Toolkit on Youth in Food Systems

About the toolkit

Engaging Youth in Food Systems

Tools for understanding youth in food systems

Tools for enhancing employability & entrepreneurship

Reading guide

WAGENINGEN
UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH

Reading guide

This interactive PDF Toolkit on Youth in Food Systems is divided into the following chapters:

About the toolkit

Engaging youth in food systems

Tools for enhancing employability and entrepreneurship

Tools for understanding youth in food systems

Navigation interactive PDF

Icons
By clicking on one of the icons in the navigation bar at the bottom right you will switch to a chapter.

Arrows
If a topic consists of multiple pages then you can navigate using the arrows.

Toolkit on Youth
in Food Systems

Reading guide

Share your tools and experiences

Footnotes

References

Colophon

Navigation bar
You can use the navigation bar on the right to navigate through the topics of a chapter.

Current page
Alt + left arrow you return to the original page.

Toolkit on Youth
in Food Systems

About the Toolkit

This toolkit supports professionals working with youth in food systems. It is a compilation of practice-based tools. The tools build on a systemic approach to food systems and the necessity to work and collaborate in multi-stakeholder arrangements.

The toolkit is compiled by Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation (WCDI). As part of Wageningen University and Research (WUR), WCDI focuses on the global challenges of secure and healthy food, sustainable markets, adaptive agriculture, ecosystem governance, and conflict and reconstruction. We link cutting edge processes of innovation and learning with WUR's worldleading scientific and technical expertise. We work with farmers and NGOs, businesses and entrepreneurs, and governments and international organisations in many different countries to support and facilitate processes of innovation and change.

Learn more about us here.

Rationale Why youth in food systems?

Youth form a large percentage of populations in many developing countries. In 2017, approximately 83 percent of the 1.2 billion youth between ages 15 and 24 resided in developing countries (IFAD, 2019). Despite their interest and stakes in sustainable food systems transformation, their contribution is limited due to, amongst others, disproportionately high unemployment rates, limited influence in decision-making processes, and difficulty accessing resources (i.e. land, finance).

While many of the challenges youth face may be shared by actors in other age groups, it is important to understand and invest in addressing the challenges that youth face. It is not only about the number of youth and the specific needs that are associated with this group, such as access to education, the need for decent jobs or the need for food security. It is also a matter of inclusion: the right to be engaged in conversations about the future and to invest in those people who will play a vital role in many aspects of the food system. The focus is thus not only on youth as providers of labour for the future, it is also about their 'voice', and the emphasis on education as a means to develop leadership for sustainable, inclusive, healthier and bio-diverse food systems. Besides some of these fundamental reasons for addressing youth in food systems, they also cope with some specific problems and challenges.

Some of the challenges young people in food systems may face include:

- Limited access to resources (i.e., land, finance, information, technology, markets, and support services) (HLPE, 2021; IFAD, 2019)
- Not seeing business opportunities in agriculture, limiting aspirations in the sector (HLPE, 2021)
- Power dynamics, limiting their influence in decision-making processes (HLPE, 2021)
- Gaps between what educational systems teach and what the labour market is looking for, resulting in young people often not having the skills sought by potential employers. Low educational attainment and low-quality education results in some youth lacking basic skills, which affects their employability (Fox & Kaul, 2017; IFAD, 2019)
- Insufficient employment opportunities and weak ties linking skilled youth to employment opportunities, leading to expanding aspiration gaps (IFAD, 2019; Fox & Kaul, 2017; HLPE, 2021)[1]
- Unfavourable conditions and systems impeding their ability to secure adequate and rewarding livelihoods, or establish and develop a business in the formal sector (HLPE, 2021; IFAD, 2019; Fox & Kaul, 2017)

These challenges put many youth at a disadvantage in their quest for independence and stable livelihoods (HLPE, 2021; IFAD, 2019; Fox & Kaul, 2017). While these challenges are not specific to youth alone, they may be exacerbated for young women and men (Dekker & Hollander, 2017; AfDB et al., 2017). For example, young generations typically face higher unemployment rates, migration, and poverty, even among working youth (HLPE, 2021; IFAD, 2019). As presented by Minister Ploumen during a conference on boosting youth employment in Africa:

"Worldwide 71 million youth (aged between 15-24) are currently unemployed. In Sub-Saharan Africa alone, 18 million jobs need to be created annually in order to absorb new entries to the labour market. While the need for job creation is high, only 3 million formal jobs are created each year in Sub-Saharan Africa."
(Dekker & Hollander, 2017)

Because certain challenges may be exacerbated for young women and men, it is important to understand and address youth challenges directly[2], while at the same time addressing the root causes leading others to experience similar issues (IFAD, 2019)[3]. Addressing these from multiple angles simultaneously is key for maximizing impact, as is coordinating between programmes.

For this it is useful to refer to both the Push-Pull model (Figure 1) and the Food Systems framework (Figure 2). While a Food Systems analysis provides insight into the relationships between different elements, bottlenecks, and potential leverage points to enhance food system outcomes (van Berkum, Dengerink, & Ruben, 2018), the Push-Pull model illustrates the different elements that are pushing, pulling, and enabling youth to succeed in food systems (Tichar & Francis, 2019).

A comprehensive understanding of young men and women's contexts within the broader food system can help identify gaps, barriers, and opportunities for ensuring attractive and successful career opportunities for young women and men. As illustrated in both the Push-Pull model and the Food Systems framework, all types of actors across the food system can play a role in creating an environment where youth can thrive.

"The future of Africa belongs to youth, but the quality of that future will be determined by what they do with it today"

Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission in 2017 (Dlamini Zuma, 2017)

What do we mean by youth?

The term "youth" is often referred to as an age group, which differs per institution. However, youth is a very heterogenous group and cannot be defined by age alone.

When identifying what type of youth to engage, there are a whole host of questions one might consider, such as:

- In what phase of life are they? (i.e. secondary school, higher education, entering the work force, launching an enterprise, or any other transitions in their professional or private lives)
- Where do they live?
- What is their socio-economic background?
- What is their educational background? What cognitive skills, behaviours and abilities do they have?
- What are their interests and concerns?
- Are they primarily active in formal or informal markets?
- What resources do or don't they have access to? (i.e. land, finance, information)

Though this toolkit refers to youth in the food system, in all their diversity, each initiative should identify what type of youth to engage and dig deeper to understand their situations. To be clear, this toolkit is not about children (the underaged). Youth as defined in this toolkit is not limited to the cultural rite of passage, nor bound to the legal age for adulthood. The demarcation of youth as a group varies between countries[4]. We think it is useful to set the limit at around 30 years, although there may be other defining factors as well, depending on the context.

Supply & demand factors impacting youth employment & entrepreneurship

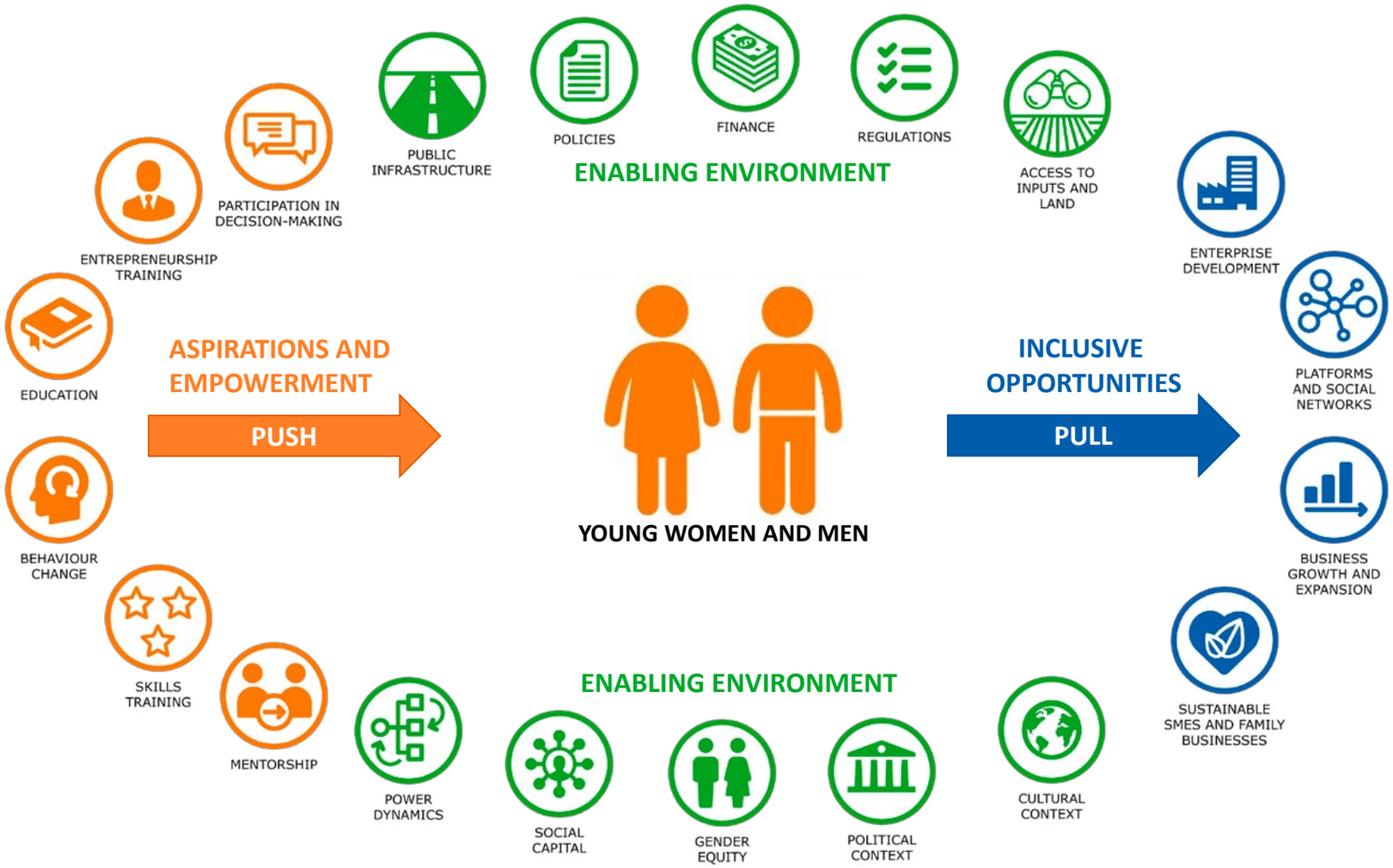

Figure 1 The Push-Pull model (Tichar & Francis, 2019) illustrates the different factors pushing and pulling youth to employment and entrepreneurship in agri-food systems, by identifying barriers and opportunities faced by young men and women. The push side of the model stimulates food system practitioners to identify what youth need in order to find or create employment. The pull side of the model prompts practitioners to consider how a career in food systems or agriculture can be made more attractive. The enabling environment illustrates factors influencing young men and women's ability to benefit from market opportunities.

The Food System

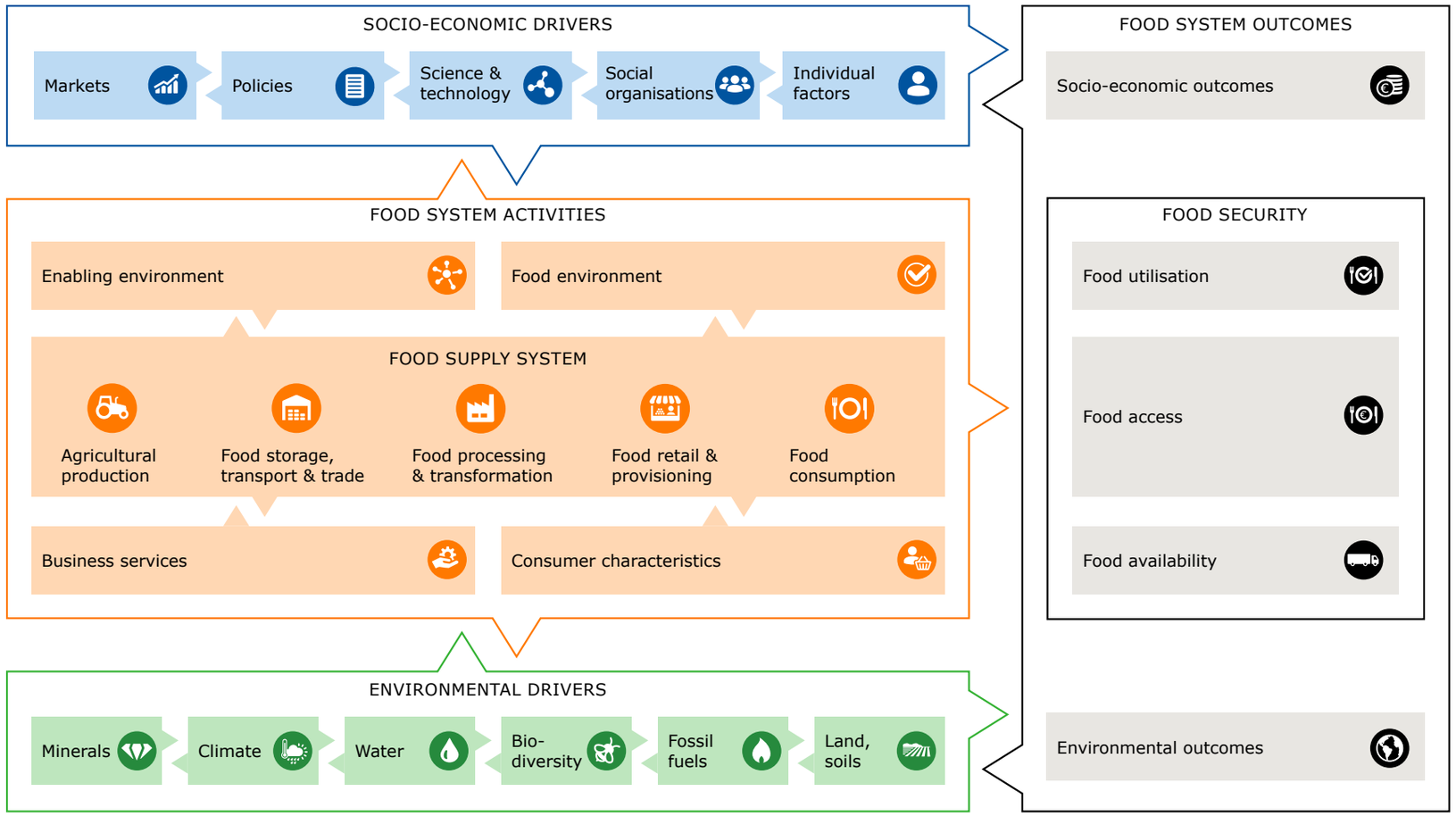

Figure 2 Using the food systems framework above (van Berkum et al., 2018), the food systems approach analyzes relationships between different elements within the food system, including socio-economic drivers, environmental drivers, activities, and the outcomes resulting from these relationships. Analysing these non-linear relationships and feedback loops enables users to identify trade-offs, synergies, and leverage points for addressing root causes of food system challenges and enhancing outcomes (van Berkum et al., 2018). The Food Systems Decision Support Toolbox (Posthumus, Bosselaar and Brouwer, 2021) equips practitioners with a variety of tools and methods to analyse food systems and identify actions to create systemic change.

Urgency Why develop this toolkit?

At WCDI, we see young women and men as key change agents in transforming food systems. Their potential to think outside the box, innovate, and adapt to changing circumstances can be a real driving force. However, despite the number of development initiatives, youth often fall between the cracks and do not feel they have much say in the decisions that affect their lives. Professionals are seeking to work with youth and shift from their expert roles to facilitate inclusion. However, the tools they have to do this are limited and have not been debated much. Youth-specific challenges are not adequately addressed and the level at which youth are asked to participate is low, which means their contribution within food systems as professionals and citizens is still limited, as are food system outcomes.

This toolkit addresses these challenges by providing tools to:

- Enable users to engage with youth at higher levels of participation, learn from their perspectives, and increase youth agency
- Better understand youth diversity, their context, interests, challenges, needs, opportunities, and how their enabling environment affects them. An enhanced, context-specific understanding can facilitate more effective programme design.
- Equip practitioners to go beyond reaching youth, to make sure that they benefit from their participation and that they invite and interact with youth to make decisions together

Audience For whom is this toolkit intended?

This Youth Toolkit is primarily intended for professionals seeking to engage and support youth in food system programs, with the aim of increasing employability, improving livelihoods, and developing meaningful roles for youth in society. Be it as a cross-cutting theme or as the primary focus, this toolkit aims to support users in realizing their inclusive ambitions by using these tools in designing and implementing projects, as course material, or in policy development. We aim to equip (young) professionals and change agents as they contribute to inclusive food systems transformation in their respective countries.

New tools, feedback, and lessons learned will be added over time and incorporated in an updated version. With a greater variety of tools added over time, an updated version will be interesting for a wide spectrum of youth organisations, educational institutions, businesses, non-governmental organisations, embassies and policy makers actively seeking to make food systems more inclusive of youth.

About the toolkit

Methodology How was this toolkit developed?

This toolkit is based on consultation with professionals who work with youth, or who are young professionals, working for youth-focused or youth-led projects and organisations.

Three groups of professionals have provided input for this toolkit:

- The Youth & Gender cluster of WCDI. Colleagues were invited to share tools they developed or used, and experienced as successful in engaging and empowering youth in food system programs.
- Youth focused practitioners. Several external experts working with youth in food systems were invited to provide input based on their experiences. Their feedback on the structure, observations from the field (i.e. gaps, needs), and expectations enhanced the structure and content of the toolkit, particularly the Guiding Principles.
- Youth-led organisations. In 2021, representatives from a few youth-led organisations, as well as the HortInvest programme in Rwanda, were invited to share their insights and feedback. Where possible, this feedback has been incorporated in the toolkit. Other suggestions will be used as input for future developments.
- This toolkit provides space to co-create. Tools are available in an editable format, so that users can adapt the tools to the context they work in.

An improved toolkit will be co-created with professionals who share their tools and experiences.

About us WCDI Youth Strategy

How is WCDI working on youth in food systems?

At WCDI we bring knowledge into action. To that end, we offer a range of services, all of which are designed to help our partners and clients make progress towards sustainable and inclusive development.

Working on youth-related issues in food systems specifically means that we work to:
Improve income opportunities for young men and women

- Improve the link between educational systems and the labour market
- Ensure the next generation of leaders have a voice in governance of society, natural resources, climate change, etc.
  Strengthen the link between younger and older generations in the co-creation of future opportunities
- Engage youth in addressing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and transforming food systems

How do we do that?

Youth entrepreneurship and employment are most often integrated as cross-cutting themes, though some of our programmes focus on youth specifically. In order to effectively address youth (and gender) interests, WCDI has established a Youth and Gender (Y&G) cluster, which spots opportunities, conducts research and develops knowledge products, advises colleagues and partners in the field on how to effectively integrate youth interests in their programmes, and spots leverage points to move beyond "reaching" towards "benefiting" and creating greater decision-making power, or "empowerment" of youth in food systems (see Figure 2).

We do this by:

- Using a food systems approach, to understand and identify approaches that address youth challenges in a particular context[5]
- Engaging youth throughout the project cycle, to ensure co-creation, co-ownership, and co-learning

- Trying and testing new methods with a hands-on, adaptive management approach
- Learning from youth. What works? What does not work?
- Working with locally-based teams

Some examples include:
- Capacity development (on i.e. how to meaningfully include youth in sector transformation)
- Improving access to inputs, information, finance, and other resources (for i.e. production, processing, services, etc.)
- Improving links between higher education and labour markets
- Analysing and addressing power relations that hamper, amongst others, the youth

How is WCDI integrating youth-related work?

Our current work on youth in food systems entails the following activities:
- Conducting research on youth in food systems
- Conducting analyses and advising on how to effectively address youth interests
- Facilitating Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships to address inclusiveness
- Designing and implementing programmes addressing, amongst others, youth interests
- Linking adult education with (action) research on youth interests
- Addressing youth interests in a variety of courses, including:
  - Youth Entrepreneurship in Agriculture and Food Systems
  - Engager les Jeunes vers la Résilience Climatique et Sociales

For more information on our services and value propositions, publications, and other toolkits, please visit our website at www.wur.eu/wcdi

Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation supports value creation by strengthening capacities for sustainable development. As the international expertise and capacity building institute of Wageningen University & Research we bring knowledge into action, with the aim to explore the potential of nature to improve the quality of life. With approximately 30 locations, 6,800 members (6,000 fte) of staff and 12,900 students, Wageningen University & Research is a world leader in its domain. An integral way of working, and cooperation between the exact sciences and the technological and social disciplines are key to its approach.

Read more

Learn more about youth in food systems

To learn and discuss more about why engaging youth in food systems is important and how, the following publications may be useful:

- Framework for Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship, by the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and Wageningen University & Research. This article refers to the Push-Pull framework, describing the supply, demand, and enabling environment elements that influence where and how youth might be impacted (Tichar & Francis, 2019).

- Promoting Youth Engagement and Employment in Agriculture and Food Systems, by HLPE (2021). This article elaborates on why it is important to invest in youth in food systems, as well as what the opportunities and constraints are.

- Youth and Food Systems Transformation, by Glover and Sumberg (2020). This article elaborates on different groups of youth and why it is important to engage them.

- Creating Opportunities for Rural Youth, the Rural Development Report by IFAD (2019). This report examines who the rural youth are, the constraints they face, and how their journey to independence can be more prosperous.

- Youth Policy Manual, by Denstad, Youth Partnership Organization (YPO), and Council of Europe (2009). This toolkit discusses the major elements of a youth policy, and how young people can be engaged in policy design.

Engaging Youth in Food Systems

How youth are engaged in food system activities, including decision-making processes, affects ownership and the lasting impact of an intervention. This section provides insights and practical tips on how practitioners can enhance youth engagement, for greater ownership and impact.

Guiding Principles and Practical Tips

Below are nine guiding principles on how to engage youth and use the tools presented. These are based on the various experiences of WCDI colleagues and partners, and aim for increased sustainability, effectiveness, and potential impact for youth in food systems.

- Ensuring youth ownership over activities from the onset should be a priority. Increasing youth participation and responsibilities as early as possible is one way of stimulating ownership and motivation, even beyond the life of a programme. This may take the form of co-decision, co-creation (i.e. designing a Theory of Change together), and/or youth leadership.
  Consider how continuity can be addressed from the very beginning of a program and how activities and empowerment can continue after the end of a programme or partnership. This is where ownership and internal motivation among youth organisations and other local institutions is crucial, which is why it is essential to work from the perspective of youth interests.

- Build on what is already there, whether they are existing organisations, relationships, networks, etc. It is especially important to engage self-organised youth organisations and initiatives (i.e. youth saving groups with revolving loans). Experience has shown that these can be valuable in many ways, because of their broad network, influence and respect among youth, and because they provide

access to finance for small investments. Engaging in these youth organisations and particularly working closely with them has shown to increase the reach and effectiveness of activities (through i.e. the ability to guarantee members' reliability in a due diligence process).
One point of attention is to discuss positionality: the disclosure of how partners see their role, function, position, and resources (in short, what interests do you have and what makes you powerful, resourceful, capacitated to do the work you do).

- Build the capacity of youth-led organisations. Take the time to better understand the challenges they face, as well as what they need to better serve their members and create change. Learn where they see a shortage in capacity and how they can be strengthened as an organisation. If such organisations do not yet exist locally, invest in establishing them as early as possible in the program.
  Understand youth diversity (in terms of i.e., background, capacity, access to resources, interests, and ambitions) and create opportunities in line with their needs and aspirations. Understanding and adapting accordingly stimulates ownership and motivation among youth, increasing effectiveness during and beyond the life of a program. One way to do this is to ensure youth have enough options to choose from, according to their areas of interest. Experience has shown that programmes often provide an opportunity and simply expect youth to be interested, sometimes resulting in a lack of or short-term interest and limited impact. For example, youth may grasp an opportunity to go into production if that is the only opportunity available, but may lose interest and step out when another opportunity arises that is more in line with their interests.

- Be aware of and adapt to additional needs certain (sub) groups may have. These could be young people with disabilities or other subgroups facing additional challenges, whether that is because of what others expect from them, the roles they have, limited access to information or other resources, or other factors. Discuss these factors and consider how their participation in activities can be increased (i.e. reducing distance, adjusting times, etc.). Consider adapting tools to better suit the local context or vulnerable groups they are used with.

- Do not overlook the importance of building (personal) relationships with young people, youth organisations, and other local institutions, and what this can mean for the effectiveness of the project. Consider them as partners working towards a common goal. Reserve time to build relations and create shared language with youth about youth. Partners / collaborative organisations should be open to learning and be generous with sharing insights.

- Capture lessons on what works, what does not work, and why or why not. Share these lessons with others, to increase the relevance and impact of future initiatives.

> Have you considered dialoguing or partnering with global and local youth-led organisations? For example:
>
> - Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD)
> - Youth in Landscapes Initiative (YIL)
> - Climate Smart Agriculture Youth Network (CSAYN)
> - Youth at Heart

For more information on youth networks, and some examples across the African continent, check out the Insights into Youth Networks report here (Kyewalabye, 2020). This is not an exhaustive list and we recommend you explore which youth-led networks are active in your area.

Case example youth-led organisation: Youth in Landscapes

One such youth-led organisation, with which WCDI collaborated on a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC), is the Youth in Landscapes Initiative. This MOOC was launched in "Climate Action in Biodiverse Landscapes" during the Biodiversity: A Digital Journey learning programme in 2020.

The overarching objectives of YIL are to unite and empower youth from diverse backgrounds around the world to have a public voice, and create positive change for the sustainable landscapes and community livelihoods. These organisations collaborate in delivering workshops, mentorship, training and networking opportunities. By organising sessions on themes such as sustainable diets, food sovereignty and food waste, as well as writing youth info-briefs, YIL activities are very relevant to food systems.

Currently consisting of 60,000 students and young professionals from around the world, YIL intends to amplify activities at a regional level in the next few years, aiming to create a stronger platform for regional struggles and dreams of young people across landscapes and silos. In a world that tends to centre on the voices of people from the Global North in the environmental movement, especially the voices of men, identifying diverse voices can be a challenge.

YIL aims for high diversity in terms of gender, region, and background (academic or other). As such, the voice of women from the Global South are highlighted and prioritized across all activities, including knowledge products. It is a network and partnership among people that have different backgrounds and share the common vision of creating an equitable world where people collaborate across boundaries, sectors and generations to achieve sustainability for global and local landscapes.

YIL aims to constantly question and redefine what inclusiveness means, what it could be, and why they are or are not in a position to include someone. As such, YIL pays close attention to the dominant discourse and language used around inclusiveness.

Partnering or collaborating with this organisation means to dialogue about and reflect on our position as advisors and as a knowledge institute.

About YIL

YIL is a partnership between the International Forestry Students' Association (IFSA), Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD), the Global Agroecology Alliance (GAEA) and Youth 4 Nature (Y4N), which emerged from a youth event at the Global Landscapes Forum (GLF) 2013 in Warsaw. YIL is now permanently involved in the yearly Global Landscapes Forum (GLF), having run comprehensive youth programmes at each of the annual GLF events (in i.e. Peru, France, Morocco, Germany, Kenya, Ghana, Luxembourg, Scotland) and as well as other events (i.e. IUCN global Youth Summit 2021).

Levels of Participation

One of the core principles in designing this toolkit is that young women and men are change agents in food systems and that, in order to successfully and meaningfully contribute to youth roles in food systems, they need to be seen as partners and leaders, and engaged early on in designing programmes and developing policy. This means enhancing levels of participation. So, what does youth participation mean and why is it so important?

Ladder of Participation

Participation is a broad term with many different levels. The Meaningful Youth Participation (MYP) toolkit, which was developed by the Youth at Heart initiative of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, demonstrates these levels. The MYP toolkit defines youth participation as "young people being able to have a say (consult, involve, collaborate) in explicated stages of decision-making (design, implementation, and/or evaluation) on policies, strategies, and/or programmes that affect them, in such a way that it benefits" young people, society, and those engaging youth (Youth at Heart, 2021). It means more than being able to voice one's thoughts. It means that stakeholders see and engage youth not just as beneficiaries (as an informed target group), but also as partners (through a collaborative and consultative relationship) and leaders (through youth-initiated and youth-directed initiatives). It means that stakeholders listen to their perspectives and suggestions, take them into account, and act on them.

> The MYP toolkit builds on Roger Hart's Ladder of Participation. Hart's Ladder of Participation was initially developed for child participation, but has since been adapted and used in various contexts to determine and measure levels of participation in development initiatives (Denstad et al. 2009). The MYP toolkit has taken this ladder and demonstrated how this might take form in the context of involving young people (see Figure 4).

At WCDI, we aim to put tools in place that support the inclusion of and leadership by young women and men. It means that consulting youth (number 5 in the Ladder of Participation), joint decisions with youth (number 6), as well as supporting youth initiatives and leadership (number 7) towards co-creation (number 8) are the levels of participation that we seek to achieve with the use of this toolkit.

Why strive for higher levels of participation?

Achieving higher levels of participation from the start of a programme, and aiming for inclusive decision-making and shared leadership with youth, is important because:

- Stakeholders will have a better understanding of the realities that youth face in a particular context. These new perspectives and engagements lead to enriched dialogue and more informed decisions.
- Youth are resourceful and interventions should aim at enhancing their leadership to channel their energy, ideals and innovations to transforming food systems.
- It is right for youth to (co-)decide when those decisions affect their lives and the future of society.
- Higher levels of participation stimulate ownership over decisions made and actions taken. Ownership is important not only because youth form a large part of the population, but because this can facilitate implementation and success beyond the life of a programme[6].
- It creates space for shared leadership. Youth who are stepping up as leaders in the food system benefit from engaging with experienced and senior professionals. In collaboration, new perspectives can be developed and youth can leverage their impact by working with a diversity of professionals, not limited to 'only youth'.

For these reasons, higher levels of participation increase the relevancy and impact of programmes on youth and other food system actors.

Participate, Benefit, Lead

Participation as explained in the previous paragraphs revolves around the level of decision-making power youth can achieve through partnerships and capacity development programmes. The Reach, Benefit and Empower framework of IFPRI (2016) drives strategies for youth inclusion. Whereas the objective to attract youth to programmes and partnerships and to reach them through participation in activities is a good starting point, youth should also benefit and be empowered through capacity development and agency. Benefiting and being empowered economically, socially or by increased well-being goes beyond 'only participating in meetings and trainings' and consequently needs different ways of measuring this impact too. When strategizing, it is important to envision the level of impact we want to achieve. Specifically in the context of food systems, this could mean that youth have more decision-making power on agricultural production, income, and household food consumption. Prior to any planned intervention, it is important to partner with youth and youth organisations to discuss the level of impact and the implications for the ways to achieve that. We have adapted the scheme of IFPRI on Reach-Benefit-Empower to Participate-Benefit-Lead. Our main reason to do this is to adopt language that is activating and that is more conducive to youth taking the lead, as well as reflecting on the position of those who have decision-making power to invite and collaborate with youth to drive for impact.

Participate-Benefit-Lead

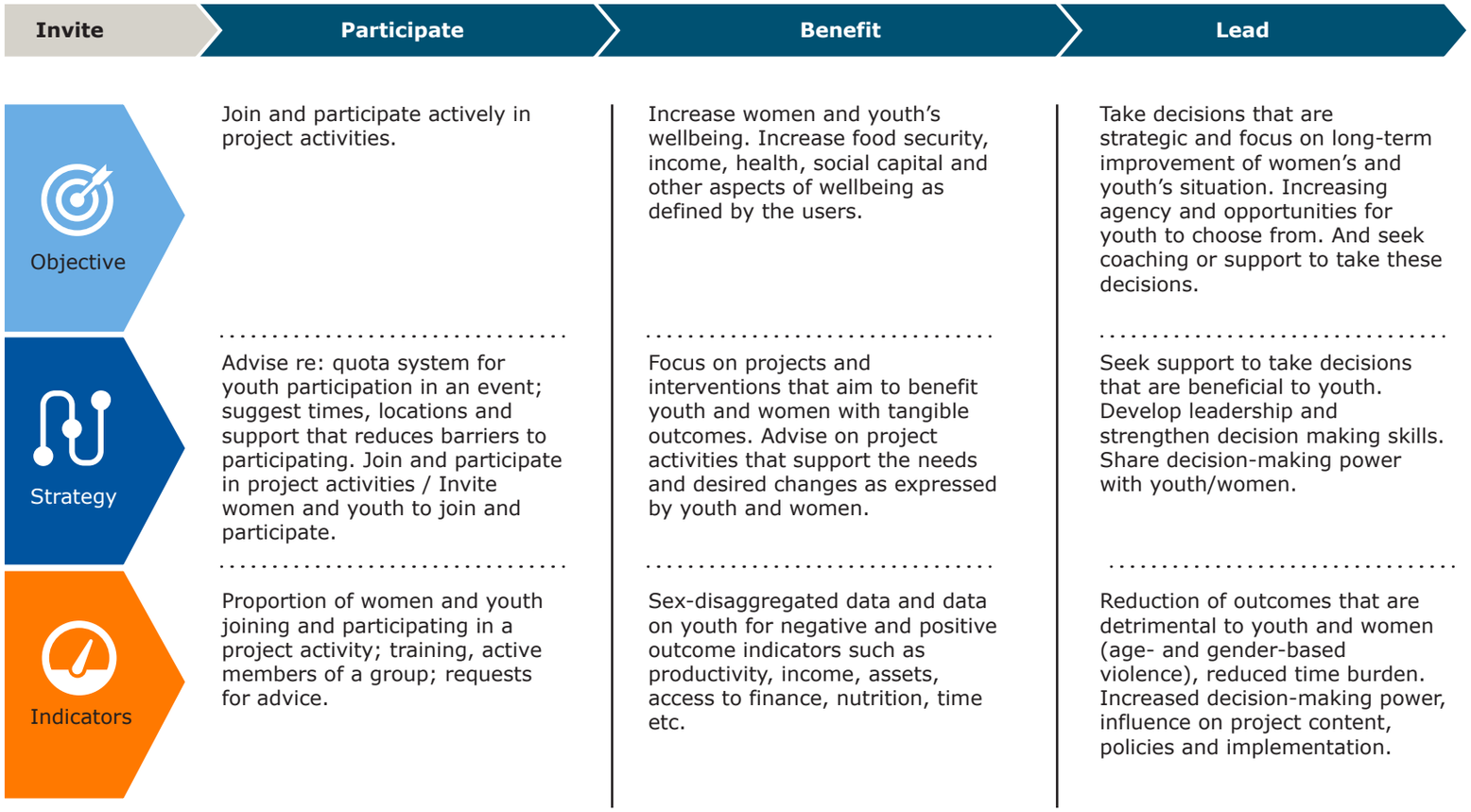

Figure 3 Participate, Benefit, Lead framework adapted IFPRI (2016) framework, by Riti Hermán Mostert, WCDI 2021

The Ladder of Participation

Step 2

Assessing your situation: the ladder of participation	Explanation
8 Young people & adults share decision-making	Young people have the ideas, set up the project and invite adults to join them in making decisions throughout the project. They are equal partners.
7 Young people leads & initiate action	Young people have te initial idea, and decide how to project is to be carried out. Adults are available.
6 Adult- initiated share decisions with young people	Adults have the initial idea, and young people are involved in making decision, planning and implementing the project.
5 Young people are consulted & informed	Adults design and facilitate the project and young people's opinions are give weight in decision making. Young people receive feedback about their opinions.
4 Young people assigned but informed	Adults decide on the project and young people volunteer for it. Young people understand the project and adults respect their views.
3 Tokenism	Young people are give a limited voice and little choice about what they can say and how they can communicate
2 Decoration	Young people take part in an event in an very limited capacity and have no role in decision-making.
1 Manipulation	Adults have completer and inchallend authority and abuse their power. They use young people's ideas and voice for their own gian.

Non-participation
It is important to remember that tokenisme, decoration & manipulation are not examples of youth participation.

Figure 4 The Ladder of Participation, as adapted by Youth at Heart (2021). One example of what number 8, "young people & adults share decision-making", might look like in practice is when young women and men decide what is needed in their community and partner with other institutions in lobbying for government resources and policy reform.

Cross-Cutting Themes

Food systems transformation, and the role youth have in it, cannot be separated from social intersections like gender, race, class, or educational background. We know that it matters where someone is born, and what educational background a person has. These social categories define and shape to what extent someone is included in decision-making settings. To be able to discuss food systems transformation with stakeholders and to join policy dialogues one needs resources, knowledge, and connections. Not everyone is included or even invited to the table for these dialogues. This is often solved by inviting representatives. It means that those representing a group in the food system are privileged to an extent. We believe it is important to be aware of these dynamics and to be understanding of the intersections that youth have to deal with. To inform further conversations about this we highlight a few cross-cutting themes that underly this toolkit in its aim to co-create and collaborate with youth on themes that are relevant to youth.

Knowledge

This toolkit starts from the premise that food systems actors have specific and in-depth knowledge about the food systems they are part of. A farmer knows his or her land, the plots that grow vegetables well, or the animals that need attention or care. Familiarity, intuition, and emotions are part of actors' knowledge of food systems. Professionals engaging with food systems actors, particularly with youth, and challenging their mind-sets, have to do so with the head *and* the heart. This kit offers tools you can choose from as a professional in seeking to achieve food systems transformation, depending on the level of interaction, participation, creativity, and engagement. The right selection of tools is as important as the facts and figures about food systems.

Gender

Agriculture is a domain in which both men and women work. However, land ownership, control over resources and decision- making power, especially in the public domain, lie primarily in the hands of men. Focusing on youth as an

overarching category holds opportunities and promises for engaging with women and men to develop more just and equal gender relations. Committing to making women visible in food systems at the stage of research - in surveys, in the tools used, in preliminary reports - is a first step to epistemic justice[7]. The next step is to ensure that young women can benefit from their labour and participation in food systems. Lastly, young women should be encouraged to convene, deliberate, own interaction processes and take decisions in food systems activities at management levels – beyond their involvement in food production, processing, and consumption at the household level. Unequal gender relations have to be discussed with men too, so that they can understand their role and the opportunities for more just food systems. Household consumption patterns, purchasing practices, farm household collaboration, and policy-level decision making can be transformed if men are positively engaged with the change processes. Do not assume that men or women are homogenous categories, and consider the normative and often patriarchal roles that they are expected to perform and that may be harmful (i.e., carrying heavy loads, pioneer and migrate from home at an early age).

As a facilitating professional, do what is needed to support specific groups of women and men. This might mean talking in separate groups, having female and male facilitators, or organising activities at a convenient time and location. Make sure you can answer the question 'what's in it for me?' from the participant's perspective.

Race, class, and educational status

One of the starting points is that unequal social relations are present throughout the food system. In the realm of international development cooperation, professionals run the risk of working within a dichotomy of experts/non-experts, and hence, of reinforcing existing inequities: with those who are experts, those who are learners (education status), with those who have and those who have not (class), with those who are white, and those who are non-white (race). The expert role and the leadership that comes with it often comes in the form of a white male. The beneficiary is too often represented by a vulnerable, non-white woman with children. Questioning Western assumptions and the knowledge that is produced requires the involvement of various perspectives, and more importantly, to position the project actors, the facilitators, participants or beneficiaries and the content itself. Explicitly talking about positionality and giving attention to representation, highlighting the strengths, leadership and ownership of professionals in the global South is important to increase a mutual and equitable working relationship.

Practical tips:

When reaching out to youth as users or as partners:

- Develop strong relations and involve diverse partners to co-create the process or to gain advice
- Do a power-analysis
- Get clarity on positions and functions of all partners. Discover together how epistemic justice can be achieved
- Develop a shared language on gender, class, race, and educational status and on concepts such as power, empowerment, food systems transformation, and the desired outcomes.
- Discuss gender relations and helpful and harmful behaviours in the food system.
- Disaggregate data for women and men
- Invite those persons and groups whose voice are often not heard whether in design or implementation of tools

Tools for Understanding Youth in Food Systems

The tools presented here aim at better understanding youth in food systems by engaging and partnering with young women and men in the beginning (analysis and design), middle (implementing) and end (monitoring, learning and evaluation) phases of a project. Inclusive processes, such as co-creation, give young women and men more influence over the decisions being made. This enhances youth ownership and is key to ensuring that their interests and concerns are adequately heard and addressed.

Survey on Youth Attitudes in Agriculture

This tool provides users with a better understanding of youth interests and aspirations within a particular sector, while capturing the diversity among youth and their interests. The tool was created for the sesame sector in Ethiopia, but users can easily adjust it for use in different sectors and settings.

Purpose

The purpose of this tool is to:

- Gather basic information on the diverse backgrounds of young men and women in a particular sector
- Better understand youth interests and challenges

When to use this tool

This tool can be used in the design stage of a new programme or project. It may be used by any professional organisation seeking to better understand the interests of their members or target groups, in order to better serve their interests.

Credits

This tool was developed by Bram Peters (former WCDI employee) and Sjors Bijen (Sesame Business Network).

Click here to access the tool and instructions on how to use it.

Youth and Gender Matrix

The Youth & Gender (Y&G) Matrix helps identify market barriers and opportunities for young men and women in food systems, and places these on a market map. In addition to its focus on youth, it encourages discussions on gender-related issues. As a result, interventions can be designed to address youth-broad and gender-specific challenges and opportunities.

Click here for a large view of the image.

Purpose

The main purpose of this tool is to:

- Identify barriers and opportunities for young men and/or women in food systems and where these lie on the market map
- Identify solutions to address barriers

When to use this tool

To address youth and gender related challenges and opportunities, this tool is best used in the design phase of a programme, with an equal number of young men and young women participating in the exercise. It can also be used for training purposes, to stimulate dialogue on youth and gender-related challenges.

Credits

This tool was developed by Thomas Tichař for WCDI short courses.

Click here to access the tool and instructions on how to use it.

Thomas' experience with the Youth and Gender Matrix

As Youth & Gender Advisor in Food Systems, I've used the Youth and Gender Matrix during several of WCDI's short courses, to provide participants with a tool for integrating youth and gender-specific needs in broader food system programmes. This tool is unique in the sense that it starts from a youth and gender perspective, rather than a market perspective. By understanding and embedding youth and gender perspectives and considering their interests when shaping interventions, programmes can better address each of their specific needs.

The Y&G Matrix has prompted very diverse groups of participants to reflect on and discuss the differences and overlaps between challenges and opportunities available for different genders and age groups. Through this exercise, our course participants have become more aware of how barriers can be broken down and opportunities be made more accessible for women and young people, and are now equipped with a tool to support similar learning and design processes in their respective countries and sectors. They have shown a particular appreciation for the insights on how to approach women and youth interests in a more inclusive and participatory manner.

> *"This is a very powerful tool to go beyond tokenistic interventions and really embed youth and gender throughout a programme from the very start."*

This is a potentially powerful tool to go beyond tokenistic interventions and really embed youth and gender throughout a programme from the very start. At the same time, we have found it to be a very fun exercise, creating awareness and sparking conversations between younger and older, men and women, about the differences and similarities in their realities. For an enhanced dialogue, ensure equal participation of men and women.

Thomas Tichař
Youth & Gender Advisor in Food Systems
Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation

Participatory Peer Research

The Participatory Peer Research presented here is more of a methodology than a tool. It is particularly useful for engaging stakeholders in collecting data themselves. Peer-to-peer interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) empower youth and other stakeholders by giving them more responsibility in data collection, stimulating ownership over the research results.

Purpose

The main purpose of this methodology is to:

- Evaluate a program through peer-to-peer interviews and Focus Group Discussions
- Validate and stimulate ownership over research results by giving project beneficiaries a greater role in gathering data

When to use this tool

This methodology can be used for program evaluations.

Credits

The Participatory Peer Research methodology referred to above is based on action research (ten Hove et al., 2019) conducted by the TIDE School Milk Programme (SMP) in South-West Uganda, published by WCDI and SNV.

Click here to access the report.

Instructions

The methodology can be summarized as follows:

Phase 1

- Students, parents, and teachers are provided with tools for peer-to-peer interviews.
- After receiving a training on how to use these tools, students interview each other about their experiences with the identified programme. Likewise, parents interview each other, and teachers interview each other.
- Once the survey results have been analysed, pertinent issues and critical questions are identified for Phase II.

Phase 2

- Focus group discussions (FGDs) are planned with (a sampling of) the interviewees.
- Protocols and tools are developed for these FGDs.
- During the FGDs, participants reflect on the survey results with a particular focus on the critical questions that came out of the research.

Phase 3

- A validation workshop is organised to validate the findings of the action research.

Typology of Marginalised Actors

The Typology of Marginalised Actors tool helps users identify the differences between roles, challenges and the potential of women and youth. This can differ in terms of access to resources or their ability to benefit from food security programmes, depending on household characteristics. This tool helps users analyse skills, market access, and the ability of women and youth to benefit from food system activities.

Purpose

The main purpose of this tool is to:

- Analyse and visualize the differences between (young) men and women in rural settings, such as skills, market access, ability to cooperate vertically and horizontally, as well as contribute to and benefit from interventions
- Analyse the potential benefits or negative effects of an intervention on the different groups

When to use this tool

This tool is best used when designing an intervention in the rural areas, and combines well with the Youth-Specific Value Chain Analysis.

Credits

This tool was developed by Nina de Roo. Though originally designed for gendered analyses, it has been adapted for both youth and gender.

Click here to access the tool and instructions on how to use it.

Youth-Specific Value Chain Analysis

This tool maps out youth presence along the value chain, as well as what opportunities or constraints they may face at different points along the value chain. Opportunities or constraints may relate to i.e. training, extension services, cooperative membership, or access to inputs and markets.

Purpose

The main purpose of this tool is to:

- Get a youth and gender-sensitive overview of a specific value chain
- Gain insight on where young women and men are active and the opportunities and constraints they face along the value chain

When to use this tool

This tool may be used when designing a project, researching a value chain, or in a course setting. It is best done with youth, or other stakeholders who work with youth and have a strong understanding of the context.

Credits

This tool was developed by Nina de Roo and Bram Peters, who based it on the Gender in Value Chain Toolkit by AgriProFocus and Fair and Sustainable.

Click here to access the tool and instructions on how to use it.

Nina's Experience with the youth-specific value chain analysis

Recognizing that women and youth may face different, or even intensified, challenges and opportunities than other stakeholders in a particular setting, my colleague and I were asked to facilitate a Youth & Gender workshop with the Sesame Business Network (SBN) team in Ethiopia in 2015. SBN is a network of stakeholders driving innovation for a more inclusive, sustainable and competitive sesame sector. In order to do so, SBN needed a better understanding of the challenges and needs faced by youth and women along the sesame value chain. One of the tools we used with the SBN team to capture this was the Youth-Specific Value Chain Analysis.

By identifying and mapping youth and gender-specific challenges and opportunities along the value chain, the SBN team was prompted to think about the different subcategories of women and youth, what it means to be poor, how this differs between groups, where women and youth are most active, what they do or do not have access to (i.e. finance, land), how they contribute to households and markets, and what other factors positively or negatively influence their situation.

Together with other tools, such as the Typology of Marginalised Actors tool, the SBN team deliberated and made more informed decisions on leverage points and what kind of support they would need to offer to stimulate inclusiveness.

"Our experiences with the SBN team have shown that it is important for facilitators to encourage and prompt participants to be very specific, since they are often not used to subcategorising within groups of women and youth"

Our experiences with the SBN team have shown that it is important for facilitators to encourage and prompt participants to be very specific, since they are often not used to subcategorising within groups of women and youth. My tip for other facilitators: make sure that participants are familiar with the local context and prepare a list of probing questions for deeper conversations and discussion.

Nina de Roo
Advisor Inclusive Food Systems
Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation

Tools for Enhancing Employability and Entrepreneurship

The tools presented here aim at building the capacity of young farmers and agro-entrepreneurs, to enhance employability and entrepreneurship. By capacitating youth, we allow young men and women to grasp and benefit from opportunities on the (job) market, while at the same time building their capacity as change agents in food systems.

Financial Literacy

This tool is for farmers being trained in basic bookkeeping skills, so they can record and monitor expenditures, income, and profitability in their own cashbook. This cashbook can be paired with a financial literacy training on capturing and analysing data, to empower farmers to make informed decisions, save, and plan long-term.

Purpose

The purpose of the cashbook and training is to:

- Develop a savings culture
- Strengthen farm businesses
- Reduce farm business risks
- Improve access to formal finance

When to use this tool

This tool can be used in combination with a financial literacy training. The cashbook is best used from the beginning to the end of a season. It is not youth-specific, so it can be used with younger and older farmers.

Credits

The Financial Literacy Material Guide and Cashbook were developed by Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation (WCDI), in the context of the Sesame Business Network (SBN), part of the Bilateral Ethiopian-Netherlands Effort for Food, Income and Trade (BENEFIT) programme. It has also been applied in horticulture programmes in Ghana and Rwanda.

The tool and further information on how to use it can be found using the links below:

- Material guide
- Cashbook

Check out this experience paper to learn more about Benefit-SBN's experiences in providing financial literacy trainings and Training of Trainers (ToT) in Ethiopia, including the lessons they learned from training approximately 20,000 Ethiopian farmers in four years.

Angelique's Experience with the Financial Literacy training

My name is Angelique and I produce onions, beetroot, carrot and sometimes fresh green beans in the Rubavu district. As a member of the Kaidu cooperative, I had the opportunity to follow a training in financial literacy, organised by HortInvest Rwanda. When I first heard about the training, I did not know anything about the topic. I was very curious and decided to participate.

"[I] am proud to know what I have invested in, what it has resulted in, and how profitable it was"

Many people in Rwanda, especially in the rural areas, farm so that they and their families will have something to eat, so farming is often not considered a business. Before the training, I used to select farm crops based on which had the highest demand and I would sell without knowing how much profit I was making. Many farmers do this. However, after following the training, I started taking a more business-oriented approach, investing based on the expected returns. I started keeping track of my investments, the cost of family labour, and my returns. I now determine which crops to produce based on profitability, looking at the investments needed, demand, and market prices. That is why I chose to produce onions, beetroot, carrot and green beans, because local supply is low and profitability high.

Looking back, I have really benefited from this training and am proud to know what I have invested in, what it has resulted in, and how profitable it was.

Angelique Umutoni
Vegetable producer and Financial Literacy trainee HortInvest Rwanda

Edidia’s Experience with the Financial Literacy training

In Rwanda, smallholder farmers often do not consider farming a business. That is why HortInvest organised trainings in financial literacy, to demonstrate that farming is indeed a profitable business if one calculates and records investments, income or profit, and anything else related to business finances.

In my experiences as a HortInvest trainer, I have seen that even after years of farming, many farmers do not know the value of their investments or profits. I have learned that if farmers are not keeping track of this, it is often because they lack the information or simply have not developed the necessary skills. These information gaps need to be addressed and opportunities need to be created to develop these skills.

“These information gaps need to be addressed and opportunities need to be created to develop these skills.”

HortInvest’s financial literacy trainings do this by equipping producers with knowledge and practice in recording farm activities and calculating profitability. I have seen how, once equipped with information and skills, farmers develop more business-oriented practices. While several farmers initially had difficulty accessing loans or were hesitant to accept loans even from family and friends, several now find it easier to get one and feel more confident doing so.

In a pilot, HortInvest trained 28 people per cooperative (from six cooperatives), a strategic choice with the expectation that, as trainees go on to train other cooperative members, more farmers will benefit over time.

Edidia Dusabe
Financial Literacy trainer
HortInvest Rwanda

Guidance Tool, Education to Work

This tool provides guidance in designing education-to-work programs, so that youth are better equipped to find work, become entrepreneurs, and improve their livelihoods. The tool prompts users with questions on food systems, the operating environment, organisation, educational practices, and interactions between them. Then users deliberate what interventions would enhance the link between educational programmes and a stronger food system.

Purpose

The main purpose of the tool is to:

- Enhance the links between the operating environment, organisation, educational practices and food systems
- Reduce the gap between supply and demand of skilled labour

When to use this tool

This tool was designed to strengthen educational programmes for the sustainability of food systems. It is best used in the programme design process.

Credits

This tool was developed by Jorge Matallana and Thomas Tichař, who were initially inspired by the Orange Knowledge Programme (OKP) – Institutional Collaboration projects, where WCDI plays a (leading) role.

The tool can be found here. Kindly share your experiences and feedback with us.

Coordinating a Mentoring Programme

This toolkit takes users through the entire process of designing and coordinating a mentoring programme, from mapping the context to rounding it off. In addition to a step-by-step guide, the toolkit includes templates and 10 years of resources and documented learnings. Mentoring refers to the sharing of experience, knowledge and guidance from a trusted tutor, with the intention of developing personally and professionally.

Purpose

The main purpose of the toolkit is to:

- Help users decide whether mentoring is the right approach for them and whether it will support them in reaching their goals
- Guide users in setting up and coordinating a robust and goal-oriented mentoring programme

When to use this tool

This toolkit complements capacity-building initiatives for an enhanced learning process. Mentoring programs can last anywhere between several months to several years.

Credits

This mentoring toolkit was developed by GFAR Collective Action, based on 10 years of experience from Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD), International Forestry Students' Association (ISFA), and African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD).

The toolkit, including case studies and lessons learned, can be found here.

Jackline's experience with mentoring programmes

My name is Angelique and I produce onions, beetroot,
In 2018, I launched a mentoring programme together with four friends from Tanzania. Through this mentoring program, university students in different countries organise online sessions each year to discuss scholarship opportunities for international applicants. While I was based in the Netherlands informing potential applicants on scholarship programs such as Erasmus and the Orange Knowledge Programme (OKP), my friends informed applicants on other opportunities in the United Kingdom and the United States. Though I did not use the YPARD Coordinating a Mentoring Programme toolkit, this programme has inspired my YPARD contacts in other initiatives.

The mentorship programme we launched operates on a rotational basis, in which the newest scholarship recipients become mentors for the next round of applicants. Sessions are organised per scholarship, in which students introduce the scholarship, requirements and general application process, which is followed by questions. As applicants work on their application process, mentors are available to answer questions or provide guidance and feedback. For example, we advise OKP applicants to refer to and build on the focus areas (i.e. food safety, Water-Energy-Food Nexus) of the Dutch embassy in their home country. We also advise them to diversify and apply for more than one scholarship or country, to increase their chances in a very competitive process.

Having mentored applicants in 2018 and overseen the programme since then, I see a lot of value in such a mentoring program. It is an opportunity for young people to expand their network and for mentors to develop themselves and strengthen their public speaking skills. Using Facebook and focusing on sharing information in countries where fewer scholarships are granted, such as Tanzania, the programme has made information and support available to a large, diverse group of people who previously were less likely to know about and benefit from such opportunities. We have even been able to reach minority groups with limited access to internet, through participants who share notes during offline gatherings.

"The rotational design has sustained the programme year after year... Our successors are able to give back to society in the same way that we benefited."

Last but not least, the rotational design has sustained the programme year after year. Just as we started this programme as a way to give back to society, our successors are able to give back to society in the same way that they benefited.

Jackline Owili
Researcher in Food Systems and Nutrition Freelance consultant
Former Intern at Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation

Rural Start-up Tool

The Rural Start-up Tool is a protocol for assessing small-scale pilots and start-ups. Through comprehensive data collection, this tool can be used to analyse the viability of a pilot or start-up, and validates outcomes on (financial) sustainability, scalability, and inclusivity.

Purpose

The main purpose of the tool is to:

- Collect, monitor, and measure information on feasibility, impact, and scalability
- Compare results of one pilot or start-up with another, for informed decision making
- Inspire stakeholders to value and develop a comprehensive validation protocol when piloting innovations
- Establish targets with third parties

When to use this tool

Businesses, project managers or financiers can use this tool before and during the launch of a start-up or pilot. Especially in dynamic settings, it is best to repeat the process regularly to ensure long-term success.

The tool and further information on how to use it can be found using the links below:

- Tool for assessing a Rural Start-up
- Guide for the Rural Start-up Tool

Credits

This tool was developed by Flo Dirks, Thomas Tichař, Addisalem Ambaye Tadesse and Tewodros Tefera, in the context of the REALISE programme, part of the Bilateral Ethiopian-Netherlands Effort for Food, Income and Trade (BENEFIT) programme.

Multi-Stakeholder Role Play

The Multi-Stakeholder Role Play tool enables participants to experience different perspectives in a multi-stakeholder setting, coming to grips with gender, age and power dimensions as they look for win-win situations. This tool is valuable not only for creating awareness about these factors, but also for developing facilitation, negotiation and communication skills.

Purpose

The main purpose of this tool is to:

- Enable participants to experience different perspectives
- Enable participants to practice looking for win-win outcomes in situations where gender, age and power play a role
- Give participants the opportunity to practice facilitation, negotiation, and communication skills in a multi-stakeholder setting

When to use this tool

This tool is especially useful for courses and trainings with approximately 20 people, and can be valuable for all kinds of stakeholders. To enhance learning, this exercise is best done in multiple rounds. Reserve at least 2.5 hours.

Credits

This tool is based on the "Gender in Mediation: An Exercise Handbook for Trainers" (ETH Zurich and Swisspeace, 2015), the MSP Guide (Brouwer et al., 2015), and the MSP Tool Guide (Brouwer and Brouwers, 2017), as cited in the tool.

The case was developed by Nina de Roo and Bram Peters. Click here to access the tool.

Nina’s experience with the MSP role play

With the intention of strengthening the enabling environment in Ethiopia, Benefit-SBN enhanced collaboration through multi-stakeholder partnerships at various levels, to realize their individual and common objectives within the sesame sector. In light of this, and the aim of a more inclusive sesame sector, my colleague and I from WCDI were asked to organise a Y&G workshop, during which we facilitated a Multi-Stakeholder Role Play with 15 people from the SBN team. Individuals were given roles very different from their usual role, to trigger participants to think about the position other stakeholders are in and the challenges they may face. Although the team clearly struggled with the exercise in the beginning, after a few rounds, we noticed individuals had a better understanding of the perspectives and emotions of the different stakeholders, particularly those in powerless corners.

What we value so much in this thought-provoking tool is the experiential learning, because it allows people to experience what it feels like to be in a powerful or less powerful position than others, whether that is because of age, educational background, gender, status, or other factors. We have noticed these experiences leave a mark on participants, enabling them to be more empathetic, and think and act differently towards other stakeholder groups. This is especially powerful when done with a group of familiar faces, where the struggles become more visible and people speak more freely, but is also very useful with less acquainted groups or during courses.

“We noticed individuals had a better understanding of the perspectives and emotions of the different stakeholders, particularly those in powerless corners.”

The most important lesson I learned in facilitating these sessions is that doing several rounds of the exercise is crucial for the learning experience, because it takes time for some people to step into a new role, to let go of usual behaviour and cultural hierarchies, and behave realistically according to the role they are given.

My advice to other users is to reflect on the role play, struggles, and observations in between rounds, and to exchange tips on how to play a role more realistically. This process provides a more realistic outcome and a greater understanding of the different stakeholder perspectives.

Nina de Roo
Advisor Inclusive Food Systems
Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation

Share Your Tools and Experiences

To increase the relevance and impact of our work for youth in food systems, it is important to share and learn from each other's experiences. We plan to review experiences over the coming two years and work towards a toolkit 2.0 in 2023.

We invite you to share your experiences, lessons learned, and any new or adapted tools by sending an email to training.cdi@wur.nl.

Footnotes

By clicking on the correct footnote you go back to the text page.

1 The aspiration gap refers to the gap between education and employment opportunities.

2 One example of how an insufficient understanding of the challenges youth face can limit impact is when the provision of certain training programmes has led to shifts in the supply curve without increasing the number of jobs available (Dekker & Hollander, 2017; Fox & Kaul, 2017).

3 To express the importance of this, we refer to examples provided by Fox & Kaul (2017) and Dekker & Hollander (2017) in which jobs were taken from non-youth and given to youth instead. This redistribution of jobs (otherwise referred to as displacement) does not address the key challenges at hand, which is insufficient job opportunities for people of all age groups.

4 For example, some UN bodies define youth as being between 15-24 or 15-32 years old, whereas the African Youth Charter, an African Union treaty, defines youth as being between 15 and 35 years of age (Youth at Heart, 2021) The government of Nepal set the limit for youth at age 40, for example.

5 This is especially important, because youth is defined differently in different contexts and consists of many subcategories. Youth may differ in terms of i.e. age, life phases, education, access to land, wealth, family backgrounds, access to finance, networks, experience, engagement in information and communication technology, access to information, technology, or other resources, ambitions, opportunities. That is why we believe it is important to understand and adapt approaches based on the contexts in which youth find themselves.

6 Programme evaluations may appear effective in the short-term, but if they do not adequately address the needs and ambitions of young people, long-term results may be limited. For example, if interventions are not in line with youth ambitions, youth may go find work in a different sector after the programme ends (Participant A, Focus Group Discussion, October 2020). For example, according to one study, two-thirds of training programmes and programmes supporting youth in searching for jobs have no effect at all. For many that do appear to be effective, the effects wear off after 2-3 years (Kluve et al., 2016 and Card et al., 2015 as cited in Fox & Kaul, 2017).

7 We understand epistemic justice to be injustice of knowledge: excluding groups in research, or not mentioning their contributions to science, or distorting information. One examples of this is the mentioning of farmers in literature, which obscures whether it is a male or a female farmer. Another example is the underrepresentation of women and brown or black people in science, and an overrepresentation of young white males in health research, leading inter alia to biases in medical treatments.

References

Berkum, S. van, Dengerink, J., Ruben, R. (2018). The food systems approach: sustainable solutions for a sufficient supply of healthy food (Ser. Wageningen economic research memorandum, 2018-064). Wageningen Economic Research. Retrieved December 23, 2021.

Brouwer, H., Brouwers, J. (2017) *The MSP tool guide: sixty tools to facilitate multi-stakeholder partnerships.* Companion to The MSP Guide. Wageningen: Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation

Brouwer, H., Woodhill, J., Hemmati, M., Verhoosel Karèn, & Vugt, S. van. (2015). *The MSP guide:* how to design and facilitate multi-stakeholder partnerships*.* Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation. Retrieved December 23, 2021.
Denstad, F. Y., Youth Partnership (Organization), & Council of Europe. (2009). Youth policy manual: how to develop a national youth strategy. Council of Europe Pub. Retrieved December 23, 2021.

Dlamini Zuma, N. (2017). Welcome remarks of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, HE Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma to the 28th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union. Retrieved December 23, 2021.

Glover, D., Sumberg, J. (2020). Youth and food systems transformation. Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems*, 4*. Retrieved December 23, 2021.

HLPE (2021). *Promoting youth engagement and employment in agriculture and food systems*. A report by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition of the Committee on World Food Security, Rome.

Hove, H. ten, Roefs, M., Herens, M., Kizito, F., Katungye, V., Mugabi, F., Wasswa, C., Mugizi, D. (2019). Exploring the views of learners and parents on the effects of school feeding: action research in the TIDE School Milk Programme, South West Uganda (Ser. Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation report, 19-078). Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation. Retrieved December 23, 2021.

IFAD (2019). Creating opportunities for rural youth*. IFAD*. Retrieved December 23, 2021

Theis, S. and Meinzen-Dick, R. (2016) Reach, benefit, or empower: clarifying gender strategies of development projects. IFPRI. Retrieved December 23, 2021.

Kovacevic, M., Dickson-Hoyle, S., Mukhebi, D. and Yoga-Yieke, P. 2018. *Coordinating a mentoring program: a toolkit for agriculture, forestry, landscapes and other sectors*. V4. YPARD, Rome.
Kyewalabye, J. 2020. *Insights into youth networks*. Germany: Global Donor Platform for Rural Development.

Fox, L., Kaul, U. (2017). *The evidence is in:* how should youth employment programs in low-income countries be designed? Retrieved December 23, 2021.

Dekker, M., Hollander, S. (2017). Boosting youth employment in Africa: what works and why*?* Retrieved December 23, 2021.

Molenaar, J.W., Kessler, J.J. (2021). *Sector transformation: a systems approach to transforming commodity sectors*. Aidenvironment, Amsterdam.

Posthumus, H., Bosselaar, J.M., Brouwer, H. (2021). The food system decision support tool – a toolbox for food system analysis. Wageningen University & Research and KIT Royal Tropical Institute. Retrieved December 23, 2021.

Tichar, T., Francis, J. (2019). Youth employment and entrepreneurship in agri-food systems: a framework for interventions. Wageningen University & Research and CTA. Retrieved December 23, 2021.

Youth at Heart (2021). *Meaningful youth participation: practical toolkit*. Unpublished toolkit. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.

Colophon

Authors
Salome Boyd and Riti Hermán Mostert

Contributors
Yael van Assendelft (WUR), Herman Brouwer (WUR), Mirjam Schaap (WUR), Chenyue Li (WUR), Nina de Roo (WUR), Thomas Tichař (WUR), and Jackline Owili (WUR), Joost Guijt (WUR)

Citation
Boyd, S., Hermán Mostert, R. 2021. *Toolkit on Youth in Food Systems*. Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation, Wageningen University & Research. Report WCDI-21-171. Wageningen

Acknowledgements
The following internal and external professionals provided useful comments in the process of developing this toolkit: Bram Peters (Cordaid), Sjors Bijen (Cordaid), Eirini Sakellari (CGIAR), Anna Bucci (CGIAR), Tewodros Tefera (REALISE), Angelique Umutoni (Vegetable Producer and Financial Literacy Trainee Rwanda), Edidia Dusabe (SNV-HortInvest Rwanda), Beatrice Tschinkel (SNV), Enoch Cudjoe (SNV), Jean Muthamia-Mwenda (SNV), Annabelle Daburon (WUR), Domenico Dentoni (WUR), Flo Dirks (WUR), Likoko Eunice (WUR), Joost Guijt (WUR), Irene Koomen (WUR), Irene Salverda (WUR), Herman Snel (WUR), Thomas Tichař (WUR), Assumpta Uzamukunda (WUR-HortInvest), Polycarpe Nshimirimana (SNV-HortInvest), Dieuwke Klaver (WUR), Jorge Matallana (WUR), James Mulkerrins (WUR), Marlene Roefs (WUR), Simone van Vugt (WUR), Etienne Niyigaba (YEAN Rwanda), Glindys Virginia Luciano (YPARD), Emily Ongus (YPARD mentee), and Pieter Temminck (Zone College Twello). We also thank our WCDI colleagues from the Youth & Gender cluster for their input and feedback throughout the process.

Design
Wageningen University & Research, Communication Services

Photography
Shutterstock (Cover p.15, 23, 25, 33)
Flo Dirks (p.04, 05, 34), Tsegab Meles (p.16), Félix Yao (p.26), Thomas Tichař (p.27), Ivoire Qualité (p.31), Dao M'boua Bakary (p.36), Nuru Mwakitabu (p.37), Konaté Karamoko (p.09, 39), Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation (p.11, 12, 42), Flickr P. Kimeli (p.06), Flickr Georgina_Smith (p.14)

P.O. Box 88, 6700 AB Wageningen, The Netherlands
t + 31 (0) 317 48 68 00
e info.cdi@wur.nl
w wur.eu/wcdi

This report can be downloaded for free at https://doi.org/10.18174/558210 or at wur.eu/wcdi (under publications).

Report WCDI-21-171

Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation supports value creation by strengthening capacities for sustainable development. As the international expertise and capacity building institute of Wageningen University & Research we bring knowledge into action, with the aim to explore the potential of nature to improve the quality of life. With approximately 30 locations, 6,800 members (6,000 fte) of staff and 12,900 students, Wageningen University & Research is a world leader in its domain. An integral way of working, and cooperation between the exact sciences and the technological and social disciplines are key to its approach.