



# Empowering Established Youth Organisations to Increase Membership Engagement

How-to-guide on building a sustainable and inclusive membership base



## Abbreviations

<b>AGM</b>	Annual General Meetings
<b>KP</b>	Knowledge Product
<b>SMEs</b>	Small and Medium-sized enterprises
<b>YO</b>	Youth Organisation

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### The context of this Knowledge Product

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH supports income generation and employment creation for youth (15-35 years) and women in Burkina Faso, Kenya, Malawi and Mozambique since 2020 within the framework of the Global Project Employment in Rural Areas with Focus on Youth. One of the interventions and as a means for reaching this aim is to strengthen Youth Organisations (YOs).

During the early stages of the Global Project, the handbook Youth.Net.Works!, based on earlier experiences from Kenya, initially assisted the other three country teams, Burkina Faso, Malawi and Mozambique to design and pilot their support interventions to various YOs since 2020. YO proved to be very promising entry points to address the target group of youth and women and target them with various support offers. Throughout the implementation of the project in the four countries up to 2023, a lot of experiences have been gained – in cooperation with beneficiaries and partners.

For this reason, a working group consisting of representatives of the four country teams, representatives of the supported YOs and other related partners exchanged and discussed over several months and finally physically met in Kisumu, Kenya in 2023 to gather the experiences and knowledge which are the basis of this Knowledge Product (KP).

**Good Practices** were identified in six thematic areas where the mentioned stakeholders felt they could substantially contribute with their experience on successfully shaping the development of YOs:

- 'How to mobilise members?'
- 'How to disseminate information within the YO?'
- 'Which agricultural services of the YO can attract new members?'
- 'How can YOs engage and retain women?'
- 'How can a leadership transition be successful?'
- 'How can the impact of YO's efforts be measured?'



The purpose of developing and publishing this KP is **to make relevant knowledge and good practices available for up-scaling and replication of efforts to strengthen YOs**. The target groups are YOs themselves as well as donors, donor agencies and Non-Governmental and Governmental Organisations working with YOs that aim at strengthening them.

This KP is specifically designed for already established and operational YOs aiming at expanding their member base and outreach. For YOs starting from scratch, we recommend accessing the [Youth.Net.Works!](#) handbook as initial building blocks (available in English and French). Once the foundation is established, this KP can be effectively applied to further enhance YOs' growth and impact.

It is important to note that the results presented in this document may not be directly applicable to every context. The document reflects the participants' learnings from their specific contexts and environments. It serves as a summary of their insights and should be interpreted with consideration of the unique characteristics of each country setting. However, challenges and success factors might be similar, and a reflected transfer of the learnings can help in the development and growth process of other YOs.

The following Chapters 1-6 present recommendations for procedures as well as challenges and potential solutions and success factors in the identified thematic areas. Country examples and experiences are particularly highlighted.

You can always jump back to the previous section through the arrows at the top of each page.



Click or hover on the lightgreen bars for more information.

**Link**

Click on this icon to be redirected to an external resource outside of the document.

### What is a Youth Organisation?

A YO in this context is defined as an organised, legally registered, member-driven grouping of young people pursuing a particular purpose (e.g. promotion of agribusiness for income generation and employment, public or political representation of youth agripreneurs in a region, exchange among peers etc.). Depending on the local context, membership may range from 25 to 500 or even beyond (this could, for example, comprise an umbrella organisation of 500 young people within an administrative, regional unit etc.).

### How can YOs contribute to employment and income creation?

Strengthening rural YOs presents an unprecedented opportunity to increase employment and income for rural youth and women and thus support the attractiveness and the development of the agri-food sector as well as rural areas in general. A strong YO can provide services by and for youth and can empower young entrepreneurs to overcome institutional voids by building structures and opportunities for knowledge sharing, collaboration, and peer networking. Youth organised in larger-scale or representative business organisations have better bargaining power for inputs, services, and trade. Youth, especially young women, can benefit by reaching out more efficiently to other rural youth and to (development) partners. Depending on their objectives and mandate, YOs are more likely to be heard and actively included in shaping the political agenda for rural youth development.

### What is youth mobilisation?

Youth mobilisation in this context is a process of reaching out to and convincing more youth to join a youth club or YO to create a stronger and unified entity in addressing pressing issues together.

### What is agribusiness development along value chains?

Agribusiness development means increasing employment and income in the agricultural and food sectors along specific value chains and for various business models that are economically viable and (in the con-

text of YO development) also youth friendly. These value chains can be crop and animal-based and cover all aspects of production (production technologies, plant protection, financing, etc.), value addition (processing, packaging, use of by-products etc.), service provision (input supply, harvesting services, transport, etc.) to marketing (price information, marketing channels, bulk selling, etc.). Agribusiness development does not only cover farmers who produce but also agripreneurs and enterprises who make a living from production, processing, service provision, and marketing etc.

### What is improved service delivery?

One of the most serious bottlenecks for agribusiness development in many countries is the lack of qualified agricultural services along the value chains. Therefore, youth will find it highly attractive to join a YO if members of the YO are in the position to deliver such services to other members and at the same time potentially benefit from further service offers. **In fact, internal service delivery is probably the most important factor contributing to employment and income created by YOs.** It becomes a win-win situation for members while the agricultural and agri-food sector is more and more professionalised.

#### Country specific

In Kenya, for example, the production of day-old chicks and disease-tolerant sweet potato vines by members and the sale to other members have proven to be highly profitable to the buyers and generate a decent income for the youth.

# Mobilising members



## How to develop a good mobilisation strategy?



### Step by step

1

**Identify the target group and make them aware of the potential benefits of joining a YO**

This step is crucial as it sets the foundation for developing an effective strategy.

- Identify the gender, age, and location of your target group and think about the target number to achieve.
- Language check: Identify the most commonly used written language (e.g. English/French/Portuguese) and spoken (local languages).
- Organise meetings with the target group:
  - to better understand their needs, wishes and expectations and
  - to present potential benefits of joining a YO, particularly in the field of agribusiness development and related improved services provision.

2

**Identify the challenges youth have particularly in starting agribusiness development and accessing relevant services**

Get a better understanding of the challenges:

- Develop a guideline for conducting a needs assessment particularly related to agribusiness development and service delivery (you can use questionnaires, focus group discussions, and other relevant tools).
- Gather supporting documents such as surveys, focus group findings, interviews, observation records, reports from past projects or programs, and relevant literature.

**Country specific**

In the case of Kenya, the problem is insufficient self-organisation of youth in the agri-food sector which leads to issues like limited access to land, finance, and information.

3

**Identify other stakeholders, particularly in agribusiness development and related service delivery**

Coordinating stakeholder efforts is crucial to prevent duplicated work.

- Conduct a stakeholder mapping to better understand the actors potentially relevant for YOs.
- Conduct a needs assessment on YO level, organise meetings to discuss the findings from the needs assessment and explore synergies amongst stakeholders.
- Verify and validate the information gathered during the needs assessment.

4

**Define the objective(s) of the intervention**

- Clearly state the reason for this mobilisation action. Motivate the existing members to participate and contribute.
- Connect the intervention objectives with the defined challenges, particularly in agribusiness development and related service delivery.

5

**Develop the strategy (this can be relevant for YOs themselves but also for support agencies)**

Encourage ownership of the process.

- Involve all the relevant stakeholders and the target group in the strategy design process through joint stakeholder meetings.
- Try to make it participatory. Make sure every participant/stakeholder is actively involved and can express themselves.
- Agree on a clear budget for implementation, a Monitoring and Evaluation framework, and the division of tasks within the YO and if applicable between the YO and a supporting agency and its team.

Mobilising youth for joining a YO is key for the formation and sustainable growth of a YO. A mobilising strategy should, therefore, be geared towards the needs of potential future members particularly in the field of agribusiness development and related improved services delivery.

### How to successfully mobilise existing members?

#### Why to mobilise existing members?

Existing members who hold official positions in a YO are best suited to explain the benefits of the YO to potential new members.

A good strategy is to leverage existing structures and officers, such as ward representatives, who work closely with smallholders at the local level or grassroots clubs.

#### Country specific

##### Kenya

One can reach out to county-level officers and provincial-level authorities for support.

##### Malawi

One can reach district youth officers, area development committees, and village development committees for support.



#### What challenges/potential solutions were encountered in the mobilisation process?

##### Lack of general motivation

Existing members may not always be enthusiastic about participating in YO meetings and activities because the activities do not address their direct needs or align with their current life situations.

##### > Potential Solution

Focus on subjects and value chains in which these existing members are already involved or would like to enter. By supporting them in addressing the issues they face with their businesses, you can enhance their motivation to more active participation.

##### Lack of Attendance

at offered activities on qualification and skills development.

##### > Potential Solution

Do not use monetary incentives, which often fail to yield results due to people only seeking the money and not participating.

- Establish a competition format: encourage members to develop business plans that address community needs or initiatives. Then, select the best plan, which will receive funding and support for implementation.

- Consider involving influential figures from the community, such as religious leaders, musicians, and individuals who have achieved success in financial terms.
- Try to organise meetings that are conveniently located near attendees' homes.

##### Sustaining Interest of Former Leaders

Once former leaders lose their positions, they often become less interested in the activities of the organisation.

##### > Potential Solution

Former leaders have valuable knowledge to offer. To make the most of their expertise, set up an advisory board made of former leaders to guide the YO. Leaders should use their influence as advisors, coaches, consultants, mentors, and service providers and support YO in their field of expertise.



### How to successfully recruit new members?

#### Why to recruit new members?

- Having new members and thus a strong member base within the organisation provides YOs with financial and market advantages.
- Service delivery from and for members becomes more attractive with a certain member base as it is more efficient and economically viable.
- It will help young people find jobs or start their own businesses in agriculture which has a positive effect on the development of the agri-food sector and rural areas.
- By growing in size, YOs enhance their prospects of being heard and taken into account by politicians and government bodies. This expansion also appeals to both the private sector and donors, as they might prefer collaborating with larger organisations.
- New members also mean new ideas and more hands to put ideas into action.



#### What challenges/potential solutions were encountered in the recruitment process?

##### Managing Young People's Expectations

Young people often have unrealistic expectations of what the YO can provide for them and underestimate the effort they need to invest themselves.

##### ➤ Potential Solution

Avoid attracting new members by using the name of a donor or partners that the YO might cooperate with, as it can create a false impression of substantial financial resources. Effective expectation management involves:

- Clarifying the organisation's objectives, vision, and realistic benefits for its members.
- Communicating the responsibilities, rights, and different roles within the organisation.
- Regularly explaining the operations of the organisation to avoid misconceptions.

##### Managing Donor or Partner Expectations

Donors/partners often have high and sometimes unrealistic expectations regarding the number of new members to be recruited, which they may use as a condition for their support.

##### ➤ Potential Solution

To manage donor/partner expectations, take the time to explain the on-ground reality to them, if possible, using available data. You can also invite them to get a clearer picture.

##### Convincing Parents and Guardians

Parents or guardians may have concerns about allowing their children or wards to join the YO. Common concerns include the participants' age and gender biases.

##### ➤ Potential Solution

Engage in personal conversations with parents or guardians to explain the benefits of membership. Also, the involvement of the community/community leaders can help.

- Provide media documentation showcasing success stories of role models.
- Address gender issues by implementing strategies discussed in the 'Engaging and Empowering Women' chapter.

### How to successfully recruit new members?



Check the link to [Bungoma County Youth Visionary Network \(BCYVN\) Recruitment Template](#) for an example of a recruitment form.

#### Lack of Recruitment Guidelines and Motivation

Open recruitment without guidelines can lead to unsuitable or inactive members joining the YO. For example, a motorbike taxi driver who is always on the road may not be able to commit time and actively engage in the organisation's activities. However, they could still contribute through activities related to transportation – it always depends on the context. In general, motivating youth to work in the agri-food sector can be challenging due to the perception of hard work with little payoff.

#### Potential Solution

Identify role models for each value chain/business model and leverage information-sharing platforms to promote the benefits and opportunities within agribusiness.

- The youth's motivation to participate is often influenced by allowances rather than their genuine interest, making it demand-driven rather than supply-driven. However, by crafting a compelling value proposition and conducting grassroots awareness campaigns, YO can inspire youth to engage based on their interests, not just financial expectations. Recruitment should prioritise what the youth aim to accomplish.
- To achieve this, it's crucial to explain the benefits that youth will gain from their involvement during the recruitment process. Sensitisation efforts can be carried out through various means, such as social media, short videos, WhatsApp groups, and other community engagement activities. Additionally, visiting colleges to educate students about the youth programme can be an effective strategy, too.

#### Resistance from existing Members

Existing members may resist admitting new members and their ideas, hindering active participation and engagement.

#### Potential Solution

The chairperson plays a crucial role in sensitising existing members to accept, change and create an environment where new members feel comfortable to contribute and participate actively.

#### Use of paid mobilisers

In Kenya, the use of paid mobilisers to hit youth-targeted goals was found to be problematic as it resulted in the creation of a database of non-existent members.

#### Potential Solution

Setting the wrong incentives rather hinders the development of a YO than to push it forward. Therefore again, the genuine interest and the focus on demand-drivenness from the target group of youth is crucial for a sustainably growing member base.

### How to successfully recruit new members?



#### Which strategies have proven successful?



**Regular Meetings** Organise frequent meetings with youth in the community to discuss their needs, interests, and priorities. This will provide valuable insights into their perspectives and enable the YO to tailor their messaging and programmes accordingly.



**Field Day Exhibitions** Field days offer an excellent opportunity to showcase success stories, highlight high-performing farmers (male and female), and promote new technologies, products, and services. Youth are particularly drawn to interactive, hands-on learning experiences provided during these events.



**Peer-to-Peer Sessions** These create a platform for youth to learn from each other, share best practices, and build networks. Encourage knowledge exchange, collaboration and growth within the community.



**Qualification activities** Training sessions are effective in attracting youths fostering engagement/skill development.



**Video Reporting and Tutorials** Visual content can enhance learning experiences and make information more accessible and engaging for youth. Therefore, engage youth through video reporting and tutorials, which serve as effective tools for imparting agricultural knowledge.



**Mentorship and Role Models** Engage mentors or role models who can guide and support youth in navigating the challenges of starting or growing their businesses or organisations. Consider partnering with successful youth entrepreneurs or leaders to provide mentorship opportunities that inspire and empower youth.



**WhatsApp Group** WhatsApp groups represent a highly effective and significant marketing avenue for sharing information amongst youth and within the agricultural business sector.



**Existing Community Structures** Partner with established community structures and thus build on existing grounds.



**Exchange Visits** Organise exchange visits to successful YOs or small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to showcase best practices and foster networking among youth. These visits provide valuable insights and inspire youth to join the organisation and embrace agricultural opportunities.



**Attractive Value Proposition** Ensure that the YO has a compelling value proposition for potential new members. This proposition should be succinctly written and displayed on social media pages, websites, or in the offices. It should clearly outline the organisation's core values, activities, services, and the advantages it offers to its members. E.g. effective communication of the YO's added value, managing member expectations, and highlighting member responsibilities.



**In-Person Registration** Facilitate in-person registration for new members, requiring them to sign up personally. Use standardised registration forms to ensure consistency and clarity such as e.g. Google registration forms.

# Disseminating information

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## How to develop a successful communication plan?

The availability of relevant information at the right time is key for the satisfaction of members with their YO and, in the end, for the survival and sustainability of the YO. For agribusiness development and improved service delivery, this applies particularly to information on the availability of business opportunities and services along the value chains favoured by members. Each YO should, therefore, develop a communication plan geared towards the specific information requirements of its members.



### Identify suitable tools and channels

Identify suitable tools and channels for information dissemination, such as social media, email, webinars, conferences, and press releases. Keep the YO members' access and capacities to use certain information channels in mind when selecting them.



### Identify a responsible

for disseminating the information.



### Identify the frequency

of how information will be disseminated, depending on the nature of the information and the urgency.



### Identify indicators

to track the effectiveness of the communication plan.

A communication plan can for instance be presented in a table format as follows

Content	Purpose	Channel/tool/methodology	Frequency	Responsible	Indicator
Monthly newsletter	Share updates and news with stakeholders	Email or others	Monthly	Marketing Team of the YO	Open rates, click-through rates
Meetings	Discuss progress and address challenges	Video conferences or others	Weekly	Head of the YO	Attendance, action items completed
Social media posts	Engage with the target audience and promote products	Facebook or others	Daily	Social media manager(s) of the YO	Likes, shares, comments, reach
...					

Collect feedback from the target audience and stakeholders on the effectiveness of the communication plan. Use it to improve the communication plan and make necessary adjustments.

## Which methods/tools/channels work?

From the four countries' experience, there was a diversity of methods that work as per country context.

### Burkina Faso

- Low mobile data costs



#### What works

Encourage ownership of the process.

- Videos: to broadcast technical information
- Social media: e.g. Facebook and WhatsApp
- Role models: sharing their successful business stories during training sessions

### Malawi

- Poor network connectivity
- Active government e.g. District Youth Officer (DYO)
- Majority do not have smartphones



#### What works

- Face-to-face meeting: arrange in-person meetings, including specific training sessions and general meetings to address organisational challenges
- Radio
- Role models
- Social media (especially for semi-urban youth)
- Brochure: Check VIYAN Brochure in the Appendix section

### Mozambique

- The majority do not have smartphones
- High cost of data bundles



#### What works

- Face-to-face meetings
- Social media: Facebook (to share services and information) and WhatsApp
- Role models
- Posters

### Kenya

- Access to digital tools
- Availability of local radio stations
- A culture of radio listening



#### What works

- Videos: to broadcast inspirational messages and showcase a case study or a challenge encountered by a farmer
- Role models: utilise them in peer-to-peer visits and videos to capture the attention of the youth
- Posters, brochures, printed T-Shirts (use branded items like T-shirts to pique community curiosity, encouraging them to ask questions, especially during special events)
- Radio: engage radio broadcasts to discuss their work, achievements, challenges, and gather feedback from potential members
- Exhibitions
- Bulk SMS: to disseminate short, important messages to members quickly and efficiently
- Social media: WhatsApp (mainly used) and Facebook





### Which information should be shared?

#### General information

Information about government policies, programmes, and services that are relevant to youth and organisations. The YO leadership should keep him/herself informed on these topics and share it with the members.

#### Target audience

All youth interested in agribusiness. Information can be shared during meetings, via social media page (or website).

#### Information related to value chains/business models

- Technical aspects and value chain/business model-related innovations, including input supply, production technologies and processing etc.
- Market information including availability of input and output markets, process of inputs and outputs, etc.
- Business and support opportunities, including extension services.

#### Target audience

YOs members involved in a specific value chain/business model. In the best case, they are organised using a common platform such as a WhatsApp group. Organising a demonstration session for members is also a good option.

#### Disaster management/disease/pest outbreak and control

How to avoid or manage disasters, disease outbreaks and pests that can affect crops and livestock.

#### Target audience

All youth in agribusiness: the government or research centers take charge of distributing information, while the YO utilises its network to share the information they have received.

#### Weather information

Weather patterns and forecasts, including droughts, floods, and storms.

#### Target audience

All members of the YO. Information is distributed through e.g. WhatsApp groups about the weather, diseases, general information, and internal information. The county government or the national meteorological department releases the information, and then leaders share it within the WhatsApp group.

#### Information about new projects

New projects and initiatives that are relevant to YOs or its individual members.

E.g. information about GIGATONNE in Kenya which focuses on the collection of organic waste material that is composted.

#### Target audience

All members of the YO.

#### Access to finance

Available sources of finance, including loans, grants, and other financial products.

#### Target audience

All members of the YO.



### What challenges/potential solutions were encountered in the realisation of communication plans?

#### Lengthy and not engaging sessions

It made it difficult for some members of the audience, particularly youth, to stay interested.

#### ➤ Potential Solution

Break up long sessions into shorter, more engaging sessions to keep members interested and attentive. Design interactive and participatory activities that encourage discussion and collaboration.

#### Using a language not common to everyone

It made it difficult for locals to understand the information being shared.

#### ➤ Potential Solution

Use local languages whenever possible. Consider hiring local interpreters or translators.

#### Limited access to quality information

Sources of information such as extension materials (videos etc.) but also service providers may not always be qualified in certain areas, resulting in gaps in knowledge or even false information regarding markets, value chains, good practices etc..

#### ➤ Potential Solution

Provide more capacity-building for both YOs and emerging service providers to improve/ensure the quality of their information.

In general, focus on reputable sources (e.g. research centers, universities, renowned international organisations etc.) and if possible, try to get information from at least two different independent sources for verification.

#### Poor access to digital formats in rural areas

It made it difficult for some members of the community to access and use the technology effectively.

#### ➤ Potential Solution

Explore partnerships with local organisations or government agencies to leverage existing infrastructure or resources and provide training to members new to technology.

#### Politicisation of youth targeting information:

In some countries such as Malawi, Mozambique, Kenya, and Burkina Faso, governments have been known to use YOs for political reasons. When recruitment information is disseminated only to party members, other well-deserving youth may be left out.

#### ➤ Potential Solution

Reflect on the purpose of the YO which shall be to present youth in all their diversity rather than limit it to any political mindsets.

#### Limited time available on radio

While radio can be an effective way to reach a wider audience, the available time slots are typically limited in duration.

#### ➤ Potential Solution

Define key messages and major information to share to make the forwarded messages via radio as precise and to the point as possible for the intended target group. If possible, refer to follow-up information and contact points/persons for the audience.



### Difficulty in quantifying reach

It can be difficult to quantify the reach of youth-targeted information, particularly if there are no clear metrics or methods for tracking engagement.

### ➤ Potential Solution

First define who needs the information of quantified reach and what it will be used for. Second define the necessary level of detail and exactitude necessary to fulfil the use case. Third, define metrics and methods. If level of detail necessary is low, try to make an informed estimation. If required level of detail is high you can do a campaign tracking survey with randomized sampling of the broad target group (e.g. random walk, Kish Selection Grid data collection method) (as these are broadly known concepts in empirical research, you can find more information on the Internet).

### Poor design of posters/comics

Posters and comics can be a useful way to disseminate information to youth, but if they lack critical details such as time and venue information, they may not be effective.

### ➤ Potential Solution

Before disseminating visualized information, take the crucial time and validate the materials with a group of people, including experts on the topic (e.g. an extension agent) and the target group to make modifications and lastly ensure common understanding.

### Email as a primary mode of communication

Despite being a popular mode of communication, email is not always effective in reaching youth, as they often do not regularly check their emails, even if they have a bundle. This can lead to missed opportunities for communication and collaboration.

### ➤ Potential Solution

Identify the major communication channels used by youth in the region and try to preferably use them for any communication. The chosen channel might also depend on the type of message to be forwarded and the target audience. For the communication amongst members, discuss within the YO which channels are used to spread information and if those ones are accessible for all members – male and female.



**Which strategy has proven the most successful?**



### WhatsApp Communities

For one-way communication from the administration to the members, the use of WhatsApp Communities has proven successful. It is recommended to have one WhatsApp Group for each value chain or if feasible business model within the value chain.

# Attracting agricultural services

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### How can YOs use agricultural services along value chains to satisfy existing members and attract new ones?

Professional agricultural service delivery by members of a YO to other members along their preferred value chain(s)/business models is probably the most important function of a YO in rural areas. If a member does not get such services, they will not benefit economically from the YO and, very likely, lose interest in the YO. Therefore, a YO is likely to gain new members and keep existing ones if their services are attractive.



#### What are the most attractive services?

- **Access to land preparation**  
e.g. soil testing, land management
- **Access to quality inputs**  
e.g. seeds, fertiliser, pesticides
- **Access to qualification and skills**  
e.g. financial literacy training, technical, entrepreneurial or life skills

#### Other attractive services

- **Village Savings Loans (VSLs)**
- **Access to innovative practices**  
along the value chains.
- **Access to value chain-related services**  
e.g. pruning, harvesting, compost, pollination, solar pump irrigation etc..
- **Access to value addition services**  
such as packaging and processing.
- **Access to the markets**  
e.g. by using the YO as rented shops or agriculture cooperatives.
- **Access to market information**  
e.g. prices of inputs and outputs, availability of market outlets, etc..
- **Expand youth activities**  
to focus on other challenges that are affecting them. (e.g. Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)).



#### What challenges/potential solutions were encountered regarding agricultural service provision?

##### Lack of start-up capital for Village Savings Loans

YOs often face the challenge of not having sufficient start-up capital for Village Savings Loans.

##### Potential Solution

Educate members about the benefits of savings. Once members understand the value of saving, the organisation can generate the required capital through membership contribution fees.

##### Limited knowledge on climate-resilient crops and innovative production techniques

This knowledge gap can hinder YO before members who wish to explore more innovative production methods such as greenhouses or multi-story structures to mitigate the impact of seasonal variations.

##### Potential Solution

Reach out to private sector and government agencies specialised in climate change mitigation, adaptation or agroecological practices (e.g. the Climate Innovation Center in Kenya, which can offer information for free.)

# Engaging and empowering women



### How can YOs engage and retain women?

Half of the youth are women. Traditionally, women are often facing structural disadvantage and injustice. YOs are in a good place to contribute to women's empowerment. YOs can stress the importance of supporting women and gear part of their services specifically to women through tailor-made support packages for women and for peer exchange.



#### What gender-related challenges/potential solutions were encountered?

##### Need husband or parents' permission to join a YO

Traditional cultural norms in the four project countries dictate that husbands hold the position of authority within the family, requiring for wives or daughters to seek permission from their male relatives to join a YO. Men can be reluctant to grant permission because they fear losing control or that their wife will have less time for housekeeping and care work.

##### > Potential Solution

Representatives of the organisation can engage in a personal discussion and present compelling arguments. Ideally, both spouses should be actively involved in the organisation, with equal treatment and recognition. Showcasing successful female role models and demonstration plots shows the value that women's participation brings to society and households.

##### Limited access to digital information

In many households, husbands control access to phones, making it difficult for women to stay informed. Unmarried women, often face unemployment, which further restricts their means and access to smartphones and relevant (digital) information.

##### > Potential Solution

Information exchange should not rely solely on digital platforms but also include in-person meetings. Female mobilisation for these meetings is key.

##### Limited access to land

It is often typically inherited by sons, thereby limiting women's opportunities for land ownership.

##### > Potential Solution

In Burkina Faso, Kenya, and Malawi, a successful strategy is group land leasing. In Kenya, using public land by women's groups can be effective. Similarly, collaborating with local leaders in Malawi helped to access communal land.

##### Limited access to ownership and decision-making power

Women are often excluded from taking on opinion leadership roles in debates and are not provided with adequate space for their voices to be heard.

##### > Potential Solution

Establish a quota for women to ensure that at least 40 percent of all meeting participants are women. Decision-making positions should be equally filled by women and men. Male members should be sensitised to value women's opinions and contributions to discussions. Women should be given ample space to express their thoughts and guide the conversation.

### How can YOs engage and retain women?



#### Which strategies have proven successful?

- **Conduct activities that promote a feminist re-interpretation of gender roles.**

These sensitisation campaigns can be implemented through radio programmes, social media initiatives, and local in-person meetings. Support strategies that address cultural barriers to women's participation in development, such as dramas or other engaging methods. Implication of husbands and men is key for a sustainable change of socially constructed gender roles.

- **Tailor activities to address women's specific needs.**

Women may be more active in marketing and short-term crop cultivation, such as vegetables. The YO should analyse women's activities and ensure that their existing services meet the needs of female members.

- **Provide activities exclusively for women.**

It can create a safe space where they can openly share their challenges.

- **Highlight successful female role models.**

It will inspire young women to think big and believe in their skills. Identify such role models and provide them with visibility and platforms to share their successes and experiences.

E.g. In Kakamega (Kenya), a female entrepreneur is leading a mushroom farm and doing import-export. Her role as a female mentor is drawing more women into business.

- **Use training tools like 'Gender Makes Business Sense',** These tools should target wives and husbands and can be applied by YOs.

- **Develop and implement a gender policy.**

YOs hold events to inform members about gender policies and their importance.. Make sure the gender policy is not an empty shell and only set up to meet donor funding requirements. An inclusive and gender-sensitive membership base is important for a strong and sustainable YO.

Gender policy may include:

- Equitable distribution of resources
- Fair recruitment processes that offer both women and men equal opportunities to participate in events or secure employment
- Inclusive and Participatory Governance
- Capacity building and sensitisation of staff on wgender mainstreaming
- Gender advocacy and awareness
- Implementation of affirmative action
- Gender sensitive working conditions and practices
- Workplace safe from sexual harassment



# Leadership transition

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### Why is a good leadership transition within YO important?

A YO is typically made up of young people. However, there can be a challenge when the persons who founded and led the organisation become older and are no longer considered a youth. This is known as the founder syndrome, where leaders feel a strong sense of responsibility and want to continue leading the YO indefinitely because they played a significant role in building it up.

Eventually, though, there comes a time when leadership needs to be passed on. It's important to note that the YO should have specific guidelines for leadership transitions within their constitution.



#### What challenges/potential solutions were encountered in the transition?

##### Unclear leadership responsibilities

Leadership within the committee is typically distributed among several members. Nevertheless, a recurring issue is that one leader tends to assume a dominant role over the others, leading to unclear responsibilities of the others, particularly when the dominant figure steps down.

##### > Potential Solution

Develop clear guidelines to provide direction and support to new leaders, so they better understand the responsibilities and duties involved. Exchange with other YO can help when developing these guidelines.

##### Aspiring applicants lack of self-confidence

Without proper mentorship, the selection of potential candidates for leadership positions may be inadequate. Many aspiring applicants may lack self-confidence and leadership skills, making them unprepared to take on their role.

##### > Potential Solution

Establishing mentorship programmes can help address this issue by gradually training and guiding young aspiring leaders through different committee positions within the YO.

#### Country specific

##### Kenya

All five YOs have a constitution that outlines the requirements for leadership roles, the length of the term of office (typically two years), and the number of terms someone can serve. Elections are held during the Annual General Meetings (AGMs). Since these organisations are relatively new, they initially worked with an interim leadership until the confirmation of leaders at the first AGM.

##### Mozambique

All the associations have their own statutes that regulate the functioning of the association, including the governing bodies such as the general assembly, the Board of Directors, and the Supervisory Board. The mandates of the governing bodies are elected for terms of office every five years, with a limit of two successive terms. Members of these bodies cannot hold more than one position simultaneously. All of these associations will hold their first AGM in three years.



### Why is a good leadership transition within YO important?

#### Ineffectiveness of deputy positions

Although most YO have deputy positions, those elected to these roles may not effectively fulfil their duties and responsibilities because of the inability of the leader to delegate.

#### › Potential Solution

Establishing clear separations in responsibilities, ensuring that each deputy is accountable for their specific roles. Ideally, the deputy should grow and develop the necessary skills to become the next leader. Provide leadership training and establish clear organisational structures and processes.

#### Losing the knowledge of former leaders

Former leaders and members often possess valuable experience and knowledge. It is important to find ways to integrate them into the YO to avoid losing their expertise.

#### › Potential Solution

Mentorship twinning approaches, where experienced ex-leaders are paired with new leaders, can facilitate knowledge sharing and provide guidance. Older members can also serve as advisors and be invited to share their knowledge with the organisation.

#### Time-consuming volunteering leadership positions

It can be challenging due to a lack of motivation and tangible rewards.

#### › Potential Solution

Delegate more responsibility among members to avoid overloading one person or the leadership structure and stress the importance of joint efforts and good planning.

#### Gender imbalance in leadership positions

Men predominantly hold leadership positions within YO due to cultural reasons.

#### › Potential Solution

- Ensure that approximately half of the management positions are held by men and half by women. If the president is a man, the vice-president should be a woman or the other way around, creating a balanced leadership structure.
- To create a supportive environment, offer a sensitisation training to board members (or even better the entire YO) that highlights the value of women as valuable assets to the YO.

- In many cultures, women are traditionally encouraged to be reserved. When they have the opportunity to interact with successful women, it empowers them to engage more actively. Those successful women can also serve as mentors and coaches, providing support to other women in leadership roles. Such a support scheme can also be set up across different YOs.

# Measuring Impact

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YOs should have annual targets for their recruitment efforts, for their members' successes in the different value chains, and their gender balance and female empowerment within the groups.

## How to track recruitment efforts?

1. Set SMART target numbers on your organisation's target group:

**S**imple  
**M**easurable  
**A**ttainable  
**R**ealistic  
**T**ime-bound

E.g. The YO xy wants to have 100 new members until date yz, thereof 40% women, 40% under the age of e.g. 21.

2. Create a promotion strategy to recruit your targets and make sure to stick to agreed-upon milestones:
  - Choose the right promotion channels.
  - Establish specific goals for member acquisition, engagement, and retention.
  - Create a clear timeline.
3. Establish a member data base: You may do it analogue or digital; both methods are essential because not everyone has access to digital tools but storing all data digitally is highly recommended for ease of accessibility.
4. Actively participating: Use registration and participation forms in paper form or in the group chat.

You can also collaborate with the ward level to verify if members are actively participating in the organisation's activities. Determine reasons for inactivity if members are not engaged. This can help to address the problem and find solutions.

5. Collect general information during the first registration: every new member should fill out a registration form with indicators such as age, gender, etc.

## How to track recruitment efforts?

To measure value chain development, focus on each member individually.

### E.g. in the poultry value chain

1. Start with an initial assessment where the number of chickens owned by each member is counted.
2. Set a target number that the individual member wants to achieve within a specific period.
3. After that period, count the chickens again.

### E.g. in crop production

1. Initial Assessment: Start with measure the current crop yields of individual members in relation to the land size. For example, record how many bushels of wheat each farmer harvests per acre/hectare.
2. Set target number: Collaborate with each farmer to establish clear and achievable yield improvement goals. For instance, from 40 bushels per acre to 50 bushels per acre within one growing season.
3. After the end of the growing session, conduct a final evaluation of each farmer's crop yields. Calculate the percentage increase compared to their initial yield.

## How to assess female empowerment?

1. Measure male and female participation in meetings, trainings, and activity implementation and how many women take on official responsibilities within the YO.
2. Conduct discussion groups to identify barriers preventing women's participation and better understand their needs and expectations regarding the YO.
3. Use gathered information to make organisation actions more inclusive for women, e.g. through the timing during the day of meetings or the location of meetings.

## How to track engagement, participation, and retention?

1. **Social media campaigns.**  
Facebook analysis can provide valuable insights into the success of social media campaigns, including total views, reactions, and graphs.
2. **Use of attendance registers.**  
Attendance registers can help to track the engagement and participation of members in meetings and activities.
3. **Use of analogue or digital suggestion boxes.**  
Suggestion boxes can animate members to (anonymously) share their opinions and ideas, helping to improve engagement and participation.

### **Further resources and tools**

to support YOs in their mobilisation and recruitment efforts can be found [here](#).

### **Further information**

[Youth.Net.Works English](#)

[Youth.Net.Works French](#)

[One Week, One Goal: African Youth Organisations  
Unite for Agribusiness Growth](#)

# Imprint

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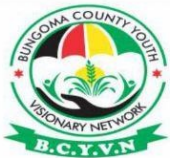
April 2024

On behalf of



Federal Ministry  
for Economic Cooperation  
and Development

## Bungoma County Youth Visionary Network (BCYVN) Recruitment Template



Metro House, Sikata Kimilili Road  
 P.O. Box 50200-112233, Bungoma  
 Tel:0700651264,11537140,0713571149  
 Email: bungomayouth.v@yahoo.com  
 Web: www.bcydn.org

### BUNGOMA COUNTY YOUTH VISIONARY NETWORK RECRUITMENT TEMPLATE

Sub county	
Name of enumerator	
Contact of enumerator	
Email address	
Level of education	

#### SECTION 1: AGRI-ENTREPRENEURS PERSONAL DETAILS

Name	
Sub county	
Ward	
Village	
GPS Coordinates(optional)	
Gender	
Age	
Contact	
Email address	
Date of recruitment	
ID number	
Level of education	

#### SECTION 2: VALUE CHAIN DETAILS

Type of main value chain	Duration in the value chain	Size of the value chain		Market for your products
		Acres (for crops)	Number (For poultry/dairy)	

How do you access information based on your value chain/s above?

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#### SECTION 3: ACHIEVEMENTS

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Metro House, Sikata Kimilili Road  
P.O. Box 50200-112233, Bungoma  
Tel:0700651264,11537140,0713571149  
Email: bungomayouth.v@yahoo.com  
Web: www.bcydn.org

**SECTION 4: CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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**SECTION 5: FUTURE PLANS**

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**SECTION 6**

**(FOR ENUMERATOR ONLY)**

Details of the value chain: (Write short notes about his/her value chain based on the information provided during key informant interview)

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Reviewed By:

.....Signature.....Date.....

Approved By:

.....Signature.....Date.....



Metro House, Sikata Kimilili Road  
P.O. Box 50200-112233, Bungoma  
Tel:0700651264,11537140,0713571149  
Email: bungomayouth.v@yahoo.com  
Web: www.bcydn.org

**SECTION 7**

**(FOR RESPONDENT/PROSPECT/EXPECTED MEMBER)**

**Agreement and obligations**

Bungoma county youth visionary network promises all members and beneficiaries on:

- 1) Treating each individual member/farmer with respect, courtesy and kindness.
- 2) Respecting the confidentiality of all information in its possession and in accordance with the relevant laws of the country
- 3) Securing all information in its possessions by maintaining systems that are in full compliance with strict information security controls, standards and procedures.
- 4) Being responsive to requests for information and assistance from members and beneficiaries.
- 5) Listening to, and carefully considering feedback and suggestions for improvements from all stakeholders.
- 6) Providing feedback to our stakeholders by periodically reporting on our performance.
- 7) Being pro-active rather than reactive in meeting the needs of the youth/farmers and in mitigating anticipated challenges.
- 8) Facilitating members who are differently-abled according to their needs.

**Members/Beneficiaries Obligation**

- 1) Participate in the clustered value chains for commercial purposes
- 2) Give feedback to the company for improvement in performance
- 3) Join different value chains and work together in terms of production and marketing
- 4) Maintain the quality standards as per the market demands.
- 5) Members/beneficiaries to respect company staff.

**Declaration:**

I..... hereby agree that I have read the above obligations and understood. I pledge to abide by them. The information I have provided is true to my knowledge and can be used by the organization for the appropriate purpose.

Signature.....Date.....



# Vihiga Young Agripreneurs Network (VIYAN) Brochure

## ABOUT US

VIYAN is a non-profit organization based in Vihiga aimed at transforming the lives of youth through agriculture by championing the agribusiness agenda for the young people in Vihiga County.

It operates in all the five sub-counties of Vihiga county. Since its registration in January 2022, its membership has grown to over 150 members, all who are young agri-preneurs running a variety of agri-enterprises. The members are engaged in various value chains including African leafy vegetables, poultry, passion fruits and apiculture, the four of which are the top four most practiced value chains.

through empowerment and social economic development

-To contribute towards increase in youth uptake in agribusiness by initiating programs that would make agriculture look appealing to the young people

-To capacity build, promote and create linkage with likeminded stakeholders with the aim of mobilizing support for the young women and youth in agribusiness.

# VIYAN

## VIHIGA YOUNG AGRIPRENEURS NETWORK (VIYAN)

### OUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

The future is bright for VIYAN members. The organization intends to take a center stage in resolving the crucial challenges of young farmers in areas of:

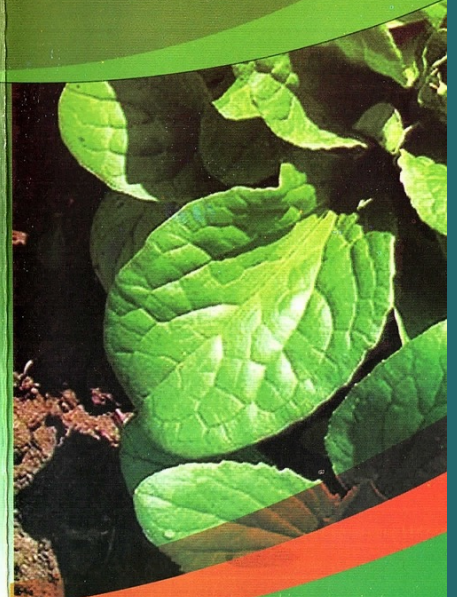
- Technology/Innovations
- Finance
- Markets

📍 Find Us..  
Office in Chango  
Along the Kisumu-Kakamega  
Highway; 300M from Majengo Town

✉️ [vihiayan2021@gmail.com](mailto:vihiayan2021@gmail.com)

📘 Vihiga Young Agripreneurs  
Network-VIYAN

☎️ 0113033097



# VIYAN

## 9.2 Vihiga Young Agripreneurs Network (VIYAN) Brochure



### WHY VIYAN?

- VIYAN provides a community of agripreneurs for all the young farmers across the county
- Through our partners, we offer capacity-building opportunities to our members on short technical courses in agriculture
- Members equally get hands-on/ on-farm trainings to enhance their skills in agriculture
- The organization links members to opportunities from commercial entities and development partners in areas such as climate smart solutions, finance, and markets
- VIYAN opens doors for peer-to-peer mentorship opportunities for the members
- Marketing through VIYAN Agri-journalism platform

### HOW TO JOIN VIYAN

•Members of VIYAN are youth (18-35 Years old) of Vihiga County active in agriculture, or planning to venture in agriculture.

•To join, fill the physical membership form, or fill the google form link provided on our virtual platforms and submit your bio-data.

•We will contact you within two weeks of receiving your request.

•For full membership, a registration fee of Ksh500 is required for administrative purposes.

•All payments are paid directly to the organization account using:

**Lipa na Mpesa,  
Pay-Bill: 247247  
Account: 0113033097**

### MISSION

To create a responsive network of young agripreneurs, regional institutions and technical partners to bring further understanding of rural transformation through agribusiness.

### VISION

To be the leading hub for youth in sustainable food security solutions and agri-business opportunities.

### CORE VALUES

- Transparency & accountability
- Inclusivity
- Integrity
- Teamwork
- Non-discrimination

