



Position Paper:

Empowering Youth in Agriculture Through Inclusive Farmer Organizations and Forward-Thinking Partnerships

- AMEA Youth Workstream – who are we?
- Why do this position paper now?
- Is investment in youth programming viable?
- Reframing Youth: Beyond Age, Toward Opportunity
- Connecting proven, best practices
- AMEA's strategic role; positioning AMEA's strategic convening power, global reach, and farmer organization influence with this Youth Position Paper

- Searched for examples in literature research and projects
- Selection chosen for deep dive
- Becomes a benchmark for Tanzania sessions; looking for commonalities and critiques
- Paper highlights what we found
- Not yet any conclusions or recommendations as it's a living paper

Emphasize redefining “youth” as the major premise of the paper

“Youth as a dynamic life stage”

Leading to the three-category model

Our Youth Workstream’s unique lens with global and local perspectives

WHEN TO ENGAGE YOUTH?



Youth engagement in agriculture must begin early, be more inclusive, and be backed by meaningful support mechanisms that reflect young people's realities and aspirations.

Youth category	Age	Professional milestones
Early youth	12 – 18 years	Formative years for secondary education/career/professional identity
Transitional youth	18 – 25 years	Entry into tertiary education or economic/labor life
Established youth	25 – 35 years	Graduating from tertiary education. Seeking professional and economic stability and leadership roles

Research indicated in 2014 that by age 14–15, youth already have entrenched perceptions of agricultural livelihoods as either viable or outdated.

Moreover, many elderly farmers view young farmers as inexperienced or disrespectful of tradition

Partnering with schools

Building Youth-Led Agritech Curiosity

Encouraging Intergenerational Engagement

By their late teens and early twenties, youth often gain experience in both farming and agribusiness.

Yet, despite having an entrepreneurial drive, many struggle to scale their ventures due to systemic barriers, such as insufficient start-up capital, limited access to land, and unattractive loan conditions, including stringent collateral requirements and rigid repayment terms.

Strengthening Youth Roles in Agri-Service Delivery

Cooperative and Farmer Organization Reform

Leveraging Digital Platforms and Peer Learning

By their late twenties and early thirties, many young people have gained experience in farming, agribusiness start-ups, or cooperative participation, setting them up for a path to leadership.

Yet, financing remains a significant barrier, as traditional lenders often require collateral and apply risk-averse criteria that exclude young entrepreneurs, despite their adaptability and innovative potential.

Unlocking Access to Finance Through Innovation

Expanding Roles in Value Chain Leadership

Institutional Partnerships for Professional Growth

SUMMARY OF BEST PRACTICES



YOUTH CATEGORY	BEST PRACTICES
Early Youth	Partnering with schools
	Building Youth-Led Agritech Curiosity
	Encouraging Intergenerational Engagement
Transitional Youth	Strengthening Youth Roles in Agri-Service Delivery
	Cooperative and Farmer Organization Reform
	Leveraging Digital Platforms and Peer Learning
Established Youth	Unlocking Access to Finance Through Innovation
	Expanding Roles in Value Chain Leadership
	Institutional Partnerships for Professional Growth

Evaluating Cost-Effectiveness and Scalability

- Benchmark trajectory of transitional youth entrepreneurs.
- Create youth representation within farmer organizations and cooperatives.

Inclusive Agribusiness Models

- In agricultural programming, “inclusion” is too often measured simply by the number of smallholder farmers reached.
- Enterprises are “forgotten”.
- True inclusion requires addressing barriers that prevent full participation.

Addressing Youth Shocks and Stressors within Food Systems

- Youth are disproportionately exposed to shocks and stressors.

Youth are not a problem to be solved; they are a solution to the successes and challenges facing food systems

Youth are navigating systemic barriers to education, employment, and finance, and

Increasingly youth facing external shocks and stressors such as conflict, climate change, and health crises

Addressing issues requires tailored, youth-sensitive responses—ranging from psychosocial support and livelihood diversification to enabling youth leadership in crisis response

