



UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION



SSTIC Impact Stories

Opportunities for Youth in Africa

SUMMARY

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) collaborated in response to a dedicated call to accelerate job creation for African youth, particularly focusing on agribusiness and entrepreneurship. The call originated during the 2018 Conference on Youth Employment in Agriculture, organized by the African Union, the Government of Rwanda, and FAO in Kigali, Rwanda.

The collaboration between FAO and UNIDO enhances their joint impact in promoting decent rural employment, agribusiness, value chain development, and support to small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in agriculture. This initiative proposes an integrated approach to create high-quality employment both on and off the farm for African youth, highlighting agriculture's central role in Africa's development. It emphasizes the continuous empowerment of African youth as the driving force behind this growth. Operating on multiple levels—continental, sub-regional, and national—the approach

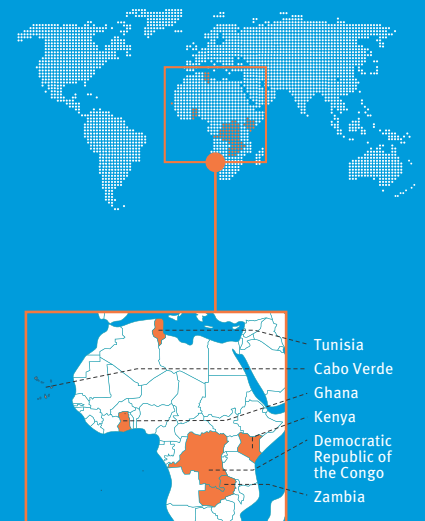
emphasizes concerted efforts involving public institutions and the private sector. This includes capacity development, resource accessibility, improved coordination, knowledge generation, and dissemination. The program aims to increase decent employment and self-employment opportunities in agriculture (both on- and off-farm) and agribusiness for young women and men in rural, peri-urban, and urban areas through improved skills, fortified agricultural value chains and food systems, and reinforced institutions supporting youth employment and entrepreneurship development.



SOUTH SOUTH COUNTRIES:

Tunisia, Cabo Verde, Ghana, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Zambia

IDENTIFIED COUNTRIES:



SOUTH SOUTH PARTNERS:

- United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

DONOR

- Government of Italy
- Trust Fund for Increased Food Security through Agribusiness, Italy
- EURO Trust Funds
- EURO IDF - Special purpose convertible

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CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVES

① South-South/Regional Coordination

In the case of the OYA programme, UNIDO and FAO work together across borders to effectively tackle acceleration of job creation in the agribusiness and agriculture sector in 6 partner countries. This multi-country approach is particularly important where some partner countries are less advanced in certain thematics or geographically isolated. Indeed, regionally coordinated programme, such as the OYA programme, have the potential to maximize impact and reduce costs for donors by scaling up successfully tested approaches. Moreover, it provides a baseline of practices and guidelines for partner countries that might have limited capacity to drive national development agendas. By leveraging on the active contribution of the African Union Commission (AUC)'s Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture (DREA) as a key partner, the OYA programme was able to build a regional dialogue platform and provide guidance to support its partner countries and provide assistance with the implementation of regional initiatives, creating networks of practitioners and strengthening inclusive governance, among other things. For instance, the OYA programme was involved in the development of the "Investment Guidelines for Youth In Agrifood Systems In Africa" by the African Union which provide practical guidance, examples and details on the "how to" steps in developing youth-focused and youth-sensitive investment programmes and interventions.

② Capacity building and knowledge sharing

Following national assessments of technical and soft skills needs for youth employability and entrepreneurship services and capacities, the OYA programme developed a collaborative, replicable and two-level approach for its training activities. National and regional institutions were selected and supported in providing multi-country training cohorts to encourage knowledge sharing between young agripreneurs and training of trainers in partnership with selected national institutions. The courses encompass technical, entrepreneurial, business, and digital skills, ensuring a well-rounded skill set for the youth. The use of digital platforms facilitated the diversification of the beneficiaries' backgrounds and a unique borderless learning experience promoting south-south collaboration and knowledge sharing.

③ South-south network of practitioners and public private stakeholder engagement

One of the goals of the OYA programme is that existing and emerging youth-led agribusinesses and agricultural SMEs are better integrated into local, regional and international markets.



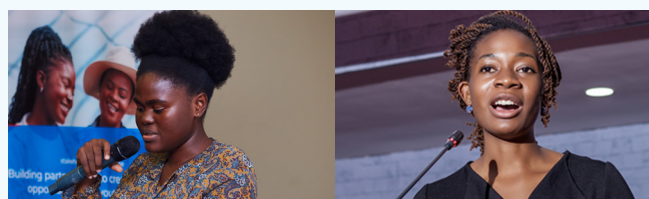
WHAT IS SSTIC?

South-South and Triangular Industrial Cooperation (SSTIC)

Is a process whereby two or more developing countries pursue their individual and/or shared national capacity development objectives through exchanges of knowledge, skills, resources and technical know-how, and through regional and interregional collective actions. UNIDO's SSTIC services are following the guiding principles for South-South cooperation set out in the Buenos Aires outcome document:

- 1 respect for national sovereignty
- 2 mutual benefit
- 3 national ownership and independence
- 4 equality
- 5 non-conditionality
- 6 non-interference in domestic affairs

Hence, the early establishment of online networks of selected African agripreneurs, such as the OYA Business Club, offers access to business opportunities and a private network of executives doing business in Africa across all sectors including food & agriculture through B2B networking events (and more). This network contributes to potential business opportunities, as well as integrating the value chains at national, sub-regional, continental and international levels. The OYA programme was also involved in the organization of B2B public-private partnership events organized by its regional partners to serve as meetings points and platforms for collaboration between entrepreneurs, private sector and investors from the continent and the international community.



④ South-South collaboration through research and innovation to find solutions to the current challenges posed by climate change

To encourage cutting-edge digital innovation and raise awareness among youth about the importance of sustainable agriculture production, the OYA programme enabled 122 zambian students to join a global network of schools to participate in a spaceX-26 mission ExoLab experiment. Students designed their own scientific protocols to grow Alfafa crops on Zambia soil while sharing their findings with their peers and the global community of ExoLab users. Their ideas and data were used and connected to the November 2022 flight experiment being developed separately but concurrently with the researchers.

1

THE CHALLENGE

What the project aims to achieve.

The African continent has the youngest population in the world. Over 600 million people are under the age of 24 years and this figure increases to over 750 million when considering youth under the age of 35 years. Youth are therefore one of Africa's greatest assets. According to the World Bank, 10-12 million new jobs will have to be created annually until 2035 to absorb the new labour market entrants and they will have to guarantee adequate wages, security and safety if the employment situation is to improve in the long run. Particularly in rural areas, where education opportunities are limited, agriculture employs about 60 percent of the young people aged 15-35 years. If properly supported, young women and men are a potent force for driving inclusive economic growth across the



continent and addressing some of the most pressing socioeconomic challenges the continent faces. Despite the abundance of agricultural resources, sub-Saharan Africa remains the world's most food insecure region. In many African countries, demand for safe and reliable food is increasing due to a burgeoning population, rapid urbanization and rising household income. This exploding demand can create new market opportunities and provide employment and self-employment opportunities in rural as well as in peri-urban areas, where last-mile processing and distribution can flourish. Indeed, the agricultural sector in Africa can play a key role in solving the youth employment challenge that threatens stability and growth in many countries across the Continent.

OYA OVERALL TARGETS

+30,000
youth empowered

+600
youth-led SMEs
established

+40%
women beneficiaries

+60
meso-level institutions
supported

2

THE SOLUTION

The methodology used that led to successful outcomes.

The overall goal of the OYA programme is to contribute to poverty reduction by promoting decent employment and self-employment opportunities for African youth through agribusiness development (on- and off-farm) in rural, peri-urban, and urban areas through improved individual skills and competencies, strengthened agricultural value chains and food systems, and reinforced institutions supporting youth employment creation and entrepreneurship development. Consequently, the programme adopts an integrated approach for the promotion of quality rural on- and off-farm employment and self-employment opportunities

for youth in agriculture and agribusiness in Africa. Technical assistance is therefore provided following a three-pronged approach to:

- 1 Increase employability of prospect employees and capabilities of self-employed youth through improved transversal competencies and technical, entrepreneurial, business, and digital skills related to on- and off-farm business development and to better access to productive resources (especially finance)

- 2 Strengthen the competitiveness of targeted agricultural value chains and agri-food systems, meaning the robustness (viability), the efficiency, and the level of innovation (i.e. new technologies introduced, products developed, partnerships established), towards the creation of decent employment and self-employment opportunities and the establishment and upgrading of youth-led agribusinesses and SMEs in agriculture

INCLUSIVE VALUE CHAINS

OYA works with stakeholders at all levels of value chains: higher learning institutes, public and private actors, and service providers towards a better enabling environment for agribusiness development. Through capacity-building, strengthened cooperation and networking, all actors will benefit from enhanced synergies and from exchange of best practices across businesses, systems and regions.

OYA is strengthening 17 value chains across the six pilot countries. Some of the selected value chains include:



- 3 Support more conducive policy, institutional and programmatic frameworks at national, sub-regional and continental levels through enhanced capacity and knowledge of institutions to support decent youth employment creation and entrepreneurship development in agriculture and agribusiness.

OUTCOME 1

Employability (on-and off-farm) and self-employment capabilities of youths in agriculture and agribusiness are enhanced

OUTCOME 2

Existing and emerging youth-led agribusinesses and SMEs in agriculture have increased access to finance and are better integrated into local, regional and international markets

OUTCOME 3

Agricultural value chains and that create decent employment and self-employment opportunities for youths are strengthened

THE OVERALL GOAL

Is to contribute to poverty reduction by promoting decent employment and self-employment opportunities for African youth through agribusiness development

DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE

Increased decent employment and self-employment opportunities in agriculture (on-and off-farm) and agribusiness for young women and men in rural, peri-urban, and urban areas.

OUTCOME 5

Programme Management and Monitoring & Evaluation (incl. independent mid-term and terminal evaluation)

OUTCOME 4

Policy, institutional and programmatic frameworks are strengthened at national, sub-regional and continental levels to support decent youth employment creation and entrepreneurship development in agriculture and agribusiness.

3

SOUTH-SOUTH IMPACT

How were South-South and Triangular cooperation utilized to achieve results?

The project's key characteristics align with the South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTIC) approach by promoting borderless dialogue, knowledge-sharing, and good practice dissemination at macro, meso and micro level and public, private and development partners. The OYA programme operates at a continental and sub-regional level while focusing on six prioritized countries: Tunisia, Cabo Verde, Ghana, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, and Zambia. Therefore, specific outputs were designed to promote SSTIC, such as strengthening institutions to design youth-centered policies and promoting cross-country dialogues and evidence-based policy sharing between countries. Moreover, the OYA programme aims to foster partnerships and collaborations with various entities and entrepreneurial service Organizations (ESOs) by building a network of capacitated service providers that attend OYA trainings together and regional OYA powered networking event in addition to collaborating on specific regional activities such as the African Summit on Entrepreneurship and Innovation and the Agriculture, Innovation and Technology conference. At micro level, OYA celebrates successful young African entrepreneurs and their entrepreneurial journeys by streaming the OYA Entrepreneurial Mindset Podcast in notable media platforms to spread real life lessons and motivational content that will inspire other young African entrepreneurs who will identify with shared experiences. Hosted by renowned and award-winning African journalists, the OYA E-Mindset Podcast highlights the African continent's stories and contributes to a diversity driven narrative of successful entrepreneurship in the global arena of popular entrepreneurship podcasts.



4

SUSTAINABILITY AND REPLICABILITY

How is it sustainable and replicable?



The OYA programme places a strong emphasis on sustainability and the scalability through a range of approaches and practices that drive lasting change and have the flexibility to replicate successfully in various contexts. To secure a high-level support and strong ownership, the programme fosters a high degree of multi-stakeholder engagement as its core coordination and management approach. It responds to the need for a concerted effort and improved coordination and linkages to maximize impact. Therefore, representatives from both private and public sectors are represented in all OYA's dialogue platforms which include global fora and national consultation workshops. Additionally, the OYA programme builds on existing African initiatives and networks to provide support and capacity building by upgrading the quality and availability of their services (technical and vocational trainings, incubation, financial literacy). The empowerment of local actors has contributed to enhance their visibility and to effectively reach a larger number of beneficiaries sometimes in other countries. As a result, OYA's partner organizations in Kenya, Ghana and Zambia have scaled-up the OYA powered initiatives (e.g. AgriTech Challenge in Ghana) and received international recognition via sister UN agencies and financial institutions such as Mastercard Foundation, Cargill to scale up their programmes. The OYA programme's outcomes are aligned with the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): SDG 1 (Ending poverty), SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), and SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth), with a particular focus on youth while enhancing gender equality and inclusion. This initiative complements UNIDO's Youth Strategy, aligning with UN's Youth Strategy 2030. In summary, the OYA programme 's SDG alignment, replicable participative methods and dedication to youth inclusion positions it as a valuable model for addressing similar challenges in other regions and continents.

SSTIC Executive Summary

The Opportunities for Youth in Africa (OYA) is a joint UNIDO and FAO programme that answers to a dedicated call for accelerating efforts in the area of job creation for African youth. The programme developed an integrated multi-level approach for the agriculture and agribusiness sector by highlighting youth's central role in the continent's economic development and strengthening youth's employability and self-employment capacities by developing their diverse skill sets, supporting agricultural value chains, and fostering youth inclusive policy and institutional frameworks in its partner countries: Cabo Verde, DRC, Kenya, Tunisia, Ghana, Zambia. Additionally, the OYA programme's areas of intervention include improving access to resources, facilitating market linkages, enhancing business development services, and promoting access to financial products and services for youth-led agribusinesses and SMEs. The programme also conducts baseline studies and promotes data-driven decision-making. This

programme aligns with the South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTIC) approach, operating at a continental and sub-regional level while focusing on partner countries. It promotes dialogue, knowledge-sharing, and good practice dissemination across agri-food systems. This is achieved by strengthening institutions, facilitating policy sharing, and fostering partnerships to support youth employment and entrepreneurship. At the national level, the project collaborates with training institutes, business institutions, value chain supporters, and financial institutions to empower youth in agriculture. It emphasizes know-how sharing, interregional learning, and capacity building through tailored courses and entrepreneurship centers. This project prioritizes sustainability and ownership through collaboration with governments and various public and private stakeholders, ensuring active participation and long-term impact.

SCAN THE QR CODE BELOW FOR MORE INFORMATION



View project in UNIDO
OpenData Platform



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Scan the QR code to access more information about SSTIC. You will be directed to a website or a resource that provides detailed information about the concept, principles, benefits, and examples of SSTIC in action.

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