**ATTRACTING YOUTH TO AGRICULTURE IN ASIA: CONTEXT AND PROSPECTS**

A Regional Scoping Paper Prepared by

Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA)

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**1. INTRODUCTION**

The United Nations (UN) declared 2014 as the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) to recognize the significant contribution of small-scale farmers in feeding the world and caring for the earth. Small scale family farmers feed 70% of the world’s population and a majority of them are in Asia and Pacific. Sixty (60%) of the poor and hungry people are in Asia. The IYFF is an opportunity to tell the world to invest in smallholder agriculture, invest in women in agriculture and invest in the rural youth.

Sixty percent (60%) of the world’s rural population is made up of young men and women. The rural youth is often unemployed or work informally in unpaid, low skilled, insecure and hazardous jobs, leading to massive migration to cities. In previous regional consultations, members of the Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA) have shared the ageing of farmers in their countries, especially in North Asia and Southeast Asia, where the young no longer want to go into farming due to various reasons.

AFA is implementing a lobby and advocacy process on attracting the youth to agriculture through the Farmers Advocacy Consultation Tool (FACT), which is one of the priority issues this IYFF. It has 4 pillars: (1) consultation to members, (2) participatory research, (3) SMART proposal writing, and (4) lobby mapping and stakeholder analysis. It ensures that proposals are based on the needs, opinions and situations of farmers and are complemented by expert knowledge.

This regional paper is the product of FACT processes at the country and regional level. AFA members in 9 countries – Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam, Cambodia, Bangladesh, Nepal, Kyrgystan, Mongolia, and Japan – conducted consultations, participatory researches and policy proposal writing, participated by young women and men farmers and other stakeholders (e.g., government representatives, other CSOs, parents, etc). (Country-level FACT processes are described in Annex A.)

The initial results of country-level processes were presented during the AFA regional consultation on youth issues in Bali in May 2014. The results of the national consultations and participatory researches were then combined with participatory research at the regional level in order to come up with a regional policy proposal that can be lobbied with decision makers in time for the closing of the IYFF 2014. The draft regional policy paper was presented and discussed at the *AFA Young Farmers Regional Forum and Workshop* in November 2014 in Manila. With the vision statement:

*A community of educated, empowered and passionate Young Asian Farmers engaged in sustainable family farming that nurtures a prosperous, resilient, healthy, happy and loving world.*

The participants agreed to create an ad hoc structure to establish a strong base of organized young farmers. They see farming as a mission, a way of life, an important foundation of a society, and an essential element of a healthy society that they want to continue to nurture, an important inheritance from their predecessors.

**2. FINDINGS**

Unless cited otherwise, the findings presented here are synthesized largely from data obtained from consultations and research undertaken by AFA members.

**2a. Situation of (Rural) Youth in Asia**

UN ESCAP (2012) data shows that over 60% of the world’s youth, or more than 750 million young women and men aged 15-24 years, live in Asia-Pacific (Figure 1). In 2012, there were 4.3 billion people living in the region, which is equal to 60% of the global total of 7.1 billion people.  The number of young people and their percentage of the total population have been increasing for over 60 years, but the forecast was for these to have peaked in 2010, and to decline in coming years. In 2010, India had 234 million young people, the highest number of any country in the world (representing 19% of India’s total population), followed by China with 225 million (representing 17% of total population). Bangladesh and the Philippines also had very high shares of youth at 20%; Japan had 12 million young people or 10% of total population.

*Figure 1. Distribution of youth by subregion, Asia-Pacific, 2010.*

Source:<http://www.unescap.org/resources/youth-asia-pacific>

Based on FAO and UNDP data, the percentage of rural youth as % of total population in Asia has been decreasing over the past sixty years which in 2010 was 9% in East Asia and 11% in Southeast Asia (Figure 2). Though the proportionof rural youth is decreasing, however, the absolute number of rural youth has increased, but has already started to decrease in the past 10 to 25 years in East Asia and Southeast Asia. It is also important to note that rural youth are not necessarily involved in agriculture.

*Figure 2. Rural youth (aged 15-24) as % of total population by subregion (1950-2050)*

Source: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/012/al414e/al414e00.pdf>

***Factors that hinder tackling youth issues.*** According to UN ESCAP (2012), several factors hinder tackling youth issues in the region: (i) lack of reliable data concerning youth; (ii) insufficient political will and earmarked resources; (iii) lack of coordination among government ministries and involvement with NGOs, the private sector and academia.

***No uniform definition of youth.***It should be noted that there is no universally accepted definition of "youth" and countries have various definitions of youth from as young as 7 years to as high as 39. For instance, youth is defined under the law as young men and women 14-28 years in Kyrgystan while it is 15-30 years in the Philippines. For statistical purposes, the UN has defined youth as those 15-24 years of age. The definition of youth, or who comprises “young farmers”, is of importance part the number of particularly when current or future programs will target young farmers as beneficiaries which will have associated public expenditures or investments.

***Lack of data on rural youth or young farmers.*** There is a lack of information or data on rural youth much less young farmers in Asia, as reflected by data collected on rural youth or young farmers by AFA members.

*Philippines*. According to Pambansang Kilusan ng mga Samahang Magsasaka (PAKISAMA), despite being a predominantly agricultural country, there are only 12 million farmers in the Philippines in a total population of about 97 million (2012 data). Many Filipino farmers are small landholders tilling an average of 2.5 ha of land each. In 2008, the 12.03 million Filipinos (75% men) employed in the agriculture sector accounted for 35% of the country’s labor force; in 2010, this went down to 11.96 million (or 33%). The number of children aged 5 to 17 years old working in farms nationwide fell to 1.26 million in 2010.

*Vietnam.* According to Vietnam Farmers’ Union (VNFU), 30% of the population are youth aged 16-30 years, and 70% of them (17 million) are rural youth, with equal proportion of young men and women. According to surveys by the Vietnam Youth’s Union in 2011, 4.1% of rural youth lacked employment while 3% were unemployed.

*Nepal*. According to National Land Reform Forum (NLRF), almost 50% of people in Nepal are youth between 16-40 years; those 18-35 years make up 42% of the total population.

*Mongolia***.** According to National Association of Mongolian Agricultural Cooperatives (NAMAC), 39% of the total population of 2.9 million are young people aged 15-34 years, with 41% women. Only 10% or 117,700 are young herders, a critically low indicator for a country whose main economic sector is livestock; 38% of the working age population are livestock producers. Of the 25,000 crop farmers, 39% are young farmers with 37% women.

*Kyrgystan.* According to Union of Water User Associations (UWUA), youth aged 14-28 years consisted of 31% of population or some 1.6 million in 2010; two-thirds of youth live in rural areas. The number of economically active youth is 855,000 people or 50.7%; out of the employed youth, 61.2% are men and 38.9% women. About 20% of youth do not work or study and about one third are not satisfied with realization of their creative capabilities or prospects of their professional and career growth. About one fourth of youth are not satisfied as citizens with their financial situation and the level of legal security. However, a majority of youth (about 55%) are open to innovations, while half are in favor of stability and evolutionary development. The economically active section of rural youth 18-35 years and owning farming land and engaged in farming can be considered as “young farmers”. Practically, each family farm has representatives of youth engaged in agriculture. Young men and women in agriculture make up approximately 61% and 39%, respectively, of the 356,000 family farmers in the country. However, there are no records on young farmers and gender proportion in youth farming, and hence impossible to give official data relevant to youth in agriculture.

***High rate of youth unemployment.*** The average rate of youth unemployment in Asia-Pacific is estimated to be 11%, or more than double the rate of the total working age population (UN ESCAP 2012). Jobs provide a source not only of income for young people but also dignity and self-respect.

***High rate of youth migration****.* Many young people choose in the region to migrate to seek better lives. The proportion of adolescent and youth migrants in the total international migrant population is 19% in Asia; 46% of all migrants between 10 and 24 years of age are females (UN ESCAP 2012). Many youth migrants are undocumented and some are trafficked, including for sex work. Data collected by AFA members show similar patterns of migration:

The number of youth in Vietnam who want to migrate to big cities to work rose from 40% in 2009 to 56% in 2012. In Nepal, there is high rate of youth migration to other countries at 1,200 to 1,700 youth daily; in two districts surveyed by NRLF, 5-25% of the rural youth are migrating abroad to look for employment. In Kyrgystan, young people go mostly to Russia and Kazakhstan and 20% of the population are now out of the country. In the Philippines, most rural families want their children to pursue more gainful jobs in the cities or overseas, as farming is largely associated with poverty.

***Lack of national youth policies.*** According to UN-ESCAP (2012), while several countries have well-developed and stand-alone national youth policies which are embedded in their constitutions, others still lack coherent youth policies with various government agencies responsible for covering different youth issues. Only a few national youth policies have been developed and implemented that draws upon the specific needs of young people.

***Limited role of youth in decision-making processes.*** Youth in Asia also face the continuing challenge of limited role in decision-making processes due to a lack of structured and institutionalized opportunities (UN ESCAP 2012). Through social media, access to information and other new networking tools, young people across the region have better opportunities to become more politically active and find space for the realization of their aspirations.

***Challenges to agricultural human resources.*** The Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) identifies the major challenges to agricultural human resources across Asia as follows: a) aging agriculture research and academic staff, b) high staff turnover, wide age and qualifications gap in the succession hierarchy, c) low budget for research and training activities, d) outdated curricula, outmoded research and academic facilities, e) lack of student attraction to agriculture careers; and f) agriculture graduates not well-equipped with knowledge, skills and attitudes to compete globally.

**2b. Issues and Challenges of Youth in Agriculture in Asia**

***Indonesia.*** Aliansi Petani Indonesia (API) believes that there is lack of young farmers in agriculture due to several factors – lack of interest in farming, lack of incentives to farm, boredom or laziness and more agricultural labor becoming more costly as young people become factory workers. Young farmers also face several challenges:

* Agrarian issues (land tenure, fertilizers, local seeds, access to capital, market information, access to market);
* Lack of support policies from central government, e..g. importation of vegetables and control over organic tobacco;
* High cost of production which result in farmers’ indebtedness;
* No price standardization;
* Pests and diseases and lack of knowledge on integrated pest management;
* Lack of modern agricultural machinery, post-harvest appropriate technology;
* Unpredictable climate change conditions;
* Vanishing local seeds and widespread use of manufactured seeds.

***Philippines.*** According toPAKISAMA, farmers and fishers are getting too old for what is back-breaking work, and their children are not keen on replacing them in the family farm for lack of interest or incentive or both. The average age of the Filipino farmer is 57 years and the Philippines may reach a critical shortage of farmers in just 15 years, an unseen crisis threatening the country's food security. Fewer students are enrolled in agriculture and related courses which are offered primarily in state universities and colleges. The youth is not attracted to agriculture due to several factors and problems in the sector:

* *Low regard for farming.* Farming is perceived as lowly work fit only for school drop-outs or those without other options. Another widespread perception is that there is no money in farming – their parents were poor farmers, they will remain poor farmers. This low regard for farming has brought about low self-esteem and a sense of discrimination among young farmers; hence the need to put pride and dignity back into farming.
* *Lack of access to land.* Many young farmers do not own land that they cultivate. In case of owner-cultivator parents, young farmers have to wait for their parents’ demise before they can inherit and manage their parents’ land. Young people can apply as agrarian reform beneficiaries only if they are considered as an independent household unit and not dependents of their parents.
* *Lack of access to capital.* Young farmers also lack access to capital and credit as they are not the heads of their families nor do they have the collateral needed by banks and financial institutions.
* *Farming is laborious work.* Most small family farms are not mechanized, and although farm mechanization is being promoted to make farming less laborious, young farmers worry that large machines will replace their labor as farmworkers.
* *Lack of participation in governance.* Young farmers are not formally recognized as a demographic group by the government. And because they are not recognized, they do not have formal venues for participation in governance and in decision-making process; as well, there is a lack of government programs that are targeted at them.
* *Lack of rural youth groups.* The lack of socio-cultural activities or youth organizations in rural areas is also a key factor. There are no solidarity groups or venue for exchange of information, ideas and supporting each other’s endeavours.
* *Legacy of chemical-based farming and “instant farming”.* Young farmers are also faced with the consequences of their parents’ or elders’ dependence on chemical farming which are more costly and degrade their lands. Shifting to organic farming is expected to result in low yields during the so-called conversion stage.
* *“Instant farming”, climate risks.* Young farmers note that the use of GMOs (genetically modified organisms) has resulted in “instant calamities” and farmers getting lazier. Also, **more unpredictable weather conditions related to climate change increases risks to agriculture but there is a lack of crop insurance and social protection for farmers.** Young indigenous farmers also bewail that rituals traditionally performed by their communities, e.g. before planting or during harvest time, are no longer being practiced.

Young men and women farmers perform many tasks in the family. They are “all-around” workers who are oftentimes assigned more laborious tasks. They work alongside their parents and when they have families of their own, they still need to help in their parents’ farms. Young farmers are “merchandisers” entrusted with marketing and finding buyers for their family’s produce; farm managers, supervisors or caretakers; small entrepreneurs who form joint ventures; or work off-farm in odd jobs, e.g. tricycle drivers. Young farmers also take on the role of extension workers within the family and community, sharing agricultural knowledge or technology they learn in school or elsewhere. Those trained in sustainable agriculture are strong advocates of ecological conservation and organic farming.

Contrary to widely-held perceptions about the rural youth, however, an award-winning research in 2012 by the Philippine Rice Research Institute (PhilRice) found that young farmers are still interested in farming. They have expressed their wish to stay connected to agriculture by, e.g., providing capital to relatives toiling the land. Rural youth should then be seen as future investors who can provide capital investments to family farms.

***Thailand.*** According toSORKORPOR (SKP), agriculture is seen as hard work, and the number of youth in agriculture has been decreasing steadily while rural youth move into the industrial, service and entertainment sectors. Only old farmers remain in the villages; the average age of farmers in Thailand is 54 years. The price of agriculture products remains uncertain or decreasing, there is a general lack of motivation in farming as an occupation. The spate of political conflict also aggravates the situation because government could not implement agricultural policies, e.g. price control on rice and rubber.

***Vietnam.*** According toVNFU, the most urgent needs of rural youth in Vietnam are jobs and low and unstable income from farming. More rural youth leave farming and work in big cities due to industrialization; the lands that they leave behind remain largely uncultivated. Young farmers lack experience, knowledge and appropriate training on agricultural production and marketing; lack capital and have difficulty in selling their products at fair prices. Moreover, there is lack of funds for community activities for rural youth. Many rural youth will go into farming only if farming can make them rich and feel confident.

* *Trend of going to cities to look for jobs*. Most rural youth just help their parents in farming when they have free time. There are very few rural youth who want to stay in rural areas to do farming. Although rural youth occupies majority of labor force, most of them have low qualification and capacity in production and business. Many rural youth wish to enter university or college to have chances to leave the rural area and have good job in big cities. Rural youth moving to big cities is a major trend and leads to other urgent issues like social problems, transportation safety and organizing migrant youth.
* *Limited agricultural land*. The process of industrialization and modernization has made agricultural lands decrease rapidly. This is also a reason why rural youth must go to big cities to look for jobs. In 2001-2007, 500,000 hectares were converted to urbanization/ industrialization purposes; currently, there is a support policy by government to control and keep agricultural land, e.g. 3.8 million hectares for rice.
* *Lack of capital.* Young farmers lack capital and access to loans because they are not the heads of their families and they do not have collateral to borrow money from the banks and financial institutions.
* *Lack of appropriate technical training.* Compared with urban youth, the rural youth’s qualifications and educational level is much lower. Although there are many supporting policies to provide rural youth with trainings these do not have suitable contents, methods or do not meet their needs. There is a need to organize the training courses on agricultural production knowledge, linking to markets and applying modern science and technology.
* *Difficulty in selling agricultural products.* Farmers cannot sell their products and sometimes have to sell at very low price. The regional production plan is not good as some crops are produced over what the market demands. Most products also lack the necessary certification for safe organic products as the certification system is not managed and operated well.
* *Lack of access to markets and marketing skills.* Farmers do not easily to access market and young people also lack marketing skills. They depend on middlemen, so the agricultural products’ price is low due to selling through middleman.
* *Lack of funds for community social activities* (such as socio-cultural activities of youth union at grassroots level). Infrastructure for cultural activities is poor.

***Cambodia.*** According toFarmer and Nature Net (FNN), young farmers in Cambodia face the following challenges:

* *Small landholdings or landlessness*;
* *Knowledge on land titling is limited*;
* *No income from farming* due to costly agricultural inputs;
* *Lack of irrigation and water storage systems*;
* *Effects of climate change*;
* *Lack of experience and skills* in agriculture techniques;
* *Marketing problems*, including information price and volume;
* *No policy support to youth in rural development*.

***Bangladesh.*** Kendrio Krishok Moitree (KKM) believes that the rural youth in Bangladesh do not find farming a profitable business due to a faulty market-oriented system that is totally controlled by big landowners and middlemen. The challenges young farmers face include the following:

* *Lack of access to land.* Most of the lands are not available for the youth for farming and are in the hands of medium and big farmers who are mainly absentee farmers. Rich people and corporations are also grabbing agricultural lands.
* *Lack of capital.* Modern agriculture needs huge investment but it is difficult for the youth to manage capital support from financing institutions.
* *Agriculture is a very risky profession* made more so due to climate change.
* *Agriculture is a very laborious job* because mechanization is limited.
* *A politically-biased system* has resulted in most government support and services going to medium and big farmers.
* *There is no dignity in the farming profession* to attract the youth. Young farmers usually have no education or other skills or alternative professions. Very few educated youth are attracted to the farming profession.
* In general, the *educated youth are interested in entrepreneurship for monoculture-based chemical farming* like high value crop cultivation, poultry farm, dairy farm, fish farm, fruit farm, etc which are not sustainable. The general trend of such farming is that it gives higher yield and profit during starting stage but as time passes cost of production become higher and profit margin goes lower. In such situation the entrepreneurs either stop the business or shift to other new enterprises. Therefore, such farming is not sustainable.

***Nepal.*** According toNLRF, the virtual lack of government support, poverty and unemployment has been leading to the brain drain and migration of young people nationally from rural areas to urban and nationally to overseas, resulting in less labor available to the agricultural sector. The problems faced by young farmers are several: lack of technical knowledge and agricultural inputs, traditional farming and low productivity, lack of access to credits, pest and disease problem, unavailability of land, lack of market, and exclusion in policy-making processes. Despite the decline in interest in agriculture, young people are still working in their farms as a last source of subsistence and livelihood.

* *Lack of agricultural land.* Those youth who want to farm lack agricultural land. While those people who have land do not want to go into farming.
* *Cultural factors***.** Agriculture is not seen culturally as a respectable profession. There is persistent perception of agriculture as an outdated field with minimal financial returns. Young people are not interested in continuing in agriculture because they do not see much prospect in the future of agriculture and they do not see it is as an active profession in the long-run, hence many of the smallholder farmers are quite old. Youth have become disenchanted towards agriculture because there is no role model established so far for their motivation.
* *Production issues***.** The youth lack technical knowledge in commercial farming. Young farmers are challenged with financial credit due to lack of collateral. Subsistence-oriented farming also discourage the youth to go into agriculture.
* *Exclusion of young farmers***.** Young farmers are not included in policy making and their voices are not being heard. There is a lack of youth involvement in agricultural activities at local level, and there is a lack of co-operation among young farmers.

***Mongolia.*** According toNAMAC, herders and farmers in Mongolia are the resource creators who provide healthy food for people, material and stock for industries. It is hence worrisome that the number of farmers and herders, especially the younger ones, has been decreasing in the last 10 years. Young farmers perform a number of activities such as producing and selling dairy products; supplying livestock output to market; planting commodity vegetables and crops; planting and preparing feed and fodder. Young farmers need more opportunities to earn at least a subsistence wage. Other worrying trends are urbanization, not having enough livestock to earn a living wage, lack of driving force for youth in rural areas, and lack of policies supporting youth in agriculture.

* *Urbanization.* The flight of youth and family farmers from the rural to the urban areas is directly associated with the difference between city and rural area development. Also, because students have been equipped with less knowledge on careers in agriculture, they opt to vie primarily for careers in the urban districts. Additionally, the large numbers of youth that serve in the Mongolian military almost always opt to settle in urban areas and pursue urban careers upon the conclusion of their service. Young people increasingly dismiss the prospect of rural settlement due to the relative lack of government and information technology services available in rural areas.
* *No driving force of support for youth in rural**areas.* There is no longer a standard for herding methodology, nor is there youth pride and satisfaction in being a herder. Also, traditional methods are no longer being passed down by elders to the youth, which means this source of traditional best practice exchange is no longer serving to bolster youth interest in the herding sector. Thus, it is important to support the young herders’ social activities and create national programs to cure the educational and social issues of youth in agriculture.
* *Lack of policies supporting youth in agriculture.* Existing laws and policies only support livestock, crops, and vegetables, but the herders and farmers are not directly considered. The policies do not focus on producers such as herders and farmers who are the major factors of production. Only one law, i.e., *The Policy Proposal on Young Herders*, focuses directly on the herders and farmers which contains one clause: “*3.3.10. The Government should support strategic plans for preparing young and future herders by providing non-degree and short-term professional education; by developing distant-learning programs; and by collaborating with media organizations.”* There is also no policy that addresses the particular concerns of youth in agriculture.
* *Small number of livestock***.** The numbers of families who have less than 100 head of livestock have decreased, and the numbers of families who have more than 200 head of livestock have increased. A family owning many livestock experiences a relatively favorable living condition, while a family owning few livestock is unable to cover their living expenses and thus has an incentive to migrate to the city.
* *Livestock vulnerability to risks***.** Due to climate change, there has been an increase in the frequency of winter Zuds (blizzards) and Summer Gans (droughts) which make livestock quality lower and increases livestock susceptibility to risks. Mongolia’s livestock is also vulnerable to risks due to inadequate shelter to shield from climate disaster, lack of fodder, an absence of reserve pasture land and lack of herding methodology.

Other issues faced by young farmers and herders in Mongolia are: (i) lack of information; (ii) lack of working place; (iii) significant development differences between town and rural; (iv) poor living and financial conditions; (v) lack of skilled workers due to bad educational system (vi) high manufacturing expenses but low income; (vii) no sales chain; (viii) low prices of agricultural products; (ix) lack of collateral for loans; (x) lack of health and social insurance; (xi) lack or constant policy changes in agriculture; and (xii) lack of seed policy.

***Kyrgystan.*** According toUWUA, youth unemployment in rural areas is a major problem due to the lack of competitiveness, limited opportunities for self-employment, lack of professional qualifications and lack of initial capital. Rural youth also have limited access to infrastructure, services and opportunities for self-realization and do not link their fate to farming. There is a high rate of overseas migration that has both positive (e.g. reducing tension on domestic labor market, huge remittances) and negative (loss of professional/skilled workers, family problems) effects. Migrant remittances are not being invested into agriculture but on household consumption. Young farmers also face the following challenges:

* Lack of knowledge about beneficial methods of farming;
* Lack of opportunity in obtaining information and exchanges among farmers;
* Low profitability of agriculture;
* High rate of bank loan (30% per annum);
* No access to sell agricultural goods at fair price;
* Lack of quality seeds or expensive seeds;
* Shortage of water supply, poor irrigation structures and lack of gender equality in water users associations.
* Lack of support from government and programs advocating for young farmers;
* Lack of program for women in agriculture, and lack of adequate conditions for employed women;
* Lack of social-cultural activities or youth recreation or rural youth organizations.

***South Korea.*** According toKorean Advanced Farmers Federation (KAFF) / Water Advanced Farmers Federation (WAFF), until the 1980’s Korea’s population consisted mainly of family farmers. But since the 1990s, many of the farmlands have been taken over by corporations who have extended their operations into the farming industry. Today, the major challenges facing young farmers in South Korea include the following:

* *Next generation of family farmers* as rapid economic growth has resulted in urbanization and a decrease in the rural population which in turn results in labor shortage in the farms. Hence, government support for agriculture has dramatically increased in recent years.
* *Financial support to young farmers.* Developed countries provide loan at very low interest rate to revitalize young farmers which Korea could emulate.
* *Free trade agreements (FTAs)* signed by the government with many countries triggering huge farmers protests since agriculture is negatively impacted by the FTAs.
* *Replacement of military services.* Korea is the only separated country in the world and has mandatory military service that has created a gap in young workforce in the farm.
* *Climate change and natural disasters* like typhoons, earthquakes, heavy rains and drought. Since 2000, South Korea has experienced heavy climate change effects; during winter the snow destroys houses and farms and many farmers cannot continue farming.

***Japan.*** According toAIOUKAI, Japan’s agricultural population is decreasing, from 2.6 million five years ago to 747,000 today, or a 22.3％ decrease. Japanese farmers are also aging, with the average age at 65.8 years. The most urgent tasks are to encourage newcomers to agriculture, find successors of family farmers and reduce the number of those who leave the sector through favorable conditions that keep farmers in agriculture. It has been noted that the crisis in Japan’s agriculture is due to the difficulty in finding successors, more agricultural land being abandoned and damaged by the foraging of animals, and rising prices of fuel and feed (Japan Times 2013). Japan’s possible entry into the Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade plan may also bankrupt small-scale agricultural producers.

**2c. Initiatives to Support Youth in Agriculture in Asia**

This section provides a summary of ongoing initiatives to support youth in agriculture being undertaken by AFA members, as well as existing policies and programs that address the concerns of young farmers or rural youth in AFA member countries (also see Annex B).

***Indonesia.*** API also has initiated several programs to attract youth to agriculture: (i) Share knowledge among farmers, youth and elder farmers through “musyawarah” or popular discussions which is an important part of family farming; (ii) Develop young farmers’ organizations and engaging more participation of women and youth in family farming; (iii) Network among farmers’ organizations at national level and hosting exchange/learning visits; (iv) Promote role of women, e.g., reading Quran together, training on finance; (v) Handle pests and diseases of vegetables and tobacco using farmers’ own methods; (vi) Provide product profiling and market information; (vii) Invite extension officers related to agricultural policy; (viii) Promote policies beneficial to tobacco farmers; and (ix) Promote participatory local seeds development (see Box 1 – Story of Rifai).

***Philippines.*** PAKISAMA trains young farmers in Integrated Diversified Organic Farming Systems (IDOFs) to expose the youth organic farming. PAKISAMA members are also trained in family farm planning, i.e., an inclusive and participatory system of planning by parents/elders and young family members in the development and management of their farms (Box 2 – Story of Jon and Ana).

There are existing laws that aim to improve the plight of young farmers: (i) *Youth in Nation-Building Act of 1994* which mandates the formulation of a Philippine Youth Development Plan; (ii) *Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law of 1988* which redistributes agricultural land to the landless and farmworkers; (iii) *Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998* which protects the right of fisherfolk in the preferential use of municipal waters; (iv) *Indigenous Peoples Rights Act* which recognizes and promotes the rights of indigenous peoples; (v) *Organic Agriculture Act of 2010* which mandates a comprehensive organic farming program; (vi) *Farm Mechanization Law of 2013* which will enhance farmers’ productivity and income through agricultural machines; and (vii) *Rural Farm School Act of 2013* which establishes rural farm schools in every province free from tuition and other fees.

**BOX 1**

**The Story of Rifai: Participatory Breeding of Local Seeds (Indonesia)**



Muhammad Rifai, 31 years old and father of one son, has been cross breeding Brazilian, Mexican and Indonesian corn seeds which were exchanged to him during an international conference he attended in 2009. He has been sharing this knowledge among young and elder farmers through “musyawarah” or popular discussion, and is now gaining customers by selling his locally-developed seeds which is of same quality but is 70% cheaper than private company seeds.

Rifai has been working with API for only 3 years when he began his search for the ideal seeds of corn. Peasants have found the price of corn seeds produced by a private company very expensive which also makes the peasants become more dependent on the seeds. They are also hybrid seeds, and suspected as transgenic which harm the environment and health of all.

In 2009, Rifai started his searching, collecting, and selecting the best local corn seeds. He then participated in the event of ITPGRFA (International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture) held in Bali where he met other representatives of farmers from Brasil and Mexico. Then Rifai exchanged seeds with them.

Rifai disseminated the excellent seeds he has grown (local and foreign) to corn farmers of Kediri, East Java. Then the farmers cross-bred and propagated the seeds, and planted them in large scale. Rifai has been sharing this new knowledge among young and elder farmers through “musyawarah” or popular discussion.

Based on their two years of experience in developing the ideal corn seeds, Rifai and other farmers found that the quality of their seeds is the same as the quality of seeds produced by the private company. While the seeds they developed is resistant to “bulai” disease (the leaves become white due to fungi infestation), on the contrary the seeds produced by company is susceptible to the disease. The seeds developed by farmers is also 70% cheaper than the private company’s seeds.

Rifai has now gained customers from three subdistricts of his hometown in Lamongan District in East Java province. There is also increasing demand for his corn seeds from Gorontalo Province (Sulawesi), which is the center of corn in eastern part of Indonesia, by as much as 40 tons from Kediri corn farmers. In Bali, there is also demand to experiment with the local seeds, Rifai and his group then facilitated Balinese farmers to have 30 kg of seeds ready to be planted for trial to see the feasibility of the corn seeds, and find their own seeds.

Until now, Rifai has been planting, developing the best local seeds, the Brasillian and Mexican corn in his hometown. He is growing four (4) varieties of two local varieties of “Siliantang” and “Asmorodhono”, and the two (2) foreign varieties from Brasil and Mexico.

**BOX 2**

**Story of Jon and Ana: IDOFS Farm Planning (Philippines)**



Jon Sarmiento, 40 years old, is born of a farming family in Mindoro, Philippines. As a young entrepreneur, he developed his farm ten years ago using the Integrated, Diversified , Organic Farming System (IDOFS) farm planning and implementation and full value chain agri-business enterprise development with actual farms, clusters, cooperatives to demonstrate to others as models. Jon had received various trainings from NGOs and church workers. Now his farm is a learning center, where visitors can stay for several days and see and learn about raising organic pigs, chicken, planting organic herbal plants and vegetables, native trees, composting, as well as vermi-culture. IDOFS is mainstreamed as the core of the Sustainable Agriculture Program of PAKISAMA.

One training activity which Jon regularly conducts in his learning farm is the Y.E.S. (Youth. Ecology. Sustainable Agriculture) camp for young people, including young farmers. Because of his home-grown and successful experience, he is one of the most sought after farmer-extensionist, and his farm is an accredited learning center of the Department of Agriculture.

Ana, 24 years old, is one of Jon’s trainees. She is a daughter of a farmer couple, and has finished a commercial cooking course. But she has loved farming and wanted to have her own farm, and manage her own farm business. After her training on IDOFS in 2014, Ana convinced her family to convert their 2,500 sq m farm into an IDOFS farm. She started to build a vermi-compost, a fishpond, a vegetable garden, and raise free range chicken and make optimum use of every sq m of their family farm. She is now promoting IDOFS farm planning to other young farmers in their neighborhood and beyond. (also see: <http://www.philstar.com/agriculture/2015/01/04/1409144/magna-carta-young-tillers-urged>)

Several bills pending in Congress are targeted at providing support for young farmers: (i) *Institutionalizing Young Farmers Program*to equip the youth with technical and entrepreneurial skills, production and marketing support, and in capital formation; (ii) *Agriculture Scholarship Fund* will establish a comprehensive scholarship program focused on agriculture, fisheries, forestry and related courses where about 25% of the curriculum is in the form of on-the-job training or related learning experience.

Programs implemented by various government agencies are also in place notably: *4-H Clubs* with Agriculture Training Institute (ATI) as lead agency in promoting ladderized training on agri-entrepreneurship; *Young Farmers Program* aims to encourage young agriculture and fisheries graduates (20-39 years) to go into agribusiness and become entrepreneurs; *Farmer-Scientists Training Program* empower small marginalized farmers to produce more than their subsistence level; *Schools for Practical Agriculture* that helps farmer leaders to become teachers and community extension workers; *Youth for Agriculture and Fisheries Scholarship Program* gives priority to youth from the poorest families and children of farmers; *Adopt a Farm Youth Program* to enhance the skills of young farmers through the use of new agricultural technology; *Young Filipino Farmers Training Program in Japan* that involves intensive, on-farm agricultural training in cooperation with farmers cooperatives in Japan; *Agri-Pinoy Project* launched to encourage the younger generation to get involved in farming, side by side with their parents; *e-Learning for Agriculture and Fisheries* which has e-learning courses for free; ***Youth as farm ‘infomediaries’*** to mobilize the youth to help their farmer-parents search for rice farming information through mobile phone technology; *Increasing mechanization to attract young farmers* to mechanize farm work to reduce drudgery.

***Vietnam.*** VNFU believes that society should recognize the important role of agricultural production and rural youth and respect the value of agriculture and farmers. It provides technical training for young farmers and urges government to implement policies supporting young farmers in Vietnam. In general, there are many programs for youth, as provided in the *Strategy on developing youth in 2013-2020,* but there are very few programs targeted at rural youth. One program called “600” encourages 600 young students to live in rural areas after they graduate. The *Law on the Youth, 2005* gives priority to vocational training, job creation and access to loan with low interest rate for rural youth. Other government programs for rural youth include *Vocational training for rural labourers,* a program to encourage the youth to participate in new rural construction and in the “green economy”, access loan from a National Fund on job support based on cooperation groups or models on production; *Loan for poor students* or those from poor households or rural laborers who want to learn at vocational training schools. Several civil society organizations also implement programs that address the concerns of young farmers. Vietnam Youth’s Union, for instance, is the representative organization for the youth in Vietnam and aims to, among others, to reduce youth unemployment. The *Movement on Volunteers to the Countryside* encourages youth in urban areas to go to rural areas to help in agricultural production. They stay with farmers and transfer their knowledge to build local infrastructure. The *Movement on youth in good production and business* encourages rural youth to apply technology, biotechnology, innovative thinking, sharing knowledge and participate in new rural construction.

***Cambodia.*** FNN has established a youth committee which is represented in its board. The young farmers are also being developed into young leaders and farmer entrepreneurs through exposure to demonstration farms and good farming practices, e.g. build a fish pond, grow organic rice, apply multipurpose farming, raise livestock and use manure to produce biogas.

***Thailand.*** SORKORPOR has a leadership post in its local and national governance structures to youth representatives. There are also existing programs to help students go back to the rural areas after graduation and find work in agriculture.

***Bangladesh.*** KKM has identified a viable alternative model in Kurigram district called the *Tanu Integrated Agriculture Farm* which was established by a young agriculture graduate to promote sustainable agriculture.

***Nepal.*** NLRF believes that investing in young people on improved access to training, capacity development and facilitating access to and encouraging the use of appropriate technology is key to enhancing agricultural productivity and food security, boosting rural economies, and reducing rural-to-urban migration. Since the youth are excellent source of ideas, they are the innovation with significant impact on public opinion, policy and action. Hence, the agricultural sector, national economies and the region will also benefit as a consequence of the increased participation of youth in agricultural production.

Through its research, NLRF found that young farmers in Nepal are involved in activities that seek appropriate solutions such as: integrated farming; organic farming in kitchen gardens; establishing local collection centers for vegetables and self delivery of agricultural products to the local market; producing home-made bio-pesticides; commercial tomato, fish, swine, poultry and mushroom farming; rainwater collection; availing credit from relatives and cooperatives; formation of youth groups; awareness about their role in increasing agricultural production; alliance-building with local farmers and associations; sharing farming experiences and create a role model to motivate other youths towards agriculture; updating on knowledge and information on modern farming technologies; leadership role in community initiatives towards sustainable agriculture; and discouraging youth migration through various self-employment opportunities in agriculture.

***Mongolia.*** There are several laws, acts, policy proposals and programs related to agriculture such as *Law on Agricultural Commodity Exchange; Food law of Mongolia; Government policy on food and agriculture; Government policy on Herders*. There are also several policies and programs directed at youth in general, e.g., *National program for Support on Development of Teenagers and Youth; Policy on Mongolian Youth Employment.* Some provisions in the *National Program for Support on Development of Teenagers and Youth* are directly applicable to young people’s engagement in agriculture. Several NGOs work on youth issues such as Mongolian Youth Federation (MYF) which is the largest NGO in Mongolia and aims to be a voice for youth advancement and rights protection. The Mongolian Young Herders Committee was established in 2013 to protect the interests of young herders; it organized a national consultation in February 2014 attended by youth herders across Mongolia’s 21 provinces. The Committee has been working on a national level survey questionnaire about young herders. The Young Cooperators Club was established in 2010 and successfully organized the *First Meeting of Cooperative Young Leadership in Agriculture* in 2013.

***Kyrgystan.***  UWUA has initiated the following activities to promote youth in agriculture: (i) set up agricultural training centers at local level; (ii) train young farmers in crop growing techniques, prepare business plans and access capital; (iii) broaden farmers exchanges; (iv) ensure admission of youth especially women in agricultural universities; (v) improve socio-cultural life of rural population; (vi) create conditions to lighten women’s work in agriculture; (vii) create conditions to keep youth in rural area; (viii) set up links with professional training centers and refresher courses; (ix) enhance farmers awareness. Existing laws related to young farmers include: *Backgrounds of state youth policy* of 2009; P*easant (farmer) farm* of 1999; *Agricultural Lands Management* of 2001; *C****ooperatives*** of 2004; *Water* of 1994; *Development of Agriculture* of 2009; *Pastures* of 2009; *Local administration* of 2011. National policy documents on rural youth development include: *National strategy of Kyrgyz Republic sustainable development 2013-2017*; *Program of transition to Kyrgyz Republic sustainable development 2013-2017*; *The state strategy on youth policy 2012- 2015*; *The concept of Kyrgyz republic agrarian policy up to 2010* (2004); *The state program on development of cooperative movement 2011-2015*.

***Taiwan.*** According to Taiwan Dairy Farmers Association (TDFA) / Taiwan Wax Apple Development Association (TWADA), there are 3 categories of young farmers in Taiwan – (i) the second generation young farmers whose parents are doing farming which they continue; (ii) those without any experience; (iii) those who are a little bit older such as professionals who want to go into agriculture. The key factors to attract the first category into agriculture are: if parents are making profit; if farming is promising; and if farming is not too much work for their parents. It is not too difficult to attract the third category because they are more mature and know what they want, and have more financial support. It is the second category, or those without experience, which finds it harder to go into agriculture. The government supports them either through the central government’s Council of Agriculture, or through the city government. Government support to young farmers ensure that they have basic income, facilities or equipment support, and technical knowledge.

**BOX 3**

**New Farmer Program in Tainan City, Taiwan**

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* Mr. Don, 42 years old
* Planting rice, cherry tomatoes, jujubes
* Through Tainan City Government, his 2.5 ha organic ice was contracted with a construction corporative for the provision to the company’s employees’ consumption and gifts.

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* Mr. Wang, the young brother, 35 years old and his older brother on the right, 41 years old
* Planting cherry tomatoes
* Former engineers before their farming business
* The young brother has won the reward “National Healthy and Quality Facilities for cherry tomatoes competition” in the past two years.
* Mr. Wu, part-time farmer, 43 years old
* Growing cherry tomatoes and vegetables
* Working in Uni-President Corporative
* Aspiring to learn planting skills and agriculture production practices
* Aiming to grow organic, toxin-free agriculture produce.
* Mr. Wang, 31 years old.
* Growing Dragon Fruit on 6 ha land
* Full-time farmer after completing his education
* Working hard to learn agriculture practices and become a new and innovative farmer.

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* Mr. Chen, 39 years old, second generation farmer
* Planting grains (Maize, Black Pea), 60 ha
* Leader of grain production and marketing group
* Pioneer of small landlord and big tenant policy
* Maize land scale grew from 23 ha in 2011 to 56 ha in 2013

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* Mr. Chen, 26 year old, second generation farmer
* Planting melons on 1 ha land
* Become farmer after military service
* Planting balsam pear (bitter melon)
* Providing fruit picking camp, also work with biotech R & D corporative for bitter melon capsule and lozenge sales.

One model is the *New Farmer Program* in Tainan City government, a flagship program in one of the top ten “new agriculture, new countryside, new farmers’ projects.” Currently enrolled in the program are 268 young farmers (14% women) all under 45 years of age, who are currently farmers or aspire to be farmers. The government extension unit provides technical and financial support to these young farmers. Technical support is provided through experts, apprenticeship, agriculture courses, and counseling system. The agriculture experts and masters who teach agriculture to young farmers are deployed through the district farmer associations. Financial support comes in the form of government loans with low interest to young farmers to buy facilities, supplies or equipment. Several new farmers have successes and became young millionaire farmers and won competitions such as organic rice and organic cherry tomato production (Box 3).

***South Korea.*** According to KAFF/WAFF, although there are many problems in the agricultural sector there is still hope. As a response to the growing problem of corporate take-over of farmlands, the government has regulated ownership of land such that only those who have been farming for five years are allowed to own lands in rural areas. In 2010-2012, there has also been a growing demand for healthy food, and young people have decided to go into farming and grow organic food and agricultural products. The government is now investing more in young farmers through policies such as providing low interest rates for young farmers.

To address the needs of farmers to be affected by FTAs, the government has developed a policy to ensure that industries who gain from FTAs support agriculture through a fund that allows these industries to invest their profit into agriculture. More recently, Korean rice farmers were able to negotiate that all losses that they would incur due to FTAs would be compensated by government. It is deemed the duty of government to ensure the survival of Korean farmers.

***Japan.*** To identify success factors to attract and keep young farmers in agriculture, AIOUKAI has conducted case studies of new young organic farmers in Iga District in Mie Prefecture. The success factors are: support to young farmers to achieve stable incomes for the first 3-5 years; support in securing markets and acquiring agricultural skills; consumer awareness about food safety and organic foods; cooperation among young farmers; and support from local community through food purchase schemes (Box 4).

The government has initiated a policy to support young farmers through a system to pay ¥1.5 million a year to younger people who became farmers; the payments end if the farmer’s annual income reaches ¥2.5 million (Japan Times, 2013). However, about 30 percent of 14,000 people below the age of 40 who became new farmers quit within five years because they failed to make a profit or found the work too hard. Hence, the government should increase its support to new young farmers through, e.g., setting up a system to help young farmers conclude long-term contracts with food companies, supermarkets and restaurants to sell their products, and providing technical know-how to new farmers.

AIOUKAI also shares the experience of the *“Family Management Agreement”* in Japan where family members agree on their roles and tasks in the farming operations, e.g. balance of payments, budgeting. In 1995, the government promoted this scheme which is a written agreement made in the presence of an unrelated person about the rules governing the farming operations and family activities. It includes such items as: distribution of farm revenues, division of labor and enterprise, working conditions, agreement of payments of each family member, transfer of farm operation from father to son, inheritance of farm assets, household expenditures, etc. Men and women under the agreement share equal responsibilities in farm and financial management and daily life operations, while young farmers are given an opportunity to participate in farm management decisions (Box 5).

**BOX 4**

**Supporting Young Organic Agricultural Farmers in Japan**

Six new young organic farmers, at least one woman, were interviewed to identify success factors to attract and keep young farmers in agriculture. The young farmers have an average farming experience of 8.4 years and cultivate a total area of 13.6 ha of vegetables (tomato, spinach, cabbage, etc) in greenhouses. There was an increase in area by 161%.

The new farmers young had a gross profit (average) of 8,860 thousand yen in 2013, increasing by 207%. The young farmers got support for securing markets. Their trainer farmers or other regional farmers give them sufficient support (skills, land, house, market) so that they can become independent within a short period.After setting up for themselves, the young farmers also work for and support newcomers. The young farmers also strengthened cooperation and have become increasingly organized with the support of 3 major organic agricultural groups.

*How they got their customers:*

* Introduced by the fellow senior farmers;
* Introduced by the shippers group;
* Self-seeking;
* Introduced by friends;
* Internet

*How they acquired agricultural skills:*

* Training by the fellow senior farmers;
* Farmers in the region;
* Public Organization;
* Training course;
* Books;
* Internet

*Factors necessary to increase the number of young farmers:*

* Introducing / securing markets for the new farmers for the first 3 to 5 years;
* Stable income for the first 3 to 5 years is required for the continuous engagement in agriculture. Therefore it is necessary to secure sale destination in the beginning;
* Securing abundant human recourses in agricultural sector by continuous acceptance of trainees;
* Overall support for the new farmers / trainees by providing market / land / house / skills and the new farmers become trainers when settled;
* Up skill training and development of new markets by the cooperation of the several agricultural groups; Stronger relationship has been achieved by setting up the new association;
* Facilitating activities by organization of the groups and cooperation with administrative agency, simplifying and support for the application;
* Abundant information about trainer farmers;
* Agricultural skills based on scientific evidence and other farm management.

**BOX 5**

**Family Management Agreement in Japan**

Although the family management agreement is a new concept, it has gradually become popular all over Japan. In 2006, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries conducted a survey on the status of the Family Management Agreement. It showed that since its implementation in 1995, more than 30,000 farm household members have already signed the agreement.

Farmers appreciated the family management agreement as it gave their successors incentives and made them more aware of their responsibilities; the successors on the other hand found it worthwhile and less stressful to work at their father's farm. The Family Management Agreement has also been used to advance women’s roles as partners in the overall farm management and improve their situation as farm and domestic workers. For young farmers, it was a way to appreciate farming better and become more knowledgeable of farm operations and participate in management policies.

The family management agreement has brought about the following achievements:

Farm activities have improved. For example, the successors or young farmers freely introduced new ideas such as the use of personal computers for book keeping or/and hiring temporary workers like students or housewives in the farm management.

The meaningless conflicts due to differences of opinion between the father and the son has been eliminated.

It enables the family members to discuss any problems frankly and to reach a consensus on all the important matters of farm management and farm household.

It encourages the establishment of individuality of each family member (e.g., independent participation and having an opinion) and the formation of the partnership which further promotes participation in the farm management.

It draws a clear-cut line for protecting the rights of family members as it has changed the characteristics of the family farm from a paternalistic one to a business like one.

A smooth transfer of farm management has been made possible. Usually, the farmer transfers his management right in his age of 60s. However in the case in which the family management agreement has been signed, the intergenerational transfer is carried on gradually and successfully.

It has contributed towards a gender-equal society by serving as a pathway for creating better working conditions for rural women.

*Sources: Iwamoto (1996) and Abe (no date)*

**2d. Policy Proposals from AFA Members**

***Indonesia.*** API is proposing a policy on family farming, including youth and women, and incentives for young farmers through national laws such as *Protection and Empowerment to Farmers (UUP3)* that promote access to capital and markets and price protection for small farmers. More policies that benefit young farmers should also be pushed, e.g.:

* *Policy on tobacco –* Government regulation (PP No.109/2012) on Tobacco Control, and Local Government Regulation on “Restriction Area for Tobacco” should be opposed;
* *Policy on importation of products –* Government should protect domestic agricultural products (e.g. vegetables) and allow local produce to be exported (e.g. baked tobacco);
* *Conversion of agricultural lands –* Government should protect productive agricultural lands against conversion into industry and other non-agricultural purposes;
* *Inventory of agricultural lands –* Data gathering should be made on the size of land controlled and owned by farmers to identify the potential for access to support services and to consolidate the land to be collectively managed;
* *Access to technology –* Farmers’ access to market and agriculture technology should be strengthened;
* *Local seeds banks* at district level, owned and managed by farmers for farmers purposes;
* *Exchange visits* among farmers organizations.

***Philippines.*** PAKISAMA is proposing a *Magna Carta of Young Farmers* to promote, protect and encourage the participation of young farmers aged 15-40 years with the overarching objective to put pride and dignity back in farming. The proposed law shall (i) define discrimination against young farmers as any age-based distinction that excludes or restricts young farmers in the recognition and promotion of their rights and their access to and enjoyment of opportunities, benefits or privileges; (ii) provide for programs for young farmers such as agriculture-sensitive educational curriculum and broader scholarships for all agri-related courses; (iii) institutionalize young farmers’ representation in all agricultural policy-making bodies and other agencies that have reserved seats for youth; (iv) strengthen existing programs for young farmers and (v) introduce innovative programs such as farm take-over to incentivize young farmers by providing capital to enable them buy their parents’ lands.

***Thailand.*** SORKORPOR is proposing a policy to develop a new generation of young farmers to replace old farmers that will cover the following: (i) establish, expand, promote, and develop group of young farmers in the elementary school, middle school and in the community continually; (ii) develop knowledge, create young farmers organizations and leadership networks; and (iii) create incentives for young farmers towards agricultural entrepreneurship.

***Vietnam.*** VNFU is proposing a policy that will: (i) establish cooperation among farmers to improve market capacity; (ii) provide training and technology transfer on sustainable agriculture through “learning by doing” or “farmers train farmers” methods; (iii) provide long-term investment and credit support; (v) organize exchange visits for rural youth, participate in trade fairs, exhibition, competition on farming techniques; (vi) develop and expand the models on production and business for rural youth; and (iv) build respect for farmers by raising on the important role of farmers and agriculture.

***Cambodia.*** FNN is proposing a policy to prioritize agricultural education program for the youth and develop programs for youth in agriculture with NGOs and the private sector. Young people and the public at large must be sensitized to the importance of the role of agriculture in the economy and for food security.

***Bangladesh.*** KKMis proposing a policy that will: (i) establish model cooperative farms by organizing the smallholders following integrated, ecological and local resource-based farming systems with consumer-linked marketing channel; (ii) develop skills of rural youth through agricultural education and field-based and practical training; (iii) establish agricultural research centers and universities; (iv) introduce “land banking” where medium and big farmers will deposit their lands to the bank to lend the lands to smallholder cooperatives; (v) ensure availability of agricultural credit to young farmers’ cooperatives at low interest rate and easy terms and conditions; (vi) promote sustainable and eco-friendly mechanization of agriculture; (vii) conduct awareness campaign to motivate young farmers to go into farming and grow respect for farming; (viii) engage more educated youth in agriculture; and (viii) ensure responsible investment in sustainable agriculture to promote integrated family farming.

***Nepal.*** NLRF is proposing a policy that will: (i) increase investment in family farming; (ii) research on the situation of family farming in Nepal; (iii) involve the youth in ensuring farmers’ rights in the new Constitution; (iv) create a new network of young farmers for a collective voice; and (v) create more public awareness on the importance of family farming. More specific proposals include the following:

* provide incentives, access to technical knowledge, skills and information, insurance services to young farmers;
* Improve the participation of young farmers at different levels in the community, e.g. cooperatives and producer groups, workers’ associations, savings groups and women’s groups;
* share success stories of youth involvement in agriculture, e.g., those who came back after working abroad;
* attract youth to shift from traditional subsistence farming practices;
* establish agriculture/horticulture as an active and secure profession and motivate young people towards a career in agriculture;
* link agriculture with employment and entrepreneurship.

***Mongolia.*** NAMAC is proposing a policy that will protect young herders’ and farmers’ social security, improve their living and working environment, and increase their household incomes through: (i) research opportunities to equip unemployed youth with transferable herding/animal husbandry skills; (ii) conduct large-scale research and data collection on the problems faced by youth in the agricultural industry and identify ways to solve them; (iii) promote the movement of “*New Generations of Herder Volunteers*” as stated in the *National Program for Support on Youth Development*; and (iv) boost the dignity and leadership of youth in agriculture. More specific proposals include the following:

* expand distance learning, non-degree and skill training /certificate/ programs appropriate for rural teenagers, rural young people and drop-outs;
* give rural youth basic education in business management, marketing, finance and law;
* increase enrolment of youth farmers in vocational colleges;
* support training in herding methods and life skills for young herders;
* organize socio-cultural and sporting events among rural youth.

***Kyrgystan.*** UWUA is proposing a policy that will: (i) provide state support to young farmers, rural women and rural development; (ii) train young farmers in contemporary farming techniques and set up demonstration plots, experience exchange and farmer field schools; (iii) train young farmers on integrated water resources management; (iv) enhance professional training of farmers; (v) provide young farmers with long-term credit with low interest rates and simple procedures; (vi) set up information centers with agricultural product sale database; (vii) promote young women to agriculture and WUA executive posts; and (viii) support the formation of youth organizations in rural areas.

***South Korea.*** KAFF is proposing a policy that will: (i) ensure succession in family farms by providing endowment, technological support and education to promote better eco-system of farmers; (ii) replace or exempt young farmers from military service; (iii) provide financial support to young farmers by lowering interest rates from 3% currently to 1% and adopting credential recognition system; (iv) enable members of Youth Farmers Association to actively participate in KAFF activities; and (v) maximize social responsibility of young farmers and develop their capacity as local farming leaders.

***Taiwan.*** TDFA/TWADA is proposing a policy that will continue support to young farmers through projects such as *New Farmer Program* that will: (i) encourage new farmers to participate in agriculture, focusing on agricultural construction work for city governments; (ii) recruit the youth to join and make use of farming system information and agriculture banking to activate fallow land; and (iii) help new farmers to expand production scale agriculture and promote sustainable agriculture.

***Japan.*** AINOUKAI is proposing a policy that reflects the voice of young organic farmers and that will: (i) encourage newcomers to agriculture; (ii) provide financial incentives and payments to young farmers to achieve stable incomes for the first 3-5 years; (iii) help young farmers secure markets, acquire agricultural skills and shift to organic farming; (iv) raise awareness on the lusciousness and safety of organic food; (v) promote cooperation among young farmers and support from local community through food purchase schemes, and (vi) promote such schemes as “*Family Management Agreement*” where family members agree on their roles and tasks in the farming operations, gives young farmer successors more incentives to farm and better knowledge of farm operations, and advances women’s roles as partners in overall farm management.

**2e. Policies and Proposals for Young Farmers from Other Countries**

***Australia.*** According to Georgie Aley ofFuture Farmers Network of Australia (FFN), a national, independent organization providing opportunities and services to support the future of Australian agriculture, its members believe they can have a prosperous career in agriculture, particularly as demand from Asian neighbors intensifies. Like many other countries, Australia is also facing an ageing population in the agriculture sector. As the vast majority of farms in Australia are operated by family farmers, Australian farms are undergoing a generational handover from parents to their children. This process brings with it legal and financial issues which must be addressed to ensure the next generation of landowners have the best opportunity to manage a successful farm business and continue to contribute to the country’s overall agricultural industry. FFN is proposing to establish a *“Next Generation Program”* that will look at such issues as succession planning, financial management and social isolation to keep young people in agriculture: (i) Create a succession planning program to help finance family farms as the farm transitions from one generation to the next; (ii) Create and support a community grant scheme where communities experiencing or are at risk of social isolation can apply for funding for community activities aimed at reducing social isolation and  give community members a sense of belonging.

***Europe.*** The European Union (EU) today is faced with the scarcity of young farmers and the rapid ageing of the farmer population.According to Eurostat 2007 figures, young farmers under 35 account only for 6% of the EU active farming population while 1/3 of European farmers are over 65. Since the mid-1980s, the EU has instituted measures under its Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) for financial assistance or subsidies to encourage youth (under 40 years) to choose a farming career. The eligibility for specific measures depend on the possible entry channels for new farmers, i.e, through inheritance, early retirement and *ex novo*. The measures can be classified into four categories:

* *Direct Payment Policy* providing access to payment entitlements from reserves;
* *Setting up young farmers* providing aid of up to €70,000 as a one-off premium plus a rebate for interest on possible loans to finance setting up expenses;
* *Modernizing farm holdings* providing special support for young farmers investing in the modernization of their holdings; and
* *Early retirement* of farmer or agricultural worker encouraging farmers to transfer their holdings to the youth.

There are current proposals to reform the CAP measures in support of young farmers. **The** European Council of Young Farmers (CEJA), which provides representation for young farmers across Europe at the EU level, argues that the **problem is not lack of young people interested in farming but the barriers that stand in their way: (i) access to land, (ii) access to credit and (iii) low return on** investments during the first years after installation of young farmers. CEJA further argues that the support currently available to young farmers is not enough to help young people attempting to start or take over a farm, and that young farmers should be made central to the post-2013 reform of CAP.

CEJA is proposing that a more proactive policy be put in place on a European level to support the arrival of new farmers in the agricultural sector and allow them either to create new businesses or take over a business, i.e. a farm, whose owners have retired. Young farmers must be provided financial support with an installation subsidy and facilitate access to bank loans, and EU Member States must institute, within their Rural Development Programs, a sub-program aimed at young farmers. CEJA maintains that state aid for land acquisition for young farmers is essential in order to increase the number of young farmers in the EU considering that access to land is the single most substantial barrier young people are faced with. CEJA calls for increased installation aid and annual “top-up” payments to help buffer young farmers from market volatility and price fluctuations in their first few fragile years of business. CEJA welcomes the proposal that calls upon the European Investment Bank (EIB) to facilitate loans at favourable rates exclusively to young farmers.

***United States.*** The National Young Farmers Coalition (NYFC), which represents, mobilizes, and engages young farmers in the US to ensure their success, has identified land access as one of the major challenges beginning farmers face. Across the country, climbing land prices and competition with the development market have made it increasingly difficult for farmers to find land they can afford. Even farmland conserved through land trusts is often unaffordable for farmers. NYFC advocates for policy changes that support young farmers getting access to the land they need in the face of rising land prices, development pressure, and competition from farm consolidation – e.g. **prioritize conservation easements with affordability language and succession planning;** provide tax incentives for landowners who rent or sell land to beginning farmers; make state lands available through contract, lease or purchase programs to beginning farmers.

According to Kesmodel and Dreibus (2014), the average age of U.S. farmers has climbed to 58.3 in 2012 from 57.1 in 2007 (US Department of Agriculture figures), while the number of farms shrank 4% continuing a years-long consolidation fuelled in part by larger operators snapping up farms of growers who retire or die. In recent years, however, there is rising interest in agriculture reflecting several trends. Many young people who grew up in the rural Midwest watched farm incomes soar due to the corn-ethanol boom and rising overseas demand for grain. This has made farming more enticing for this generation, unlike children who experienced the 1980s farm crisis in which crop surpluses and plunging land prices helped force many farmers out of business. Agriculture also is attracting urbanites and others interested in sustainable food-growing practices and the thriving market for organic foods.

Renewed interest in agriculture among younger Americans is boosted through a USDA program that provides financial incentives to older landowners to rent to neophytes more cheaply. Land-matching programs run by governments, universities and community groups are also now enjoying surging demand because they help beginning farmers and ranchers tackle the high cost of farm real estate. These programs typically arrange for beginners to lease at below-market rates for a certain period, or to earn farm ownership by working for a landowner, and sometimes address another problem – helping identify successors for older farmers who have no children interested in the trade.

Accordingly, this renewed interest in agriculture is not only true for young Americans but is a “revolution” taking place among youth in rural – and even urban – areas around the world. According to Nierenberg (2014) of Food Tank, for the first time*,* many young people are excited about being involved in agriculture and the food system and learning the skills to become agronomists, extension agents, food scientists, academics, food business leaders, chefs and cooks, and food entrepreneurs. They see the food system as an opportunity, not a burden, and are looking to solve some of the world’s most pressing social problems through food and farming.

***Bordeaux Manifesto.*** Young farmers from Asia, Oceania, Africa, America and Europe gathered in Bordeaux, France in September 2014 and called for policies to make family farming a solution for the future. International young farmers called for (i) social, economic and legal recognition of family farmers; (ii) promote young farmers’ installation; and (c) put family farmers at the center of territorial development. As family farmers comprise 40% of the world's active working population, all governments must accord a meaningful legal status to the farming livelihood in their respective national laws, and set up specific support measures in favor of family farming.

* Governments must support the creation of cooperatives of young farmers or creation of youth sections in existing cooperatives, and promote projects that enable famers to increase value creation on their farms through innovative and collective tools of production and commercialization.
* National agricultural policiesmust be supported by education and training programs that allow young farmers to succeed in their professional project, on their farm, within their collective organizations and on their territories; put in place young farmers start up programs, providing financial and technical assistance; promote for young farmers the access to the production means, to the markets, to credit, to continuing education and to technical support; develop awareness and promotional campaigns in relation to the farming livelihood and aimed at both rural and urban young people; and promote the setting up of synergies between public and private sectors to support the installation of young farmers.
* Access to land and credit must be safeguarded through a support to intergenerational cooperation consisting of knowledge transfer, cooperation and support between generations in the form of apprenticeships for young farmers, land transfers, the development of “agricultural banks” and insurance schemes, a preferential credits system with low and flexible interest rates for young farmers.

***IFAD.*** In 2011, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) proposed the following measures to boost food security, feed future generations and reduce poverty by involving young rural people in a dynamic, modern agribusiness sector:

* *Getting young people interested in agriculture.* With modern technology, training, communication and information, agriculture becomes attractive to young people.
* *Changing the way we view agriculture and farmers.* Agriculture is not viewed as a respectable activity. There is need to improve the image of agriculture need to view successful young farmers as role models.
* *Setting new paradigms.* First, deal with agriculture based on communities rather than commodities. Second, respect traditional knowledge. A dialogue needs to take place between traditional knowledge and scientific knowledge, with the two being seen as equals. Third, stop talking about developed and developing countries. Countries are developed differently; they’re not developed and undeveloped.
* *Prioritizing young rural women and men.* For many years national planners have not been aware of the presence of the youth sector and simply assumed that young people are still in school, which may be true in urban areas, but not in rural ones. If national planners are ignorant of the contribution being made by young people, they cannot effectively plan for them. It is time that the youth sector is given greater recognition.
* *Giving young people a voice.* If young people don’t have access to public policies, they also will not have access to land, nor will they have their needs met. Young people need to be given a voice in decisions affecting their future, and must be allowed to take a more active role in public debates.
* *Creating opportunities for young women.* Design programs and initiatives to ensure that women receive access to land and finance and have the skills to use the land productively.
* *Making funds available to young farmers.* The difficulties faced by young rural women and men in accessing funding are identified as a key barrier to establishing vibrant farm and non-farm enterprises.
* *The role of governments and development agencies.* Policymakers should look at the household or the community members involved in agriculture, and their special opportunities, capacities and constraints. Agencies need to be gender sensitive and youth sensitive too.
* *Providing young rural women and men with high-quality, relevant education and training.*
* *Giving young women and men access to land.*

**3. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The 2014 UN International Year of Family Farming is a recognition of the significant contribution of small-scale farmers in feeding the world and caring for the earth. It is an opportunity to tell the world to invest in smallholder agriculture, invest in women in agriculture and invest in the rural youth.

Over 60% of the world’s youth, or more than 750 million young women and men aged 15-24 years, live in Asia-Pacific. Young people, however, are increasingly leaving the rural areas for the cities or overseas mainly due to the lack of opportunities in rural areas and the low income from farming due to lack of access to basic means of production, and ineffective government policies in support of agriculture. More young farmers are leaving the farms and only old farmers remain in the villages. The average age of farmers in the Philippines, Thailand and Japan are 57, 54 and 66 years, respectively. Moreover, fewer students are enrolled in agriculture and related courses due to a lack of interest or a push from their parents to seek jobs other than farming.

The factors that need to be considered to attract youth in agriculture in Asia today may be categorized into: personal, economic, political and socio-cultural.

***Personal*.** Young farmers lack experience, training and technical knowledge and skills to make farming more productive. These include knowhow and skills in agricultural production, farm management, agri-enterpise business development and marketing. Young women farmers even have less access to such trainings as they are not largely seen as farmers. There is also a general lack of motivation among young people in farming as an occupation. They do not not find farming as a profitable business; subsistence-oriented agriculture also discourage the youth to go into farming. Agriculture is also seen by young people as hard, back-breaking work and drudgery since many small family farms are not mechanized. Moreover, young farmers feel discriminated against and have low self-esteem due to a general low regard for farming. In the Philippines, for instance, farming is seen as a form of punishment for children who do not do well in school. Youth have become disenchanted towards agriculture because there is a lack of role models to motivate young farmers. On the other hand, note should be taken on the innovativeness of young people and the growing renewed interest in agriculture where young people are excited about becoming agronomists, agri-preneurs, chefs and cooks, etc.

***Economic.*** The popular perception is that there is no money in farming and agriculture is an outdated field with minimal financial returns. Rural youth do not see farming as a way out of poverty; their parents were poor farmers, they will remain poor farmers. In Vietnam, rural youth would wish to farm only if farming would make them rich and secure. In Mongolia, young farmers needed to earn at least subsistence wages from farming.

Young farmers lack access to production assets such as land, capital and in the case of Mongolia, livestock.Young farmers lack access to credit since many of them are not the heads of families which are sometimes required legally nor do they have the collateral needed by banks and financial institutions, as productive assets would usually be in the name of their parents. Young farmers are challenged with financial credit due to the lack of collateral and in some cases, the high rates of bank loans.

Farming does not generate good returns on investment due to the high costs of agricultural inputs (e.g., chemical fertilizers, insecticides, seeds) and the low price of agricultural products. Young farmers also lack access to markets to sell their goods at fair prices and depend largely on middlemen. The lack of agricultural infrastructure is also a major problem. For instance, Kyrgystan suffers from shortage of water supply in some areas and poor irrigation structures and a lack of gender equality in water users associations.

Farming is also risky business. Engaging in agriculture is fraught with high risks and low returns. Traders control the price of agricultural products who take advantage of farmers’ vulnerabilities. Changing climate patterns has also increased unpredictability for farmers.Major typhoons can wipe out earnings, and social protection and crop insurance is sorely lacking.

Finally, free trade agreements signed by governments (e.g., South Korea, Japan) with many countries trigger huge farmers protests since agriculture is expected to be negatively impacted by the FTAs.

***Political.*** Agrarian issues (e.g., land tenure, landlessness) are major factors in attracting youth in agriculture. Many young farmers do not own land that they cultivate or those who want to farm lack agricultural land. Most agricultural lands are in the hands of medium and big farmers who are mainly absentee farmers. Rich people and corporations are also grabbing agricultural lands. Moreover, industrialization and modernization has made agricultural lands decrease rapidly and also one reason why rural youth must go to big cities to look for jobs. In Cambodia, young farmers expressed the need to gain more knowledge on land titling.

Generally, there is a lack of agricultural support services, and where provided, these are inadequate or does not prioritize young farmers. There is a lack of exposure and skills training for young farmers. There is lack of support in terms of inputs, fertilizers, local seeds, modern agricultural equipments, access to capital, lack of information on price or market, and access to market.

Young farmers are excluded in agricultural policy formation and decision-making processes thus their issues and concerns are not usually taken into consideration or are not prioritized.

This is reflected in the a general lack of policies and programs supporting youth in agriculture. In Mongolia, young people decry that existing laws and policies only support livestock, crops and vegetables, but the policies do not focus on producers such as herders and farmers who are the major factors of production.

This lack of participation in governance also stems from the fact that young farmers are not formally recognized as a demographic group by the government. And because they are not recognized, they do not have formal venues for participation in decision-making processes. Young farmers voices are not being heard and are thus excluded.

***Socio-cultural.*** There is generally a low regard for farming. In the Philippines, is perceived as lowly work fit only for school drop-outs or those without other options in life. In Bangladesh, there is “no dignity” in the farming profession, while in Nepal, farming is not seen culturally as a “respectable” profession.

Young people also see rural life as boring that lacks social life and recreation activities. There are not may rural youth organizations that could foster community social activities and provide solidarity groups or venue for e.g., exchange of information, ideas and support among young farmers.

The next generation of family farmers of farmers is at risk with the ageing farming population in many countries in Asia. Also, traditional methods are no longer being passed down by elders to the youth, which means this source of traditional best practice exchange is no longer serving to bolster youth interest, e.g., in the herding sector in Mongolia.

There is a perceptible trend, however, of young people getting more interested in farming. An award-winning research in the Philippines found that young people are still interested in farming and wished to stay connected to agriculture through providing capital or other support. Rural youth should hence be seen as future investors who can provide capital investments to family farms.

***Recommendations.*** The youth can be attracted to agriculture if they see meaning, income opportunities as well as feel a sense of pride in farming. The youth needs training, as well as the presence of mentors, coaches, motivators. The youth needs to be provided with basic resources especially land, capital and equipments to make farming less tedious work. Several recommendations are identified to attract the youth to agriculture in Asia:

1. **Access to land, capital and other basic resources**

The youth needs to be provided with basic resources especially land, capital, seeds and equipments to make farming less tedious work and primarily be viable and sustainable.

1. **Capacity building**

The youth needs appropriate training and exposure through education, as well as the presence of mentors, coaches, motivators, to motivate young farmers. The youth needs to be attracted to sustainable, organic, agro-ecological approaches, farmer-owned and led enterprises and value addition. An entrepreneurial attitude should be built among young farmers. They also need to be trained on constructive engagement and be provided with youth education, scholarship programs and ensure admission of especially women in agricultural universities. Methods like “learning by doing” or “farmers train farmers” should also be used.

1. **Policy advocacy especially focused on youth**

These include developing and advocating for policy proposals and programs to attract youth back to agriculture, e.g. Magna Carta of Young Farmers, soft loan for young farmers, ASEAN agricultural bank, right to seeds, campaign on land, New generations of Herder Volunteers, Financial support to young farmers, New Farmers Program,Setting up young farmers *or* young farmers start up programs, family management agreement, next generation or succession planning program, etc.

1. **Research** **and Documentation**

New knowledge has been gained from the research on situation of young farmers, and the existing initiatives and proposals from young farmers and their organizations to make agriculture a more viable option for rural youth. Further research needs to be done on effective strategies to attract youth to agriculture, e.g. comparative study of the use of organic and non-organic fertilizer, policy research on incentives for young farmers, research on impacts of climate change. The lack of a common definition or official data on young farmers should also be addressed. Action research such as participatory breeding of local seeds should also be documented, as well as success stories of young farmers as role models.

1. **Regional Exchange program**

These include young farmers’ gatherings, exchange visits among young farmers organizations, cooperation and international solidarity among young farmers, participation in trade fairs, exhibition, competition on farming techniques, sharing success stories of youth involvement in agriculture, etc.

1. **Organization development**

The key to enticing the youth into farming is forming a strong base of organized young farmers who are empowered to negotiate for support that they would need to nurture a happy and healthy world. The youth needs their own spaces to find their voice and actualize themselves as young farmers. They need more venues for more participation and representation at all levels, including establishing a youth arm at AFA, to give voice to young farmers, strengthen cooperation groups / cooperatives, to organize support to advocacy work, and to develop knowledge networks. The creation of cooperatives of young farmers or creation of youth sections in existing cooperatives and producer groups, workers’ associations, savings groups and women’s groups, should be supported. Moreover, organizing and strengthening small-scale family farmers will make them better prepared to access opportunities and benefit fully from ASEAN or other free trade integration and address adverse consequences as a result of integration.

1. **Partnership with various actors**

To attract youth into agriculture, there is a need to link up with various actors (government, business sector, banks, academe) – e.g., set up links with training centers and refresher courses; link up with consumer groups on about food safety and organic foods; create support from the local community for food purchase schemes. The public at large must be sensitized to the importance of the role of agriculture in the economy and in ensuring food security. Respect for farming should be built and more awareness should be created in recognizing the role of farmers and agriculture, and in ensuring the next generation of farmers through the succession of young farmers.

1. **Highlights of policy proposals to attract the youth to agriculture**

***Indonesia.*** Promote family farming and incentives for young farmers through national laws such as “*Protection and Empowerment to Farmers”* that promote access to capital and markets, price protection for small farmers, participatory crop breeding, and knowledge-sharing among young and elder farmers through “musyawarah” or popular discussions.

***Philippines.*** Enact a “*Magna Carta of Young Farmers”* to promote, protect and encourage the participation of young farmers aged 15-40 years with the overarching objective to put pride and dignity back in farming and will define discrimination against young farmers, institutionalize young farmers’ representation in all agricultural policy-making bodies, and introduce innovative programs such as “farm take-over” that will provide capital to young farmers to enable them buy their parents’ lands.

***Vietnam.*** Promote farmers’ access to markets, provide training and technology transfer, long-term investment and credit support, organize exchange visits and develop models on production and business for rural youth, and build respect for farmers by raising awareness on the role of farmers and agriculture.

***Cambodia.*** Prioritize agricultural education program for the youth and develop programs for youth in agriculture with NGOs and the private sector.

***Bangladesh.*** Establish model cooperative farms by organizing smallholders farmers, develop skills of rural youth through agricultural education and field-based training, establish agricultural research centers and universities, introduce “land banking”, provide agricultural credit to young farmers’ coops at low interest rate and easy terms, promote eco-friendly mechanization of agriculture, conduct awareness campaign to motivate young farmers to grow respect for farming, and promote integrated family farming.

***Nepal*.** Increase investment in family farming, conduct research on the situation of family farming, involve the youth in ensuring farmers’ rights in the new Constitution, create a new network of young farmers, and create more public awareness on the importance of family farming.

***Mongolia.*** Protect young herders’ and farmers’ social security, improve their living and working environment and increase their household incomes, equip unemployed youth with transferable herding/animal husbandry skills, identify problems faced by youth in the agricultural industry and ways to solve them, promote the movement of “*New Generations of Herder Volunteers*”, and boost the dignity and leadership of youth in agriculture.

***Krgystan.*** Provide state support to young farmers, rural women and rural development, train young farmers in contemporary farming techniques (e.g. integrated water resources management) and set up demonstration plots, experience exchange and farmer field schools, enhance professional training of farmers, provide young farmers with long-term credit with low interest rates and simple procedures, set up information centers with agricultural product sale database, promote young women farmers in executive posts, and support the formation of youth organizations in rural areas.

***Taiwan.*** Provide support to young farmers through schemes such as “*New Farmer Program”* that encourages new farmers to participate in agriculture through technical and financial support in the form of government loans with low interest, promote sustainable agriculture banking to activate fallow land and help new farmers to expand production scale agriculture.

***South Korea.*** Ensure succession in family farms by providing endowment, technological and educational support towards better ecosystem of farmers, replace or exempt young farmers from military service, provide financial support to young farmers by lowering interest rates from 3% to 1% and adopting a credential recognition system, enable the active participation of young farmers in civic activities, and develop the capacity of young farmers to be local farming leaders.

***Japan.*** Encourage newcomers to agriculture, provide financial incentives and payments to young farmers to achieve stable incomes for the first 3-5 years, help young farmers secure markets, acquire agricultural skills and shift to organic farming, reflect the voice of young organic farmers, raise consumer awareness about food safety and organic foods, promote cooperation among young farmers and support from local community through food purchase schemes, and promote such schemes as “*Family Management Agreement*” where family members agree on their roles and tasks in the farming operations, young farmer successors are given more incentives to farm and better knowledge of farm operations, and which advances women’s roles as partners in overall farm management.

***European Union.*** Promote EU policies for financial assistance or subsidies to encourage the youth to choose a farming career through “*Direct Payment Policy”, “Setting up young farmers”* providing aid of up to €70,000, “*Modernizing farm holdings”* and “*Early retirement”* to encourage farmers to transfer their holdings to the youth. Provide increased installation aid and annual “top-up” payments to young farmers during the first years after installation to enable them to start or take over a farm and address barriers such as **access to land and bank loans.**

***Bordeaux Manifesto.*** Promote social, economic and legal recognition of family farmers, promote young farmers’ installation and set up specific support measures in favor of family farming, such as support the creation of cooperatives of young farmers or creation of youth sections in existing cooperatives; national agricultural policiesthat support education and training programs for young farmers; access to land and credit with low and flexible interest rates; intergenerational cooperation and apprenticeships for young farmers; land transfers; and “agricultural banks.”

***Australia.*** Establish a *“Next Generation Program”* that will promote succession planning to help finance family farms as they transition from one generation to the next and provide grants for communities which are experiencing or are at risk of social isolation to give community members a sense of belonging.

***United States.*** Address issue of rising land prices and young farmers no longer able to afford loan through such schemes as **succession planning, p**roviding tax incentives for landowners who rent or sell land to beginning farmers, and making state lands available through contract, lease or purchase programs to beginning farmers.

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**ANNEX A**

**Country-level FACT Processes and Results**

**Indonesia.** Aliansi Petani Indonesia (API) conducted a half-day consultation and Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) on Youth in Agriculture in December 2013 attended by 112 youth participants (up to 35 years old), 30% of them women, from three API members – Paguyuban Petani Gunung Sumbing (PPGS) in Wonosobo District (Central Java Province); Organisasi Petani Merapi Merbabu (OPMM) in Boyolali District (Central Java Province); and Serikat Petani Lumajang (SPL) Lumajang District (East Java Province). API has consulted with university expert for pest and disease, and discussed with field extension staff and district parliament regarding the importation of vegetables. API also pushed a new policy to regulate the importation of vegetables and tobacco, and within the next five months, a local regulation for tobacco is expected. API has concluded that the systematic FACT tools facilitated farmers organization in advocacy and was easy to be internally absorbed into daily organizational advocacy process.

**Philippines.** Pambansang Kilusan ng mga Samahang Magsasaka (PAKISAMA) conducted a desk study, participatory research and organized 11 provincial consultations and a two-day national consultation in February 2014. The participants were about 100 young farmers aged 18 to 40 years, roughly 27% women, from farming or fishing families whose parents are either small landholders, or landless tenants or leaseholders; all of them are members of farmers organizations (FOs). As a result of the consultations, the PAKISAMA Young Farmers Assembly was formed with two young farmer leaders selected (one male, one female) to represent the youth at the next Council meetings of PAKISAMA. In September 2014, PAKISAMA organized a Young Farmers Camp to train young farmer leaders in sustainable organic farming and discuss the issues to be included in the proposed Magna Carta of Young Farmers where the Philippine Young Farmers Assembly was also formed. PAKISAMA was also invited to talk about issues of young farmers and the proposed Magna Carta of Young Farmers at the “Second International Conference on Agriculture and Rural Development in Southeast Asia organized by the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) in October 2014. At a IYFF-inspired event in the Philippines organized by government in November 2014, international agencies and CSOs including PAKISAMA, the young farmers recommended policy proposals to attract youth to agriculture.

As a result of national and local consultations, the PAKISAMA Young Farmers Assembly was organized which selected 2 from among themselves (one male, one female) to represent the youth at the next Council Meeting of PAKISAMA. In September, PAKISAMA organized a Young Farmers Camp in its demonstration farm in Mindoro to train young farmer leaders in IDOFS organic farming; as well, the young farmers discussed the contents and issues in the proposed *Magna Carta of Young Farmers*. They organized themselves into the Philippine Young Farmers Assembly. At the closing session of the IYFF in November 2014, the Magna Carta was proposed to various government agencies; as a result, government agencies including the Departments of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform and the National Youth Commission have expressed support to young farmers’ initiatives including the Magna Carta of Young Farmers.

**Vietnam.** Vietnam Farmers’ Union (VNFU) conducted national consultations with representatives from VNFU, Youth’s Union, Women’s Union. Membership consultation and participatory research were also held in Dang Xa commune, Gia Lam district, Hanoi in February 2014 among rural youth farmers in Dang Xa commune using the FACT approach. A questionnaire /surveys forms was developed with the support of internal experts and staff. The desk study involved collaboration with the Youth’s Union to collect reports and gather information about existing policies from VNFU reports, websites. Based on the results of consultation and participatory research, VNFU used internal experts/staff to write a SMART proposal. Lobby mapping and stakeholders’ analysis was done using the format of power and interest grid. Almost all of the issues and comments from the commune were noted and supplied as input for VNFU to have more research/studies on the youth in agriculture and formulate the suitable projects/proposal to solve problems of young farmers.

The FACT process helpedVNFU to find out exactly the needs, issues of youth in rural areas. Identifying the priorities from rural youth had then been integrated in the activities of the organization, with real solutions and proposal to make a contribution to regional level proposal. The Vice-Director of VNFU’s International Cooperation Department also noted that the youth plays a very important role in national socio-economic development, sustainable agriculture and rural development, but they leave the countryside to the cities to look for the jobs. Hence the need for relevant government ministries to implement policies and programs that attract the youth to come back or stay in countryside to work in agriculture.

**Cambodia.** Farmer and Nature Net (FNN) conducted consultations with members in November – December 2013, prepared the participatory research and SMART proposal in January-February 2014, and conducted lobby mapping and stakeholder analysis in March 2014. Interviews and Focused Group Discussions were conducted in 3 provinces which include 13 districts with nearly 200 young farmers, parents, NGOs and local authority using questionnaires translated in Khmer. FNN also organized a youth national workshop in Phnom Penh, with 46 participants (39% women) from youth, parents and local organizations and the government. FNN leaders and members had been sensitized and expressed their support to the issues of young farmers, including migration of youth to cities and lack of labor in rural areas, and gained better understanding of youth in agriculture issues. During the consultations, the Deputy Director General of the Department of Agriculture and Head of Agriculture Extension expressed their support to the issues of young farmers. FNN found many challenging issues of youth in agriculture. It also gained initiatives and proposal made by youth for writing policy through the help of the FACT tool.

**Bangladesh.** Kendrio Krishok Moitree (KKM) conducted a participatory research through Focus Group Discussions with young farmers both male and female and in-depth interview of youth farmers, rural youth and other stakeholders, and organized validation workshops with relevant stakeholders. Validation workshops were done with participation of officials of Department of Agriculture Extension, Fisheries, Livestock, Youth Development who expressed similar opinion as the research findings. They suggested recommendations which were reflected in the policy proposal. The KKM leaders facilitated the whole process which increased their capacity on the FACT process. A policy proposal was prepared for KKM to do advocacy and lobby with the policy makers at national and global level.

**Nepal.** National Land Reform Forum (NLRF) carried out a study in 4 village development committees (VDCs) of 2 districts, interviewed 52 youth members (18 to 35 yrs) from Mohattari district and 42 members from Lalitpur. It conducted FGDs, literature review, and national consultations. 94 people attended the national consultation including representatives from the Ministry, the National Committee of Family Farming, various agricultural cooperatives, organizations and associations working in the field of youth and agriculture, journalists, civil society. There were 53 youth members. The youth had been motivated to join at the NLRF, opening the possibilities to develop more youth frontline leaders, addressing an important issue in the land rights movement.

**Mongolia**. National Association of Mongolian Agricultural Cooperatives (NAMAC) organized a National Consultation on Youth in Agriculture, village-level online discussions cum FGD survey and stakeholder lobbying analysis in December 2013. The national consultation was attended by 26 participants from 13 provinces who work in the agricultural sector (average age 30 years and 58% women). The teaching faculty from Agricultural University gave lectures on various youth in agriculture-oriented topics which equipped the youth with new perspectives, facts, and information pertaining to the Mongolian Youth Agricultural Environment. The village-level online discussions were held with 53 representatives from 13 provinces with 47% women. Online discussion questionnaires were developed and distributed to all 21 provinces, but some provinces were not able to participate due to Internet connectivity problems. Some 1, 080 people participated in the study on attracting youth in agriculture. NAMAC identified three important benefits of the FACT-Youth: a) After organizing the first National Consultation on Youth in Agriculture, it was decided that the National Consultation be organized every year, and the second National Consultation was held in August 2014 in “Khorgiin misheel” cooperative at Tariat soum of Arkhangai province; b) NAMAC has enriched its information sources and policy proposal on youth in agriculture and youth who participated in the consultation innovated new activities in their own local areas; and c) Under auspices of Mongolian Prime Minister, the National Consultation on Young Herders was organized on 9-10 May 2014 at the Government House of Mongolia. A special program for young herders has been developed, and government gave zero interest loans to young herders and repayment through livestock.

**Kyrgystan.** Union of Water User Associations (UWUA) organized two consultations with representatives of young farmers, including women, FO leaders, government institutions and NGOs with the participation of WUA Union team in Osh city and in Bishkek city in April 2014. There were 59 participants, with 30% women. UWUA also conducted a desk research and sociological survey participated in by 126 rural youth with 35% women in the first group, and 60 FO leaders, government and NGO reps in the second group, 20% women. A stakeholder analysis was also conducted. For continuation of the work at national level and more full covering of all groups of interest it was most urgent to continue WUA Union activity on promotion of IYFF and involve other CSOs. A separate agreement had been made with Association of Forest and Land Users (AFLU) which has 70 branches in all regions of country. The AFLU had rendered an active assistance in arrangement of the research. Joining hands with a huge organization of natural resource users will provide an opportunity for full scale coverage of all groups of interests. Both WUA Union and AFLU have enough experience in development of strategic documents and a huge number of youth among their members and are planning to closely undertake promotion of rural youth interests at in national policy and legislation. Since the subject of integrated water management is the focus of WUA Unions, the southern region representatives of WUA Union have taken a decision to undertake measures on advocacy of these problems within the area of their responsibility. Results of research and meetings, workshops and WUA meeting were considered as an important and priority measures for further work on improvement of national policy on support of family farms and rural youth. The WUA Union activity in recent months and research results had demonstrated apparent lapses in coordination of MOA and LI and MLM and Y activities, in particular on support of rural youth.

**Japan**. AIOUKAI conducted case studies on Young Organic Agricultural Farmers in Iga District in Mie Prefecture, and a survey of young organic farmers of Japan. In March 2014, AINOUKAI conducted interviews with 6 young organic farmers in Iga district before its General Assembly.

**Others.** SORKORPOR (SKP) in Thailand, Korean Advanced Farmers Federation (KAFF)/ Water Advanced Farmers Federation (WAFF) in South Korea and Taiwan Dairy Farmers Association (TDFA) / Taiwan Wax Apple Development Association (TWADA) in Taiwan – did not implement the FACT process in youth in agriculture, but shared existing initiatives during the AFA regional consultation on youth. SAEDA from Laos, non-AFA member, implemented FACT process in youth, but did not share process and results during the AFA regional consultation on youth.

**ANNEX B**

**Initiatives to Support Youth in Agriculture in Asia**

**Philippines**

Several policies and programs or services exist for rural youth and young farmers, including the following:

1. *Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law of 1988.* Republic Act (RA) 6657 institutes a Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) which covers all agricultural lands, regardless of crop. The retention limit for rice and corn lands is seven hectares; for non-rice and non-corn lands retention limit is five hectares, while each child 15 years old and above and are actually tilling or managing the land can retain three (3) hectares. Eligible beneficiaries are: owner/cultivators; leaseholders granted permanent use rights over the lands; farm workers who rendered service for value as an employee or laborer.
2. *Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998*. RA 8550 protects the right of fisherfolk in the preferential use of municipal waters; limit access to the fishery and aquatic resources of the Philippines for the exclusive use and enjoyment of Filipino citizens; ensures the rational and sustainable development, management and conservation of the fishery and aquatic resources.
3. *Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997.* RA 8371 recognizes and promotes all the rights of Indigenous Cultural Communities/ Indigenous Peoples (ICCs/IPs) – to their ancestral domains; to preserve and develop their cultures, traditions and institutions;  enjoy the full measure of Human rights and freedoms  without distinction or discrimination.
4. *Youth in Nation-Building Act of 1994.*RA 8044 defines ‘youth’ as the critical period in a person’s growth and development from the onset of adolescence towards the peak of mature, self-reliant and responsible adulthood, from age of 15 to 30 years. Youth is categorized as urban / rural, and according to four youth sub-sectors: out-of-school youth, in-school youth, working youth and specific youth groups. The National Youth Commission (NYC) is designated as the main agency responsible for coordinating policies on youth development and formulate the Philippine Youth Development Plan (PYDP). Existing NYC programs include Youth Organizations’ Registration Program; Government Internship Program (summer work program for students); National Youth Parliament (3-day convention of youth leaders); Local Youth Development Program (establishment of Local Youth Development Councils); Mindanao 2020 (advocacy-training program on culture of peace, human rights and indigenous peoples); Abot-Alam National Program for Out-of-School Youth; National Action Plan for Youth Employment and Migration (local employment and entrepreneurship).
5. *Agricultural and Fisheries Modernization Act of 1997 (AFMA).*RA 8435 empowers civil society groups and the local government units (LGUs) to provide area-specific extension services, and supports ‘centers of excellence’ for world-class agricultural education and research.
6. *Agricultural Competitiveness Enhancement Fund of 2008 (ACEF).*RA 9496 provides for an ACEF earmarked for the protection of farmers against unfair trade practices and increased productivity of farmers by providing necessary support services.
7. *Agri-Agra Reform Credit Act of 2009.*RA 10000 institutes an agriculture, fisheries and agrarian reform credit, insurance and financing system, in which all banking institutions are to set aside at least 25% of their total loanable funds for agriculture and fisheries credit, and at least 10% shall be made available for agrarian reform beneficiaries.
8. *Organic Agriculture Act of 2010***.** RA 10068 establishes a comprehensive organic agricultural program by promoting and commercializing organic farming practices, cultivation and adoption of production and processing methods.
9. *Farm Mechanization Law of 2013.* RA 10601 aims to encourage farmers and fisherfolk to use modern, cost-effective and environment-friendly production, processing and postharvest machines and adopt new technologies to enhance their productivity and income.
10. *Rural Farm School Act of 2013.* RA 10618 institutionalizes the creation of rural farm schools as a parallel learning system or alternative delivery mode of secondary education to address the needs of young Filipinos in agricultural or fishing areas, and provides that one public rural farm school be established in every province, using the core high school curriculum of the Department of Education (DepEd) with add-on courses focusing on agri-fishery. Public rural farm schools are free from tuition and other fees, and priority is given to relatives of CARP beneficiaries.

*Department of Agriculture (DA) programs* ***–*** These include the following: *4-H Clubs* with Agriculture Training Institute (ATI) as lead agency in promoting ladderized training on agri-entrepreneurship; *Young Filipino Farmers Training Program in Japan,* with National Agricultural and Fishery Council (NAFC) as lead agency, involves intensive, on-farm agricultural training in cooperation with farmers cooperatives in Japan; *Young Farmers Program* aims to encourage young agriculture and fisheries graduates (20-39 years) to go into agribusiness and become entrepreneurs; *Farmer-Scientists Training Program* with ATI – as lead implementor to empower small marginalized farmers to produce more than their subsistence level; *Schools for Practical Agriculture* of ATI that develops farmer leaders to become teachers and community extension workers, and their farm lots as ‘schools’ for hands-on training; *Youth for Agriculture and Fisheries Scholarship Program* gives priority to youth from the poorest families and children of farmers; *Adopt a Farm Youth Program* to enhance the skills of young farmers through the use of new agricultural technology; *Agri-Pinoy Project* launched by the National Tobacco Administration (NTA) to encourage the younger generation to get involved in farming, side by side with their parents; *e-Learning for Agriculture and Fisheries* with ATI as lead which makes available e-learning courses for free; *Pinoy Rice Knowledge Bank (PinoyRice)* launched by PhilRice to provide online assistance to rice farmers, agricultural technicians and extension workers looking for area-specific and local resource materials on farming practices and technologies; ***Youth as farm ‘infomediaries’* launched by** PhilRice to mobilize the youth to help their farmer-parents search for rice farming information; *Increasing mechanization to attract young farmers* with Philippine Center for Postharvest Development and Mechanization (PhilMech) as lead to mechanize farm work to reduce drudgery.

*Other government programs – TESDA’s Agricultural Vocational Course.* Under AFMA, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) is mandated to provide agri-fishery skills training programs for farmers and fisherfolk; *National Agriculture Organic Board (NOAB).* The Organic Agriculture Act and created the NOAB and allocated permanent seats for farmer representatives, coupled with an annual allocation in the national budget to develop and mainstream organic agriculture; *National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC).*The youth and student sector is one of 14 marginalized sectors represented in the NAPC structure which provides for the sector’s participation in policy-making and governance. Other basic sectors are: Farmers and landless rural workers; Artisanal fisher folk; Indigenous people and cultural communities;

*Pending bills in Congress –*

1. *Institutionalizing Young Farmers Program (YFP)*will institutionalize the YFP to equip the youth with the necessary technical and entrepreneurial skills, provide them production and marketing support, and aid them in capital formation.
2. *Agriculture Scholarship Fund* will establish a comprehensive scholarship program focused on agriculture, fisheries, forestry and related courses where about 25% of the curriculum is in the form of on-the-job training or related learning experience.

*NGO programs* – *Family Farm School; Farm Business School*. *Pinoy Agripreneurs Program, Agri-tourism.*

**Vietnam**

There are many programs on youth in general. However, there are very few programs only for young farmers or rural youth. The rural youth are mentioned in laws and programs as follows:

1. *Law on the Youth, 2005* to encourage and give priority on vocational training, job creation, access to loan with low interest rate for rural youth.
2. *Strategy on developing youth in period of 2013-2020*.
3. *Vocational training for rural labourers.* Program on new rural construction to encourage the youth to participate in new rural construction; support rural youth develop youth cooperation groups on production, business, credit groups and build up collective models like youth cooperatives, service groups, farms of rural youth, models on “green economy” which rural youth enrich by safe plantation and husbandry. Rural youth can access loan from the National Fund on job support based on cooperation groups or models on production.
4. *Loan for poor students* or those from poor households or rural laborers who want to learn at vocational training schools.
5. *Initiatives of FOs/CSOs in addressing the concerns of young farmers*. Youth’s Union is a representative organization for the youth in Vietnam. Finding jobs is very urgent issue for the youth. There are many programs to reduce the unemployment among the youth, increase time beyond farming time, generate income and increase capacity for the youth to meet requirements on competitiveness.
6. *Vocational training for rural laborers including the rural youth.* With the aim of providing vocational training for
7. *Movement on Volunteer to the countryside* involves many youth in urban who have knowledge to go to rural areas to help farmers, particularly the rural youth to do production. They stay with farmers and transfer their knowledge and labor force to build local infrastructure.
8. *Movement on youth in good production and business:* This movements encourages rural youth to apply technology, biotechnology, creating creativeness in agricultural production; innovative thinking, sharing knowledge and make a difference in products and participate in new rural construction; Rural youth participate in making new and high quality products to meet the market requirements and increase the market power for rural youth.

**Mongolia**

There are many existing laws, acts, policy proposals, and programs instituted by government and NGOs: Law on Protecting the livestock gene pool and animal health; Law on Agricultural Commodity Exchange; Mongolian Law on Natural Plants; Food law of Mongolia; Government policy on food and agriculture; Government policy on Herders; National Livestock program, and support program for intensive livestock development; National programs on Food safety, Dairy product, Mongolian livestock, Feed and Fodder.

The policies, however, do not have clauses that focus on the producers, such as herders and farmers, who are the major factors of production, i.e., the policies support only livestock, crops, and vegetables, but the herders and farmers are not directly considered. Only one –*The Policy Proposal on Young Herders* – focuses directly on the herders and farmers but contains only the following single clause on their behalf: “*3.3.10. The Government should support strategic plans for preparing young and future herders by providing non-degree and short-term professional education; by developing distant-learning programs; and by collaborating with media organizations.”*

There is no policy that is particularly addressed at youth in agriculture, but there are several policies and programs directed towards youth: National program for Support on Development of Teenagers and Youth; Policy on Mongolian Youth Employment; Mongolian Human Development Report 2014; Millennium Development Goals; National Development Strategy; Beehive Program, etc.

Some provisions in the National Program for Support on Development of Teenagers and Youth are directly applicable to young people’s engagement in agriculture, although more specific programs are needed.

* Expand distance learning, non-degree and skill training /certificate/ programs appropriate for rural teenagers, rural young people and dropouts;
* Support youth initiatives for the development of rural areas and retard the expansion of rural-urban migration by creating better rural living conditions;
* Local governments must work together with non-governmental youth organizations to foster youth aspirations toward careers in agriculture;
* Pursue the launch of programs that praise, reward and provide discounts to young persons who contribute to local development;
* The local employment services must organize training courses to give young people in rural areas basic education covering business management, marketing, finance and law;
* Support the activities on training in herding methods and life skills for young herders.

There are many NGOs in Mongolia working for youth, such as the Mongolian Youth Federation (MYF), the Mongolian Students Union, the UN-Youth Consultation Committee, and the New Generation Chamber. The *Mongolian Youth Federation* is the largest NGO in Mongolia and its purpose is to be a voice for youth advancement and rights protection; it has been working to further youth prosperity in general, and it has 16 committees nationwide that differ from each other in their youth oriented activities. The *Mongolian Young Herders Committee* was established in 2013 to protect the interests of young herders. The Committee had organized their national consultation in February 2014 with expected attendance from every youth herder across Mongolia’s 21 provinces. The Committee had also been working on a national level survey questionnaire about young herders. The *Young Cooperators Club (YCC)* was established in 2010 and organized their forum meeting in 2011 comprising representatives from 21 provinces; in June 2013, they successfully organized the First Meeting of Cooperative Young Leadership in Agriculture.

**Kyrgystan**

Existing laws related to youth and young farmers include the following:

1. Law “*On backgrounds of state youth policy*” (2009);
2. Law # 7 “*On peasant (farmer) farm*” (1999) establishes the legal basis, order of formation and activity of peasant (farmer) farms, their rights and responsibilities, aimed at creating conditions for their equal development with other forms of farming;
3. Law # 4 “*On Agricultural Lands Management*” (2001) regulates the legal relationship of agricultural lands and is sought for ensuring effective and safe use of lands in the interest of people;
4. Law # 70 “*On* ***cooperatives*”** (2004) determines the legal and economic background of forming cooperatives and their unions, as well as identifies specific features of forming agricultural cooperatives based on joint use of land resources.
5. Law # 1422-XII *“On water”* (1994) determines regulation in use and preservation of water resources, prevention of environmentally harmful effects of economical and other activities on waterworks and hydro-structures and improvement of their condition, etc
6. Law # 166 *“On development of agriculture in Kyrgyz Republic”* (2009) determines 18 major directions of government support which shall be funded from republican and local budgets, including forming financial-credit infrastructure, ensuring accessibility of technical resources to agricultural producers, development of risk insurance systems, development of seed farming of basic crops, arrangement of measures on preservation, restoration and reproduction of soil fertility, ensuring the national food security, funding of scientific-research programs on seed farming and on selection of plants and livestock, animal breeding, upgrading technology of production, processing, storing and rational use of food products, providing agricultural sector with specialists.
7. Law # 30 *“On pastures"* (2009) which determines rules for sustainable use of pastures; the responsibility and control over management of all kinds of pastures were transferred to local unions of grazing land users and their executive bodies – Pasture Committees.
8. Law # 101 *“On local administration”* (2011) identifies the role of local self rule and local state administration for exercising public authority, consolidates organizational and legal basis of their activity, establishes competence and principles of interrelation between self rule body and local administration, state guaranties of local community rights for the self rule.

National policy documents determining rural youth development include the following:

1. *National strategy of Kyrgyz Republic sustainable development 2013-2017* ;
2. *Program of transition to Kyrgyz Republic sustainable development 2013-2017*;
3. *The state strategy on youth policy up to 2015* ( 2012);
4. *The concept of Kyrgyz republic agrarian policy up to 2010* (2004) which considers sustainable management of land resources within wider context of agricultural development and poverty alleviation, and issues related to preservation of soil, plants and pastures for prevention of soil fertility worsening, protection of water resources through establishing legal and regulatory basis, as well as institutional reform in water relations, decentralization of management, transition of economic functions to basin, territorial and municipal bodies and to private sector.
5. *The state program on development of cooperative movement 2011-2015* to enhance agricultural output efficiency and competiveness of agro-industrial complex products and ensure the national food security; provides rationale for setting up diversified agricultural cooperation movement and joining it with integral interest and government potential, private sector and NGOs.

Initiatives for youth in agriculture include:

* Set up agricultural training centers at local level;
* Train farmers, in particular, young farmers of each village to cop growing techniques and application of chemicals;
* Widen experience exchange between farmers of regions
* Ensure admission of youth, in particular women, in agricultural universities
* Arrange regular training workshops and consultations on improve agro-technical measures
* Train young farmers to preparation of business plans and accession to credits;
* Develop state program on promotion of young farmers
* Improve social-cultural life and medical service of rural population;
* Create conditions for lightening of women’s work in agriculture;
* Create conditions for youth to keep them in rural area;
* Train young farmers and women to getting credits and simplification of credit access procedures;
* Set up contact with professional training centers and qualification refreshment courses;
* Enhance farmers awareness, arrangement of round tables;
* Work-out rural youth advocating state programs.