

Youth Agripreneurship in Africa: Insights from NFP's Community of Practice



Community of Practice Youth Agripreneurship: An Overview



3 ONLINE LEARNING SESSIONS

- *Strategies and approaches to serve different youth groups*
- *Meaningful youth engagement - from a Value Chain and Livelihoods perspective*
- *Empowering Youth In Agriculture - Effective knowledge sharing strategies*



Community of Practice Youth Agripreneurship: An Overview



6 BEST PRACTICE SHOWCASES

- **SNV:** *Using an integrated approach to effectively serve marginalized youth groups*
- **Rwanda Youth in Agribusiness Forum:** *Strategies and tools to engage different groups*
- **VSO International:** *Building resilient livelihoods with and for vulnerable youth*
- **2SCALE:** *Engaging young entrepreneurs in Value Chain Development*
- **Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation:** *Guide for Practitioner*
- **INCLUDE:** *Engaging local policy makers through policy dialogues*



OUR GOAL:

Stimulating more inclusive food systems by helping practitioners, youth champions and policy advisors to develop and implement more effective interventions which meet the needs of different youth groups, including entrepreneurial youth, subsistence farmers and those seeking employment in the food system.



BACKGROUND:

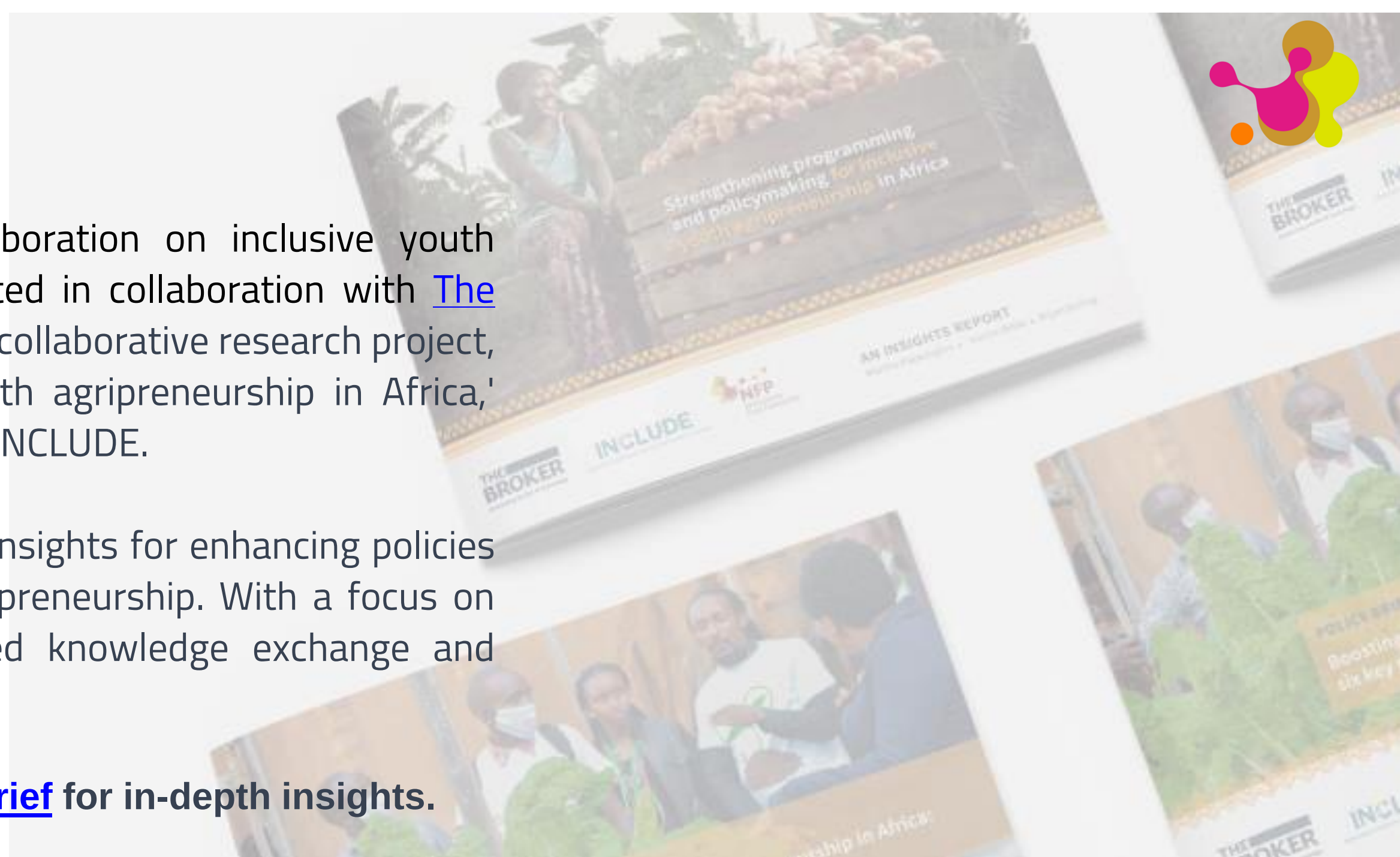
The CoP builds on the Multiplatform collaboration on inclusive youth agripreneurship in Africa, which was conducted in collaboration with [The Broker](#) and [INCLUDE](#). The CoP stems from our collaborative research project, 'Multiplatform collaboration on inclusive youth agripreneurship in Africa,' conducted in partnership with The Broker and INCLUDE.

Our primary goal was to generate actionable insights for enhancing policies and programs in youth engagement and agripreneurship. With a focus on involving youth at every stage, we fostered knowledge exchange and practical experiences.

Dive into the [Research Report](#) and [Policy Brief](#) for in-depth insights.

This CoP takes on vital recommendations from our past research, shaping the path forward for improving youth agripreneurship interventions:

- Tailor programs for different youth groups: Develop distinct programs addressing hard-to-serve youth, those requiring special support, and market-ready youth based on their specific barriers and needs.
- Create an enabling environment: Make the agriculture profitable option for youth by improving market linkages, access to finance, and land rights. Further, tackle social and labour market barriers, particularly for marginalized groups like rural women, to encourage agripreneurship.
- Engage youth meaningfully in programming: Involve diverse youth in programme design and implementation by setting up youth advisory groups at the beginning of a project and incorporating peer-to-peer learning and mentoring through-out the programme to enhance its impact.



CoP Outcomes in 2023



- **Complementarity of work through increased synergy**
Identification of best practices for interventions that meet the needs of different youth groups in collaboration with Dutch and African partners from policy, practice, youth networks and the private sector.
- **Improved access to evidence based knowledge for accelerated and just innovation**
Improved capacities to innovate and adapt youth agripreneurship strategies. Involvement of members' networks to maximize knowledge uptake and opportunities for implementation.
- **Strengthened enabling environment for food system transformation**
Generation of needs-based evidence and knowledge uptake of common issues faced in the ecosystem of youth agripreneurship programmes.



4 Insights from CoP Learning Sessions

1. Tailoring Programs for Diverse Youth Groups
2. Breaking Social Barriers
3. Youth-centric Value Chain Development
4. Meaningful Youth Engagement in Programmes & Policy



1. Tailoring Programs for Diverse Youth Groups

No one-size-fits-all approach:

Develop programs catering to individual youth profiles and aspirations within varying contexts. This ensures relevance and effectiveness.

- ✓ *Involve local youth for contextualizing global strategies.*
- ✓ *Use comprehensive matrix model integrating social background and employment profiles to identify and address specific needs.*

Effective toolkits are not blueprints:

Toolkits consider pathways for change and increase the understanding of systemic challenges and how to tackle these issues.

- ✓ *Effective toolkits need to give practitioners the confidence and right tools to address systemic barriers for young aspiring professionals in food systems.*



Learn more:

Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation developed a [Toolkit on Youth in Food Systems](#), which presents an interactive guide that supporting professionals with practice-based tools that build on a systemic approach to food systems and the necessity to work and collaborate in multi-stakeholder arrangements.



2. Breaking Social Barriers

Address social and cultural barriers:

Specifically design tailored programs to address distinct barriers, for example, gender, power dynamics, age, access to resources, educational systems, employment opportunities.

- ✓ *Contextualize your global theory of change and tools by asking input and advice from local youth with different backgrounds.*

Inclusion of rural and marginalized voices:

Integrate the voices of rural youth into national programmes, starting at grassroots levels, to ensure inclusivity and representation in policy and implementation.

- ✓ *Give youth a voice and provide opportunities to grow professionally by widening their networks and training them to become mentors.*
- ✓ *Advocate for youth community models that expose young entrepreneurs from marginalized backgrounds to successful youth-led ventures.*



Learn more:

The [VSO Women's Self-Help Groups](#), in Siaya County Kenya, supported community platform development through training to women and vulnerable youth, making connections with market actors and transferring agricultural assets to the most vulnerable. Strong intergenerational skills transfer and saving groups were cornerstones.



3. Youth-centric Value Chain Development



Inclusive Private Sector Partnerships:

It's imperative to go beyond mere training; simultaneous connection to economic opportunities is vital for sustained impact.

- ✓ *Engage youth in value chain development to establish partnerships with the private sector and connect them with other ecosystem players for follow-up services.*
- ✓ *Create synergies between the rural and urban youths through linking primary production and processing activities and building an ecosystem of youth farming associations and active entrepreneurs.*

Support Intrinsic Entrepreneurship:

Identify and offer enhanced support to the fraction of “high potential youth” possessing scalable business models, ensuring they receive comprehensive support for growth.

- ✓ *Provide long-term investment and mentorship for intrinsic entrepreneurs.*
- ✓ *Utilize innovative coaching approaches for peer-to-peer learning (e.g. [Young Farmers Champion model](#)), a potent tool for skill dissemination and knowledge sharing.*

Learn more:

[2SCALE's approach](#) is to facilitate PPPs to promote inclusiveness in agricultural value chains. These value chains are often complex networks involving many actors, including support services providing access to agro-inputs, finance and other services.

SNV's [Youth Employment & Entrepreneurship \(YEE\) framework approach](#) focusses on identifying and supporting youth-led agri-businesses with a high grow potential through an integrated approach, utilizing both supply- and demand-side activities. This includes amongst others strengthening leadership and entrepreneurship skills for market-oriented employability and improving B2B relationships with MSMEs to promote market systems development.



4. Meaningful Youth Engagement in Programmes & Policy

Involve Youth in Policy Formation and Project Implementation:

MYE requires young people in power to build pathways to sustain and support themselves and other youth.

- ✓ *Strengthen youth's ability to become advocates for their communities by building skills in areas of leadership, networking and advocacy.*
- ✓ *Avoid targeting the same youth for multiple programs and ensure diversified learning experiences and opportunities.*

Engage with Policy Makers:

Influencing policymakers is about building trust and engaging them at various levels, and from the start of an initiative.

- ✓ *Policy dialogues in collaboration with other ecosystem actors and youth leaders make policymakers part of the solution, and foster collaboration among diverse stakeholders for strategic partnerships.*



Learn more:

The [Rwanda Youth in Agribusiness Forum](#) empowers youth through leadership training, encouraging them to take active roles in shaping agricultural policies and practices.

[African Policy Dialogues](#), a flagship knowledge sharing approach of the INCLUDE knowledge platform, address research-policy gaps, starting from identifying themes, stakeholder mapping, knowledge creation, and culminating in meetings to bridge these gaps and work with all relevant stakeholders towards concrete context-specific solutions.



What is ahead in 2024?



- *Improve* youth agripreneurship programmes with **SNV, EAFF, GAIN, INCLUDE, VSO** and many others, and increase knowledge, awareness and collaboration amongst relevant food systems stakeholders.
- *Co-develop* one of the **Knowledge & Action Agendas** to address key youth agripreneurship challenges (e.g. access to finance, access to markets, influence on decision making)
- *Design* concrete **Knowledge Management Strategies** for practitioners and youth champions.

Interested to work with us?



Go to [NFP Connects](#) and join the community!

Request membership: *Send an email to Bente Meindertsma* bmeindertsma@nlfoodpartnership.com