PRESS RELEASE

FAO, AUC Call for Increased Investment in Youth in Africa’s Agri-Food Systems

Technical Validation Workshop on Investment Guidelines for Youth in Agri-Food Systems in Africa

13 July 2021, Accra - The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the African Union Commission have called for an increased investment in youth in agri-food systems in Africa through new investment guidelines. That was the key message today during the online validation workshop for the Investment Guidelines for Youth in Agri-food Systems in Africa, in which over 150 participants from FAO, the African Union, governments, technical experts, donors, and youth entrepreneurs and leaders came together to review and validate the document.

The Investment Guidelines aim to contribute to achieving the commitments outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals and the African Union Agenda 2063 by accelerating investments for and by youth in agri-food systems, taking into consideration the diversity of their constraints, needs and aspirations. It is expected to reinforce the perception of youth not as a vulnerable group but as a development partner, advisor and innovator.

“The Food and Agriculture Organization invites governments, producer organizations, youth organizations, international financial institutions, and all other development partners to use the Investment Guidelines as a practical tool for operationalizing efforts to increase investments in youth in the agri-food sector,” said Abebe Haile-Gabriel, FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa.

The Guidelines were drafted to assist African governments and others to design youth-responsive and youth-led agriculture and agribusiness investment programmes to increase youth entrepreneurship and decent jobs. They were also created to stimulate policy dialogue to ensure an enabling environment for investing in youth, particularly in rural areas and from vulnerable backgrounds.

“The African continent can prosper if we take action now through formulating policies, investments programmes, and interventions that are demographically informed, youth focused, and youth sensitive to tap the energy and dynamism of its increasing youth population,” said Amb. Josefa Sacko, the African Union Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment.

The Guidelines will be presented for endorsement by African Union Member States at the Specialised Technical Committee (STC) Meeting in October.

ENDS
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