of agricultural society. This is a great opportunity for young people to implement their technical knowledge and to practice their leadership in order to develop the local economy and promote social inclusion. These are important actions promoted by civil society organizations, which will awaken young peoples' sense of pride in being a farmer and inspire others to live and develop activities in rural areas in a sustainable manner.

Specialized farming of young farmer could meet food security and family income

Ms. Chhoeng Sokunthea,

Head of agriculture and advisory support unit of CFAP

Agriculture has been playing an important role in ensuring food security at community and national level as well as in the provision of employment/ income opportunities for a growing population (about 75 % of the population is employed in the primary sector). In addition, agriculture plays an important environmental role as water shed protection, ensuring quality of water and soil resources and bio-diversity, depending on the type or form of farming practices.

Youth aged 15 to 24 in rural areas are very likely to have less than lower secondary education, in case of young Cambodian rural females it is up to 78%, rural males around 65%. Based on the research however better educated rural youth are more likely to obtain jobs outside of agriculture. In Cambodia only 20% of youth without education and 25% with primary education work outside of farms, but almost 50% of rural youth with secondary or higher education are in non-farm work. Work in factories and civil service is better paid, but the wages still remain very low, less than USD\$100, even for professional positions. Young people are also very often supporting a large family with their income. Education and skills training can therefore go a long way, improving chances of youth to obtain better jobs, earn higher salaries, which will also benefit their families.

In 2011, CFAP staff provided services on agriculture techniques to their male and female members. The objective of the trainings was to enable small farmers to increase their technical expertise, better able to work on their own farms using knowledge they received from CFAP. Thanks to the trainings, they acquired the following skills:

- More specialised in agriculture

- Improved capability of young male and female farmers in agricultural production

- Increased opportunities for young farmers to practice at the demonstration plot and share ideas with other farmers.

- Up-scaled production to increase income from agriculture.

- Reduced migration of young farmers from the villages to cities. Most young males and females were proud of the knowledge they had received. They can continue to carry out their farming activities on their farms, most of them live with their parents, they could own land after they got married.

Our member Ms Kong Ranny, age 28 years old, a farmer lives in Svaytaplor village, Basac commune, Svay Chrum district, Svay Rieng Province says that she acquired knowledge in agriculture from CFAP. In 2010, she registered as a member of CFAP through CFA-BS (Basac Commune Farmers' Association). As a member of the CFA-Basac, she received technical training on vegetable growing and chicken rearing provided by CFAP staff. Then, she decided to grow vegetables, as she was only growing a row of cucumber in front of her house as a pilot activity initially. As a result, the cucumber grew very well. Later on, she decided to extend her land size of about 1,000m². She also joined the savings group CFA-Basac. The organization provided credit of 800,000KHR or US\$200 for vegetable growing, she reported that obtaining credit from her own organization is easier than Banks or MFIs, and not complicated. With this money she began growing vegetables, she grows several types of crops such as cucumber, long bean, pumpkin, ridge gourd and some other crops on 1,000m² of farm land. Besides vegetables, she also raises chicken.

On average, she earns about 20,000 KHR to 40,000KHR (US\$5 to US\$10) per day from her vegetable production in harvest season. She could also earn about 50,000 KHR (US\$12.50 to US\$25) from chicken rearing per 6months, this will

make her family's living standard better than before. She expressed her strong belief that she will not migrate to find a job in the city, instead she will remain to earn a living in agriculture on her farm land. She added that chicken represents a complementary and beneficial interaction with vegetables: as she can use chicken manure as organic fertilizer for her vegetable growing. She reported that the organic vegetables sell well with high prices on the market compared to others who use chemicals on vegetable production.

As a young farmer, she is happy with her vegetable and poultry production because they are the main income for her family. She could also buy inputs on credit from CFA-Basac, to avoid travel costs deriving from travel to buy inputs at the market. She pays her loan back regularly to the organisation at the harvest season.



"FARMER UNIVERSITY"

IS A FRAMEWORK OF REFERENCE TO INCREASE SKILLS OF FARMERS ORGANIZATIONS

Mahamadou Ouedraogo,
Communications ROPPA

The Network of Peasant Organizations and Producers in West Africa (ROPPA) remains obviously a dynamic space in the service of farmers' organizations. Recognizing the importance of training for real development, it undertakes organized a Farmer University of 1 to 14 November 2013 in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) for its members.

Framework for the training of farmers' organizations, the Peasant University comes from the needs expressed by the members of the network in relation to the priority areas of the five-year plan ROPPA. Specifically, peasant University will establish a training agenda based on the needs of ROPPA to mobilize a range of partners around the training needs of ROPPA and other OP of West Africa, to a regional dialogue on the themes of education and key issues of agricultural development and strengthen leadership ROPPA in the field of regional training.

Offer training partners do not always match the demand of farmers' organizations. Indeed, the partners are training according to their own agenda regardless of education level and above the audience. It is not uncommon for sessions that involve interests with levels disappear. In addition, a set of training took place without any consideration of knowledge and know-how of the OP. There is a multitude of training

with the participation of the same political actors without pooling. Finally, the complete lack of monitoring and the impact of this training is often commonplace.

The Peasant University aims to help minimize all of its shortcomings. To be viable and sustainable, the University takes into account a number of factors such as flexibility, low operating costs and training at three levels (basic, intermediate training, training of trainers).

The first edition of the Peasant University is scheduled to take place from 1 to 14 November 2013 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso under the sponsorship of the highest authorities of Burkina Faso.

THE NETWORK OF PEASANT ORGANIZATIONS AND PRODUCERS IN WEST AFRICA (ROPPA) REMAINS OBVIOUSLY A DYNAMIC SPACE IN THE SERVICE OF FARMERS' ORGANIZATIONS



Francesca Ferrari's Agri-tourism site

Coldiretti Giovani Impresa

Francesca Ferrari is a graduate in Educational Processes of Communication and Training.

Together with her husband, they decided to turn an old farmhouse owned by Francesca's grandmother into an agri-tourism site and leave their respective jobs to pursue a life as farmers. Thanks to financial assistance received through the National Rural Development Plan, Francesca Ferrari's company was born. Particular attention is paid to the quality of their products, which is why the company chose to undertake the certification process during its first year of production in order to obtain the title "Toscana PGI" (Protected Geographical Indication) and sub-title "hills of Lunigiana", for all their products.

The farmhouse was built using materials that have low environmental impact, wherever possible, environmentally friendly materials were used, reducing the excessive use of reinforced concrete and stone walls and retaining structures in chestnut. Thermal solar panels and condensing boilers provide the entire structure of hot water and a constructed wetland is at the service of disposing of the waste that is produced during the processing of olives and water for domestic use.

The meals in the agri-tourism site are carefully prepared using the company's products by educating guests on the importance of consuming local and seasonal produce. The farm has a laboratory to process and package that allows for the shortening of the supply chain, so as to ensure a high level of quality. Currently, the company owns about nine hectares of specialized olive grove, with drip irrigation systems that allows for minimal levels of alternation between different crops. With land located in the municipality of Pontremoli, the company produces Extra Virgin Olive Oil PGI, the hills of



Lunigiana's flagship product, which over the years has been able to acquire an increasing base of consumers and constitutes a highly appreciated product. Since 2010 another product worthy of mention has been added, the Monovarietale "Quercetano"; a cultivation typical of Versilia, originally from Querceta which is located in Seravezza.

She and her husband have wanted to face another challenge affecting the management and therefore decided to restore an ancient olive grove, situated in the locality in the municipality of Seravezza (LU), which had been abandoned for years.

The business facilities are complemented

by a media room with a projection screen and electronic whiteboard to carry out educational activities and to organize courses and seminars for adults and children also offering practical knowledge sharing activities as well as olive oil tasting. Her degree in Communications, has allowed Francesca to integrate and incorporate these formative-educational activities in the context of business activities thereby creating greater agronomic interest around the company itself.

Recently, they have also opened a shop enrolled in the Campagna Amica-agricultural campaign that allows them to establish a direct retail relationship with their customers.

Investing in young women and girls to shape the future of rural economies

Ilaria Perlini

“If you want to change the world, invest in an adolescent girl.” This was the simple yet powerful message that emerged from the opening pages of *“Girls Grow: A Vital Force in Rural Economies”* – a report prepared by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, as part of a wider effort by the [Coalition for Adolescent Girls](#) to empower young girls in developing countries.

Despite the fact that a growing number of organizations have been advocating to improve the social and economic prospects of young rural girls, traditionally, development programming has bypassed them or lacked attention to some of the unique challenges they face – including access to quality employment after school or the persistent lack of more inclusive forms of citizenship.

In many ways, adolescence is an age of opportunity and can offer a key chance to stop the cycle of poverty before it even begins. This is especially true for rural girls, who face a triple burden of disempowerment because of their location, age and gender. We know, for instance, that timely interventions which encourage girls to enroll in secondary and higher education are fundamental for the prevention of early childbirth and marriage. They provide girls with continued access to learning and skills development, both necessary to flourish into adulthood.

However, across many developing countries, rural girls are expected to take on work burdens from a young age that are disproportionate to their abilities and often even force them to drop out of school. While these types of child

labor are unacceptable, participation in certain home and farm activities can prove beneficial, as it provides girls with unique knowledge and experience.

Alongside their families, girls often learn to plant, weed and harvest the fields. They tend poultry and livestock, sort and pound grain or help process food products. They collect medicinal plants, herbs, nuts, berries and many other basic foods that help to supplement family diets. In their roles as farmers, rural girls and women manage natural resources daily – and are therefore key to effective strategies for the conservation of land, water, and biodiversity. By investing in rural girls during their formative years, we also increase their opportunities to become future scientists, research and project managers, extension workers and entrepreneurs.

Rural adolescent girls are powerful agents of change - they are the world’s future farmers and their contribution can help to build more resilient families, communities and nations. In recent years, global campaigns such as the *‘Girl Effect’*, *‘Girl Up’* and *‘Because I am a Girl’* have successfully used creative and social media to get this message higher up on the development agenda. Innovative projects, such as the music-based radio programme YEGNA in Ethiopia, have also provided encouraging new solutions to help address gender-biased norms and stereotypes.

Donors, policy-makers and the wider development community have a large role to play. They can determine whether or not greater investments are targeted to addressing the needs of rural girls. Efforts should also focus on improving data collection and analysis, which is fundamental to the development of effective policies and programmes for girls’ empowerment.





The benefits of collective action: The case of herders in Mongolia The insight of a young researcher

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During summer 2011, I had the chance to conduct together with local partners a large survey among herders of Tariat, a region of central Mongolia. The survey was part of

the field work of my MSc studies in Value Chain Management. The aim of my survey was to collect information on herders' livelihood and herding practices in order to assess the feasibility of a carbon credit project in the region. The hypothesis behind the project idea of generating carbon credits was that with improved livestock and pasture management Mongolian pastures would improve and more biomass would be built up on the pastures. These carbon stocks

on the pastures could be certified and sold on the international voluntary carbon market and the benefits from the sales of the certificates could be used as means of investment to improve herders' livelihood. Although the implementation of a carbon credit project would have to overcome substantial obstacles, the basic idea of the project addresses the main problem of herders in Tariat: pasture degradation due to overgrazing, weak pasture management and climate

change.

During the socialist period, the Mongolian government assigned stocking rates to all regions and pasture management was organized collectively. After the end of the socialist period in 1990, livestock was privatized while the pasture land of Mongolia became public property and was thus basically open to every Mongolian herder. This situation of open access led to overstocking in some areas, to decreasing pasture management and in the end to pasture degradation. While in former times clans ruled the pasture land and social pressure regulated pasture use and livestock numbers, nowadays neither governmental stocking densities nor social structure regulate pasture. This situation leaves Mongolian herders in a vulnerable position: the families are highly dependent on the pastures as the fodder basis of their livestock and because of their nomadic lifestyle and the lack of legal means to protect their ancestral pastures, the only security they have is to increase their herd size, which again aggravates the situation of overgrazing.

Although this whole situation is complex and difficult, there is a promising option to improve herders' situation: collective action and a proper organization of herders in Pasture User Groups (PUGs) is seen by organizations such as the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) as a viable solution to the problem. In Tariat a project financed by SDC started in 2010 to organize all herders of Tariat in PUGs in order to increase the possibilities of herders to regulate the pasture use by themselves and enforce pastures towards intruders from other regions. Although herders are aware of the problem of pasture degradation, there is a long way to go before PUGs can serve as effective organizations in Tariat. It came up in the survey in 2011 in Tariat that only about 75% of all herders are aware of their membership in the PUGs and most herders do not yet participate actively in the organization (only some of the herders with the largest herds in the region indicated to participate actively). Most herders prefer to only work and cooperate with their



Photo 1: Often two or more herder families move together with their livestock to the seasonal pastures

Photo 2: Livestock means wealth to herders but if stocking densities are too high, livestock can be a threat to the vulnerable pastures

relatives or with the other herders of their direct neighbourhood. On the other hand, most herders see a need for more rules on pasture use because conflicts with other herders on pasture use occur frequently.

PUGs could offer even more benefits than only organizing pasture rotations and protection. Because of their seasonal production and their nomadic lifestyle, herders are mostly highly dependent on traders for the sales of their products and for trading. PUGs could serve as a means to better spread information on prices and market situations as well as organizations to act collectively. PUGs could help to organize cooperation in production, processing and marketing activities of herders' livestock products. Once the organization will work properly and trustful relationships will be established, PUGs could even serve as providers of loans or they could collectively invest in facilities for processing or storage of products which would increase herders' bargaining power. Presently herders produce and process most of their products within the household and marketing is done by each family for themselves.

Meanwhile PUGs are very young social

structures and need to be established and filled with life and purpose by the herders. The NGO Green Gold that works on the establishment of the PUGs in Mongolia has very committed members in Tariat which believe in the idea of collective action and work hard on turning the organization from an idea on paper into an effective social structure to work towards pasture degradation and the improvement of herders' livelihood. Although the principle of a herders' organization sounds straightforward, it is not easy to establish a culture of working collectively and trusting the other members. But once the organization will gain momentum, herders will hopefully see the benefits of working collectively and they will join forces to protect their pastures and thus protect the basis of their livelihood.





TOWARDS BETTER NETWORKING AND COLLABORATION FOR YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE: JOIN AGRIVIVO 1.0!

To enable better **networking and collaboration in agriculture**, AgriVIVO, managed by the GFAR Secretariat and developed jointly with Cornell University and FAO, has been launched at the following address:

<http://www.agrivivo.net>

AgriVIVO is a **search portal built to facilitate connections between all actors** in the agricultural field, bridging across separately hosted directories and online communities.

This can be seen as a great means for **Young Professionals to connect with experts and peers** and strengthen their career opportunities.

<http://europe.ypard.net/node/26884>



EARTH DAY: YOUTH AND AGRICULTURE

In the framework of the Earth Day 2013 it has been pointed out how farmers around the world are aging rapidly. As a matter of facts, labor-saving technologies and new opportunities in cities have sent young people from farming families onto new career paths, so much that 25 percent in the United States. farmers are now 65 or older. Moreover, in some industrialized countries, such as Japan, nearly half of all farmers are over the age of 70.

On the other hand, in countries with young populations, such as Uganda, farming is seen as a career for people with no other options. But there are many opportunities for agriculture and youth to help each other. At a time when young people are struggling economically around the world, agriculture offers fulfilling jobs that support healthy people, healthy economies, and a healthy planet.

This is a very important innovation: instead of waiting for change to happen, youth are finding ways to address hunger, obesity, food waste, urbanization, and a whole range of other problems.

<http://foodtank.org/news/2013/04/earth-day-youth-and-agriculture>



YPARD ACTIVITY REPORT 2012 IS OUT

YPARD is proud to share its YPARD 2012 report. This was a year of growth for YPARD where it made its mark in agricultural research for development.

The strong representation by YPARD at the GCARD2 demonstrated to the international community that **youth can have a strong voice and be an integral part** of international events and proceedings and that they have a valid role to play.

Local representatives established themselves and YPARD **reached out to Young People (YPs) on the ground**, throughout the world. The network has matured, as have its activities and its plans for the future are ambitious.

Some highlights of 2012 include a 44% increase of new members, new YPARD country representatives for Sierra Leone, Malawi, Mali, Benin, Nepal, South Africa, Switzerland and France and strong youth representation at the GCARD2 with a prolific group of young social reporters and a youth pre-conference session which fed into a youth and gender focused plenary.

YPARD expanded to create a new region in YPARD Europe and also had a YPARD representative in place on the Steering Committee of the European Forum for Agricultural Research for Development (EFARD).

YPARD also had a significant launch of YPARD China at CAAS (Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences) in Beijing and released a report on 'Working towards a generation of new professionals in ARD', and much more!

<http://ypard.net/2013-may-14/ypard-report-2012-out>



AWESOME EVENT IN AGRICULTURE AND REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON "ENGAGING YOUTH IN THE IMPLEMENTATION PHASE OF THE CAADP (COMPREHENSIVE AFRICA AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM) TRANSFORMATION AGENDA – KIS" IN ACCRA, GHANA!

The Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) has organized a Regional Workshop on "Engaging Youth in the Implementation Phase of the CAADP Transformation Agenda – KIS" on **9-10 May 2013** at FARA Headquarters in Accra, Ghana.

The meeting has looked at the entire CAADP country and regional policy processes, and identified innovative approaches for making job creation for young people a top priority of the AFSIPs (Agriculture and Food Security Investment Plan) that Africa countries are currently developing.

The Workshop has brought together youth, youth leaders, and policymakers including CAADP Country Team Leaders to articulate a workable strategy for effectively engaging youth along the implementation phase of the CAADP Transformation Agenda – KIS.

<http://agricinghana.com/tag/caadp/◇◇◇>

