

SWAZILAND YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE SUMMIT DECLARATIONS AND CALL FOR ACTION



Organized by Swaziland National Agricultural Union
Funded by Micro Finance Unit
Happy Valley Hotel, Ezulwini
4 - 5 November 2015

Preamble

We, the youth, SNAU members, Ministry of Agriculture, Swaziland National Youth Council, non government organizations, private sector, and other development partners have gathered at Ezulwini, Happy Valley from 4th to 5th November 2015 at the youth in agriculture summit for Swaziland.

Affirmations and acknowledgements

In this regard we:

1. Note the discussions held before and during the Youth in Agriculture Summit for Swaziland with youth in agriculture.
2. Recognize that diversity of the young people in terms of gender, religion, region, organization of affiliation have enabled them to contribute positively to agricultural development through their creativity, vibrancy, and capacity innovation. Therefore, youth participation in agriculture at the community, regional and national levels should be a strong pillar in all current and future agricultural development in the country.
3. Acknowledge the efforts of the youth, representatives of government (i.e. (MoA), SNAU, CYDP, SNYC, NGOs and other development partners at all levels in promoting and supporting youth initiatives.
4. Further acknowledge previous decisions, and declarations made by AU Heads of States, governmental organizations and NGOs, and private sector to involve youth mainly through the 2014 Malapo Declaration, key message from the 2014 Conference held in Tunisia among other commitments.
5. Affirm that despite previous decisions and declarations made by AU Heads of States, governmental organizations, NGOs, and private sector to involve youth in agriculture, there are still some prevailing challenges that hinder full participation in agriculture in the country.
6. Stress that youth involvement in agriculture is imperative to eradicate hunger and poverty in Swaziland.
7. Note with concern the challenges of involving the youth in agriculture, that are common in Swaziland and the SADC region or African continent, namely: (i) negative perceptions on agriculture by the youth in general; (ii) mismatch between education, training, and labour markets needs (iii) unemployment (iv) lack of competitive markets for agricultural products (v) hard work involved in farm operations (physical and labour intensive) (vi) lack of start up capital for the youth engagement in agribusiness enterprises, (v) lack of access to land, (vi) traditional structures that are not youth friendly, (vi) limited skills and knowledge (vii) and limited involvement in Agriculture or youth policy dialogue.
8. Welcome the deliberations of the Youth in Agriculture Summit in Swaziland held at Happy Valley, Ezulwini from 04 – 05 November 2015, endorsed by the youth, SNAU members, Ministry of Agriculture, Swaziland National Youth Council, non-government organization, private sector, and other development partners.

Summit Declarations

We hereby adopt the following Declarations:

I. Commitment to mainstreaming youth programmes in agriculture policies at all levels.

Commitment to advocating for mainstreaming youth programmes in agriculture policies at all levels. To this end we urge key stakeholders in the agriculture sector on the following:

- a. to avail specific funds to support youth in agricultural activities
- b. to facilitate creation platforms and linkages for learning among the youths and
- c. to create development programmes for inclusive participation of all youth categories

II. Commitment to building the capacity of the youth through knowledge management, learning and information sharing across the country

We commit to advocate for building the capacity of the youth through knowledge management, learning and information sharing across the country. To this end we resolve to ensure:

- a. the training and equipping of the youth with skills and knowledge an agri-business along the various value chains
- b. engagement of youth in developing and applying ICT solutions in agriculture along commodity value chains (e-farming).
- c. developing user friendly and appropriate ICT systems for marketing, knowledge sharing and learning for on-farm and off-farm users, and
- d. facilitating educational tours (look and learn visits) to successful enterprise by other youth.

III. Commitment to improving business infrastructure targeted at the youth

We commit advocating for provision of facilities and equipment for the youth; to this end we

resolve to advocate for:

- a. availing information on appropriate technologies and equipment along the value chain
- b. harnessing common facility partnership to be leveraged by the young people.

IV. Commitment to equitable access to market and trade for the youth

We commit to promoting the strengthening of access to markets and for trade for the youths; and to this end we advocate for:

- a. Facilitating adherence to quality standards of goods for competitiveness to local and global markets.
- b. Facilitating linkages to the other related businesses for mentorship and exploitation of markets opportunities
- c. Creating an environment for negotiation of market prices between farmers and buyers (middle-men)

V. Commitment to advocating for appropriate financing packages

We commit to advocating for financial support targeted to youth willing to actively engage in the agriculture and value chain opportunities, to this end we commit to:

- a. advocating for policies that deliberately enhance financial support for youth, and to ensure that they are effectively implemented, monitored, and evaluated
- b. facilitating or mobilizing financial support for agriculture related youth initiatives, and to ensure its efficiently and effectiveness
- c. advocating for provision of financial incentives for different categories of youth, e.g. tax cut, and fee waivers and
- d. advocating for mechanisms and systems that allow access to loan by the youth such as bank guarantees.

VI. As young people we commit to the following:

We commit to championing our active

involvement in agriculture, and to this end we resolve:

- a. To actively committing and engaging to undertake the above commitments
- b. To encouraging our communities and all stakeholders to do the above individual commitment
- c. To expanding our networks to reach out to other youth and key stakeholders to achieve the above commitments
- d. To saving money that could be used as capital in the event financial institutions are not in a position to give us loans.
- e. Taking advantage of the opportunities of commodities that are currently imported and to be engaged in value chain addition
- f. Transforming farming by bringing the concept of commercialization.
- g. Working as associations, schemes, and groups where there is a need.

A Call for Action

We commit to translating the above commitment into results; and to this end we call upon

- a. MFU / SNAU in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture to be constantly making follow ups on the above mentioned commitments
- b. The youth, SNAU members, Ministry of Agriculture, CYDP, Swaziland National Youth Council, non-government organizations, private sector, and other development partners to look into the plan of action that came up from the summit; modify it where necessary and translate the commitments into results.

- c. Stakeholders, such as farmers, youth organization (CYDP & SNYC), private sector, NGOs and other development partners and financial institutions to rally behind the realization of the provisions of this Youth Declaration and take advantage of the opportunities that it presents.
- d. The development partners to rally and align their technical and financial support in a harmonized and coordinated manner to support the implementation of the commitments made in this Declaration.
- e. Traditional structures such as chiefs and inner councils to give undivided attention to the issues affecting youth in agriculture
- f. SNAU to formulate a youth wing which will have a national committee to advocate solely for issues affecting the youth in agriculture.
- g. Government of Swaziland to reconsider the implementation of the Land Policy as it can create opportunities for the young people to access land.
- h. Government to involve the young people in the formulation of policies that touch on the youth.
- i. Parents not to overwork young people and teachers at school not to use the garden or agriculture tools to punish the pupils.
- j. The government and SNAU to organize a consultative meeting with SWAGAA to help farmers differentiate between socializing young people into farming and child labour.
- k. The Ministry of agriculture to investigate factors that lead to the ineffectiveness of the Children and Youth Development Programme.

PLAN OF ACTION

Matrix of the Action Plan

ACTION	TIMELINE	OFFICE
Change of attitude by summit participants – self help	Right away from the Youth Summit	Young farmers
Take advantage of the available opportunities: Water Services & UN offers to support the youth.	Right away from the Youth Summit	Young farmers with help of MoA
Net working through ICT – have email addresses, have smart phones and collaborate with e-farming	Right away from the Youth Summit	Young farmers & e-farming
Participate in reviewing the Youth Policy	January 2016	SNAU & Youth Council
Form youth wing under SNAU with controls	February 2016	SNAU
Consultation meeting between Minister of Agriculture, SNAU and the Consultants to forge ways in which issues of youth could be inculcated into the strategic plan of the Ministry of Agriculture.	March 2016	Minister of Agriculture, SNAU President and Consultant(s) of the Youth in Agriculture Study.
Have a consultative meeting with the Chiefs and the inner councils to look at issues affecting youth in agriculture	March 2016	SNAU and MoA
Conduct a study on the factors affecting the project sustainability of the Children and Youth Programme	April 2016	MoA
Elect national youth agriculture committee	May 2016	SNAU
Have agriculture Expo for the youth	August 2016	SNAU & Youth Council
Convene consultative meeting to address issues related to youth involvement in agriculture i.e. balance between socializing young people into farming and child labour; teaching of agriculture and the use of agricultural equipment and facilities to punish offenders.	August 2016	SNAU, MoET, SWAGAA
Convene workshops to capacitate youth	September 2016	SNAU & MoA
Stage educational campaigns	December 2016	Youth Committee
Encourage the youth to form associations, schemes and clubs	December 2016	SNAU
Advocate for Land Policy implementation	December 2016	SNAU & Youth Committee
Advocate for youth statements in the Agricultural policies	February 2017	SNAU & Youth Committee
Have competitions for youth in agriculture	May 2017	MoA, SNAU & Youth Committee

DISTRIBUTION LISTS

No	Organization	Male	Female	Total
1	Swaziland Farmers Cooperative Union (SWAFCU)	1	2	3
2	KICKSTART	1	1	2
3	ENACTUS	1	1	2
4	Junior Achievers	2	1	3
5	KDDP-Farmer Federation	1	1	2
6	Lubumbano Lwebalimi Belubombo	5	1	6
7	LUSIP Farmer Organization (LFO)	2	0	2
8	Manzini Regional Agricultural Union (MARAU)	4	4	8
9	Hhohho Regional Agricultural Union (HRAU)	5	5	10
10	Shiselweni Regional Agricultural Union (SHIRAU)	5	3	8
11	CYDP / 4S	1	1	2
12	Technoserve	2	1	3
13	E-World	3	0	3
14	UNISWA students – Smiling Through Investment	2	0	2
15	Microfinance Unit (MFU)	1	1	2
16	Swaziland National Youth Council (SNYC)	4	1	5
17	Ministry of Agriculture (MOA)	1	3	4
18	Swaziland National Agricultural Union (SNAU)	4	1	5
19	Study and Summit Consultants	2	0	2
TOTALS		47	27	74

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