

# CALL TO ACTION

## Moving from Policy to Action for African Youth in Agribusiness

Young people represent the promise of positive change. Today, Africa is home to the largest generation of youth in history. By 2030, Africa's youth population in the labour force is projected to reach over 375 million. The potential of Africa's youth to support progress now and in the future is unparalleled. Simultaneously, there is an increasing need for food and nutrition insecurity to be tackled urgently in view of demographic shifts and climate change impacts.

This poses a strong impetus for young people to be actively involved in transforming agrifood systems towards improved inclusiveness, sustainability, and resilience, particularly in view of a rapidly changing world. The agribusiness sector presents boundless opportunities for youth to contribute to tackling food and nutrition security, while generating income and securing livelihoods through on- and off-farm activities along value chains.

The Africa Youth in Agribusiness Forum was organised as a pivotal platform for fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing, aimed at bridging policies and strategies towards collective action for improved youth engagement. The event brought together youth representatives from across the continent with practical experience and expertise relevant to the agribusiness sector, who jointly pronounced the following **Call to Action**.

## Preamble

We, the African youth, gathered for the African Youth Agribusiness Forum (AYAF) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on the 4<sup>th</sup> day of November 2024:

1. **Recall** the rights and duties expressed in the African Youth Charter;
2. **Note** that the African Union, under its Agenda 2063, has identified youth as a priority area;
3. **Recall** the Malabo Declaration of the African Union on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods, including the commitment made by Governments to create job opportunities for at least 30% of youth in agricultural value chains by 2025;
4. **Guided** by the Continental Agribusiness Strategy Framework of the African Union;
5. **Note** the reaffirmation by the African Union as expressed in its African Agribusiness Youth Strategy in 2023, to create policies, frameworks, and strategies that encourage youth engagement in agricultural development initiatives.

## Our Commitments

We, young African agripreneurs commit to organize ourselves, and collaborate with our leaders as well as other stakeholders to drive innovation, sustainability, and resilience in agricultural practices towards economic growth. We strive to foster partnerships that address the challenges of land access and resource distribution. We seek to combat post-harvest losses, and advocate for waste-to-wealth and waste-reducing practices. We are dedicated to act as agri-service providers, committed to empowering our farmers organizations and local communities. We want to facilitate the sharing of indigenous knowledge, research, and practical application of environmentally-friendly solutions. Finally, we young African agripreneurs, commit to champion the implementation of our call to action.



## Our Request

We hereby identify the following to be critical agendas for urgent collective action:



1. We call upon our leaders and all stakeholders, to act with urgency to fulfil obligations, honour past promises, and provide robust support to African youth in improving opportunities for engagement in the agribusinesses sector, specifically to:
  - i. Uphold the commitments enshrined in the African Youth Charter, as well as those outlined in national, regional, continental, and international agreements, in support of inclusive and sustainable, youth-focused development, food and nutrition security, and economic empowerment;
  - ii. Accelerate all efforts to implement the African Agribusiness Youth Strategy;
  - iii. Honour the commitments made in the Agenda 2063 to treat youth (employment) as a priority area.



## We urge our African leaders and other stakeholders to:



1. **Collaborate in advancing access to land and productive inputs**, empowering our communities to maximize critical resources such as land, water, and (indigenous) seeds for equitable, sustainable, and resilient agricultural development while addressing the climate change crisis. We urge for advancement of land access initiatives, adopting fair, inclusive, and transparent regulations, and creating digital land banks that integrate both lands reserved for community tenure, as well as government-owned lands while prioritising the needs of the youth.
2. **Provide enhanced access to financing**, specifically dedicated to entrepreneurial youth operating in the agricultural space. We call for innovative financial products and services including dedicated credit facilities, subsidies, collateral-free loan programmes, and tax exemptions, combined with specific financial management capacity building initiatives for young agripreneurs.
3. **Prioritize robust training programmes that leverage good practices**, while serving our needs and aspirations, as well as the requirements of the agrifood sector. We urge governments, the private sector, and other partners, to contribute funding, technical expertise, and resources to enhance training quality and address the gap between skills acquired through conventional education and the practical skills that we need to succeed as agripreneurs.
4. **Promote the development of agri-tech innovations** including locally tailored and accessible agrifood processing technologies while improving efficiency, increasing yields, reducing post-harvest losses, and creating meaningful economic opportunities specifically aimed at young agripreneurs. We furthermore urge governments to invest in supportive infrastructure such as shared manufacturing spaces to facilitate collaborative processing and innovation.
5. **Improve market access and trade opportunities for young agripreneurs**. We call on our governments and partners to develop One-Stop Youth Hubs dedicated to providing digitized and automated market support services to young agripreneurs, including business licensing, permit issuance, and payments. We urge governments to harmonize regional quality standards to reduce compliance costs. We furthermore call for dedicated incentives and support to increase competitiveness of young agripreneurs for accessing local, regional, and international markets.
6. **Enhance accountability for initiatives** aimed at unleashing the potential of young African entrepreneurs. We advocate for AU Member States to commit to bold pledges through Nationally Determined Youth Incentives (NDYIs), while ensuring regular and periodic reporting to foster transparency, accountability, and progressive increase in ambitions.

In addition,

7. **We appeal to the African Union Commission and partners to support the institutionalisation and continuation of the Africa Youth in Agribusiness Forum**, with the aim to provide a consistent continental platform for sharing knowledge and experiences, promoting progress and accountability, and realising the objectives expressed in the Agenda 2063 and the African Agribusiness Youth Strategy.



---

**Information and Communication Directorate,  
African Union Commission**

E-mail: [DIC@africa-union.org](mailto:DIC@africa-union.org) | Web: [www.au.int](http://www.au.int)  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

