

AFRICAN  
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FORUM 2012



# YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE

*Side Event at the AFRICAN GREEN REVOLUTION FORUM 2012*

**27 September 2012**

*Kenya Rural Youth Livelihood Strategies Programme (KERYLIP): Case Study Nyando District of Nyanza Province, 2004-2007*

*Presented*

*By*

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# Introduction

- Kenya Rural Youth Livelihood Strategies Programme (KERYLIP: 2004-2007) initiated by Kenya Youth Foundation to **create employment and livelihood access** for rural youth along the Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources Value Chain by venturing into **both on-farm and off-farm** enterprises/income generating activities.
- **Time frame & Budget:** A 10-year programme proposal broken into five site-phases of two years each at a cost of \$100,000 (Actual Investment Kshs. 50,000, about \$650).
- **Programme Activities:** Capacity building, vegetable production, livestock production, trees & fruit trees seedlings production, garbage collection & recycling, transport & marketing, para-extension services, youth resource centre, etc.

# Project Context

- **Pilot District (Nyando):** Agriculture is the main economic activity (rice, sugar cane, livestock, maize, millet etc.).
- Over 60% of the population are youth & children.
- Population growth rate is 3%.
- Poverty is over 50%.
- Good soil & close to River Nyando (potential for irrigation).
- HIV & AIDS & Malaria - major health challenge.
- High school drop out rate (primary school 4 out 10 while secondary 7 out 10 mainly due to lack of school fees).
- Most popular youth engagement: Motorcycle riding popularly known as boda- boda.

# WHY KERLYP?

- Runaway youth unemployment (It is estimated that 67% of unemployed in Kenya are youth (GoK 2008).
- Several policy interventions on youth self-employment have not yielded the desired results (promotion of informal artisan skills & micro-businesses, recently established National Youth Development Fund)
- According to Vision 2030: the longer people stay out of work, the more their employability deteriorates making progressively harder for them to gain employment.
- Rural-urban migration of youth (productive labour wasting in search of non-existent formal employment).

# KEY IMPACTS

- **200 youth** directly & indirectly benefited from the livelihood improvements under the project
  - 55% in vegetable production, 17.5% trees and fruit trees, 10% in garbage collection and recycling, 7.5% in livestock, 6% Resource center and extension services, 4% transport and marketing.
- **Involved youth** largely remained in the community & continued engaging in agriculture & related activities and many youth groups emerged with similar activities (experiential learning, peer to peer learning)
- **Contribution** to sustainable management of solid waste in Ahero Urban Centre - a great challenge to local authority (Waste recycling for making compost Manure)
- **Supplementing** agricultural extension services-facilitation of Farmers Field Schools (complimenting government in service provision and agents of change for other youth & farmers groups)
- **Attitude change** on HIV & AIDS and Gender (increased awareness & gender responsiveness)
- The project was **recognized** by UN-HABITAT –MILGAP (Mashariki Local Governance Award Programme) as best practice in sustainable development.
- **About 40,000** trees and fruit trees were sold by the group to the public with each seedling sold at Kshs. 3 to Kshs. 10. This earned approximately Kshs. 350,000 which is about US \$ 4,375.(Translated into household assets & wellbeing of youth involved & their families).
- **Enhanced Knowledge & networking** (Youth Resource Centre) the youth, NGOs & government officers benefited from the resource materials at the Centre.

# Key Success Factors

- Working with existing youth groups in line with project objectives and activities.
  - Reduced the cost of mobilization
  - induction/up-take/capacity building
  - faster, timely & focused implementation
  - Better utilization of existing resources (transport: donkey pulled cart, recycling of the biodegradable for making compost manure)
  - Cost-sharing (renovation & stocking of resource Centre – Paying the rent)

**Tailor-made Capacity building** very important to attract youth to agriculture & related sector.

- **Agriculture is not only production** but the entire value chain
- **Clearly defined benefits** (immediate & long term)
- **Active participation** by youth will bring out the best in them
- **Creativity, innovativeness & fun** (KERLYIP incorporated sports-football)
- **Technology** (use of Irrigation pump boosted vegetable production)
- **The replicability** of project

# Opportunities

- Renewed confidence in agriculture & related sectors by youth
- Available productive land and water for irrigation (River Nyando)
- Enhanced infrastructural development in the rural areas under Vision 2030 (roads, electricity, telecommunication, irrigation systems etc)
- Youth are more “educated”/exposed to modern ways (high uptake rate of innovations & technology). Even with basic education, the youth are curious & receptive to new ideas than older farmers-use of mobile phone, computers etc.
- Focus on the entire value chain (key areas: production, marketing & technical advisory services etc)
- Huge Market (local, national, regional & international)
- Enhanced research in agriculture (high value varieties, drought resistant, home-based agro-processing & cost-effective production technologies)
- Slow growth rate in the formal employment(67% of unemployed in Kenya are youth (GoK 2008)
- Political & Economic Reform Agenda of the Government (New Constitution, Vision 2030, devolved development funds, Special funds for disadvantaged groups-youth fund, women fund and funds for the disabled)

# Challenges

- Inadequate resources to support the project components & upscaling (the pilot fund was provided by KYF - Kshs. 50,000 against proposal of US\$100,000 for 10 years in five Districts)
- Lack of strong linkage and commitment from the government departments to sustain such initiative and upscaling
- Stigma & low attitude towards youth in agriculture & related sectors
- Low funding from government, donors, private sector and development partners
- Inadequate rural infrastructure & multiplier services (agricultural credit, access to input & services)
- Structural inequalities( poverty, gender, thematic, geographic & cultural)
- Biased policies (Lack of enabling environment & resources)
- Lack of deliberate & tailor-made capacity building



# Recommendations

- Further research on motivation, aspirations and benefits (how youth can effectively participate in agriculture & related sectors?)
- Repackaging of agriculture as a business. Focus should not be only on production but also include marketing, input supply, extension & advisory services, agro-processing, agro-technology, storage services, transportation, packaging and managerial services.
- Enhanced structural linkage among stake holders to up scaling best practice (local, regional and world).
- Deliberate National & Regional policy on youth and agriculture (Participation by youth in the process, training government officers in working with youth, collaboration with other service providers (NGOs, Academic & Research Institutions and Private sector)

# Recommendations cont'd

- Affirmative action for disadvantaged youth (out of school youth) such as specialized training packages and access to financial and marketing services.
- Prioritize socio-economic benefits and strategies to achieve them (It is about their aspirations). Portray farming as cool, sporty and of higher returns to live well like their counter-parts in other professions like IT.
- Social interaction & entertainment should be mainstreamed (music, skits, drama, & sports as tools for agricultural extension services to farmers).
- Creativity, responsibility, self-reliance and involvement of other key segment of the society are important (parents, role models & community leaders).

Q. How Do We Create A 'Swag' Farmer?

Thank You