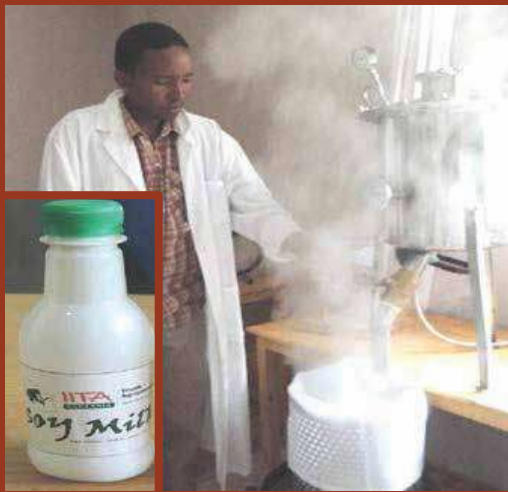


# Guidelines for IITA Youth Agripreneur Business Incubation



**IITA**

*Research to Nourish Africa*

**August  
2015**



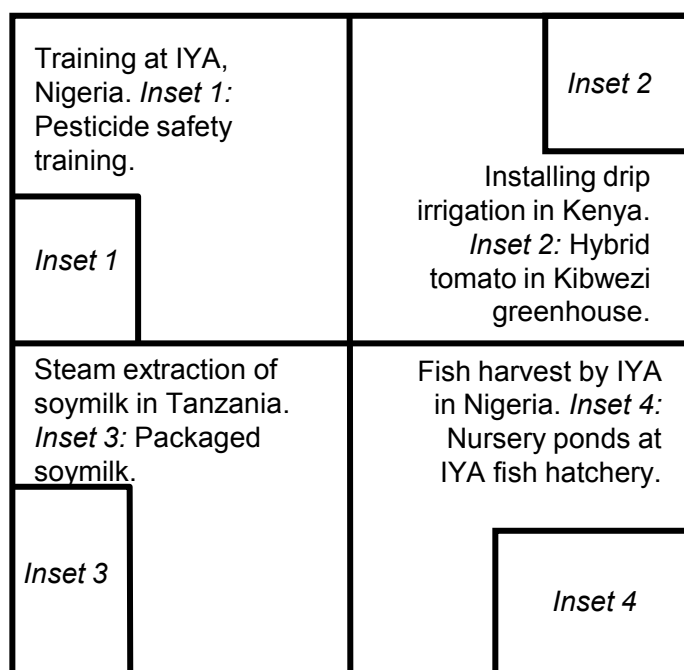
**IITA**

**Youth Agripreneurs**

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# Guidelines for IITA Youth Agripreneur Business Incubation

Paul L. Woomer, Molayo Owoeye, Ifedayo Ibironke, Kristina  
Roing de Nowina and Welissa Mulei

IITA Youth Agripreneur Program, Director General's Office, Ibadan, Nigeria  
Email: [iita-agripreneur@cgiar.com](mailto:iita-agripreneur@cgiar.com) or [plwoomer@gmail.com](mailto:plwoomer@gmail.com)

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## **Purpose**

This document provides flexible guidelines to the establishment and operations of Agribusiness Incubation within the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA) Agripreneur framework. It is intended to assist new and existing Youth Agripreneur Groups (YAGs) as they expand in both number and size. These guidelines are flexible in that they can be adjusted to site-specific situations and national requirements but certain principles must be met with regard to youth leadership, gender balance, democratic norms, focus upon experiential learning and the requirement that all participating interns contribute to and learn from both a series of core group agribusiness ventures and group organizational tasks.

## **Scope**

This document is intended for use by all YAGs with care taken to adhere to its guiding principles and expectations. Appropriate sections of these Guidelines should be consulted should uncertainties arise. In addition, every YAG is expected to develop their own set of guidelines, based on this overall guiding document and national regulatory requirements.



Chairwomen from Youth Agripreneur Groups in DR Congo, Kenya and Nigeria (front to back) admire the growth of tomatoes in the Kibwezi Hortipreneurs greenhouse in Kenya.

## **Background**

The Youth Agripreneur Group movement is pioneered by IITA and its developmental research partners. It is intended to reinforce the roles of rural, urban and educated youth within a comprehensive outreach effort across sub-Saharan Africa through support and expansion of Youth Agripreneur Groups (YAGs). IITA first initiated a pilot project in Nigeria during 2012 to empower underemployed university graduates toward careers in market-oriented agriculture and agribusiness and has since initiated similar activities in DR Congo, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. This approach is experiential, where clusters of youth are provided resources and expertise to explore options for income generation, and then develop business plans and enterprises around the most promising ones.



A group meeting of the IITA Youth Agripreneurs in Ibadan, Nigeria.

### **YAG Establishment**

A conceptual diagram of the establishment of youth-led agribusiness and their various operations and impacts upon the larger rural community appears in Figure 1.

1. Important steps in YAG establishment follow.

1. IITA establishes a Coordination Office to provide administrative and technical support to identified hosts of YAG operations.
2. These hosts may be agriculture vocational schools, research stations, rural development projects, an existing youth group or chapter within larger farmer associations, or any other organization with the interest and capacity to house a YAG.
3. IITA and the host then appoint a Youth Coordinator (a youth) that receives training in YAG operations with an understanding that their role is transitory pending appointment of elected officers over the next few months. The Youth Coordinator serves as a champion who understands youth empowerment and drives the YAG start-up.
4. The Youth Coordinator registers a provisional YAG



Dr N. Sanginga; IITA Director General and founder of the Youth Agripreneurs.





Kibwezi Hortipreneurs meet with IITA staff to discuss farming operations.

- name with local authorities. In anticipation of widespread expansion of YAGs, this name best not include the terms IITA or the country of origin, but rather specify the local area of group operations followed by Youth Agripreneurs. Groups that registered prior to the development of these guidelines, however, are not expected to change their names. Furthermore, groups intended for specific operations may amend Agripreneur to suit their activities (e.g. Hortipreneurs for vegetable farming or Aquapreneurs for fish farming).
5. Intern recruitment is organized by the Youth Coordinator and based upon voluntary participation of qualified candidates between the ages of 18 and 35 holding university degrees or higher national diplomas across a range of disciplines. Groups must consist of approximately 50% women and elected officers must be gender balanced. Once the group is established, additional members are accepted through majority vote, thus determining the size and disciplinary balance of the group. Every youth working within the group must be aware of the purpose of the group, and sign a Preliminary Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct developed in conjunction with individual YAG hosts and IITA.
  6. Group elections are organized among YAG members to appoint Co-Chairs (one man and one woman), a Secretary and a Treasurer. Co-Chairs lead the group, the Secretary is responsible for documenting group developments and the Treasurer handles group funds and transactions. The Youth Coordinator is eligible for election to any of these posts, and otherwise becomes a member of the group or moves on to found another group as situations warrant. In some cases the Co-chair persons may be designated Chair and another Vice-Chair as local authorities require, but both occupy equal status within the group.
  7. Elections are intended to be part of a larger registration process with local authorities. This requires that group bylaws or constitution be produced, and these guidelines may assist in this area. The group's bylaws (or constitution)

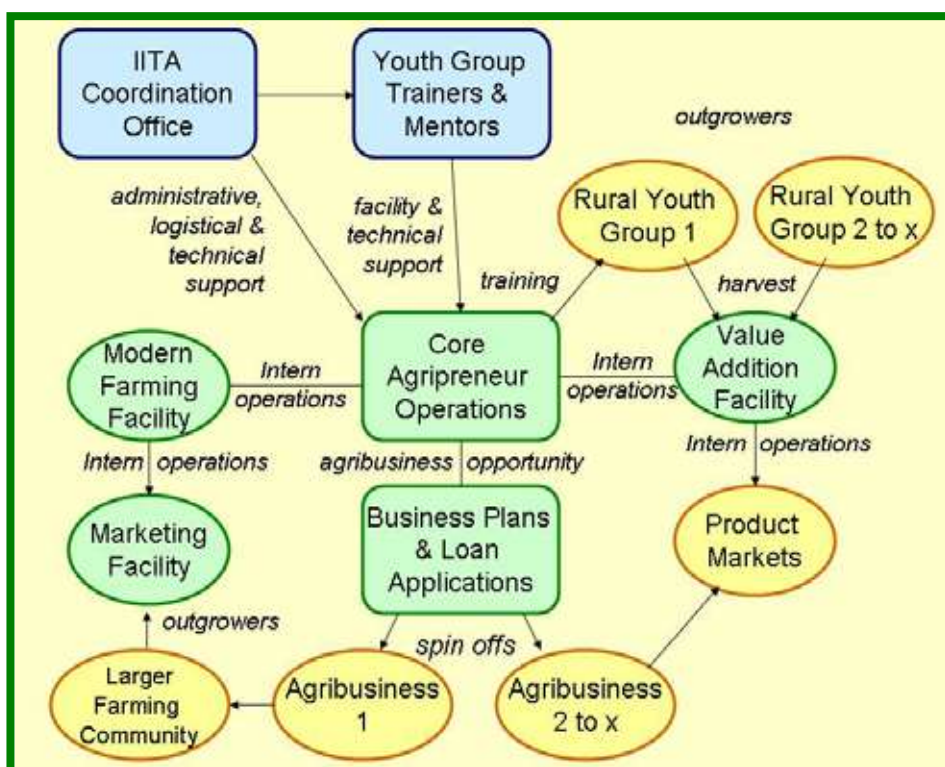


Figure 1. Conceptual diagram of YAG activities where Agripreneur groups operate as a nucleus to stimulate improved crop production, marketing opportunities and value-added processing, and to take these benefits to the wider rural community.

should also include information on how to make decisions, handle revenue from the groups activities, how to take on new members, and changes of leadership. Following registration with authorities as a self-help group, NGO, business or other organization, a bank account should be established to handle costs and revenues from core enterprises. In some cases, however, IITA may elect to administer project funds on behalf of donors sponsoring YAG activities.

8. Trainers and mentors are identified to assist Agripreneurs in the agribusiness incubation. This incubation is essentially a diagnostic study of which agribusiness ventures are most feasible and profitable. The YAG is expected to establish three types of core enterprises in 1) crop production, 2) marketing and 3) value addition, and pilot enterprises are established over the next few months.
9. Each YAG intern must sign a Youth Agripreneur Intern Agreement (Appendix 1) describing the benefits, expectations, conduct and participation to and by interns engaged in IITA Agribusiness Incubations. At this point, the YAG is considered to be established.

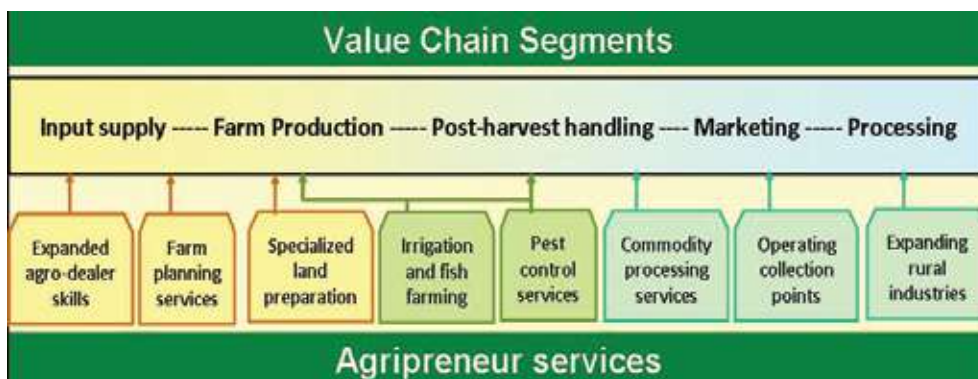


Figure 2. Opportunities for service provision by Agripreneurs and their business spin-offs to the larger rural community.

### YAG Operations

During the agribusiness incubation, various teams are formed and members assigned responsibilities within them. These teams may include Production, Marketing, Communication, Finance, and Facilities. For example;

1. **The Production Team** oversees crop and animal production, ensures that farm equipment remains in working order, and provides timely information and farm products to the Marketing Department for sale. It plans group enterprises in a participatory manner. It consists of smaller teams relating to those enterprises led by Task Managers. Examples of these teams include Field Crops, Horticulture, Animals and Fisheries. All group members are expected to participate and develop competence in all production and marketing (below) activities on a rotating basis.
2. **The Marketing Team** develops a detailed marketing plan, coordinates its efforts with the Production Team and directs revenues collected to the Finance Leader. All group members must participate in marketing activities at least one month during their internship.
3. **Partnership and Advocacy Team** is responsible for liaising with YAG sponsors and other youth, and advocating for mindset change and youth opportunity. It takes the lead in donor relations and fundraising. This team is led by the two group chair persons in close collaboration with the Communications Team.
4. **The Communications Team** is responsible for documenting group activities, preparing reports, conducting M&E activities and meeting the group's ICT needs. It posts group achievements on social media. It also identifies training needs and coordinates training events if no Training Unit is in place. The group's Secretary is head of Communication.
5. **The Finance Team** compiles and reports upon expenses and revenues generated by the group. It develops mechanisms for invoicing and receipting.



It prepares regular financial statements using accounting software. The group's Treasurer is the head of Finance. The group operates a bank account managed by the Finance Department and its three signatories (Two Chairpersons and Treasurer), or as required locally.

6. **Facilities Team** ensures safety and cleanliness and maintains the group's physical plant. It maintains an inventory of group assets and secures them from misuse.
7. **Other Teams** may be formed as needed, such as Capacity Building, Value Addition or Service Provision.

YAGs liaise with other youth groups and solicit their involvement as potential out-growers and satellite agribusinesses, an effort that involves several of the above teams. As Agripreneurs develop expertise in various business operations, they are encouraged and assisted to develop detailed business plans and loan applications for submission to commercial lenders. Departure packages may be arranged for the most promising of these ventures to assist in start-ups and improve their creditworthiness, depending upon the availability of funds. These spin-off agribusinesses generate employment and also link to out-growers and markets forged by the YAG, stimulating positive feedback within the larger farming community.

It is important that YAG enterprises not be confined alone to products grown, processed and marketed by the core group, but rather their expertise in agricultural technologies are also extended as services to the wider farming community (Figure 2). These service enterprises align along the agricultural value chain in a manner that generates income throughout the cropping cycle.

1. After acquiring adequate training, youth groups may be aligned with larger farmer associations and local agrodealer networks to provide extension services.
2. Contacts with commercial mentors may be expanded for group members to become area product representatives or franchise holders.
3. Equipment acquired for group use may also be used on other farms to provide services for hire. Expertise in fish farming and other animal enterprises may also be contracted depending upon local conditions.
4. Commodity processing and marketing activities may also be extended into the larger community, either through out-grower arrangements or the establishment of market collection points. Value-added processing may also be out-sourced or franchised.

These mechanisms will likely take longer to develop, but they have potential to multiply beneficial impacts across the larger rural community and serve as a platform for private agribusiness spin-offs developed by departing Agripreneurs.

## YAG Timeline and Outcomes

YAG activities are not intended to be open-ended but rather to reorient and cycle interns through experiential learning and assist them to become agribusiness persons. This process requires about 18 months for YAG start-ups, slightly less for existing groups. The timeline is often determined by donor conditions or rural



Figure 3. An example 18-month agribusiness incubation timeline.

development interests that sponsor the YAG. An 18-month agribusiness incubation timeline with quarterly steps is presented in Figure 3, although some groups operate at 24-month cycles. Prior to YAG operations a host is selected, Youth Coordinator trained and interns appointed. YAG training materials are developed by IITA and other YAGs and employed through a series of short courses. By Month 4, elections are held, rotating tasks assigned and interns are fully engaged in all areas of the core group enterprises. This mode continues for six months, building confidence and skills in agribusiness, and allows for teams of like-minded interns to consolidate. At Month 10, interns begin to develop detailed business plans and loan applications, an activity reinforced by a series of visits from mentors. Interns are expected to fulfil their responsibilities to core enterprises and organizational tasks as they prepare their business plans. YAG officers establish contacts with commercial lenders so that loan officers become aware of the group's operations, improving creditworthiness of youth associated with the group. At the culmination of their Agripreneur experience, departing interns are expected to complete their detailed business plans and loan applications, whether as individuals or like-minded partners. Three departure routes are possible in this regard.

1. **The main route.** Interns prepare winning business plans and successful loan applications and start their own profitable agribusinesses (Figure 1). This departure may be facilitated through provision of a modest, non-monetary departure package that launches their business and provides collateral for expansion. Local rural finance institutions may be offered loan guarantees to leverage the creditworthiness of youth passing through the business

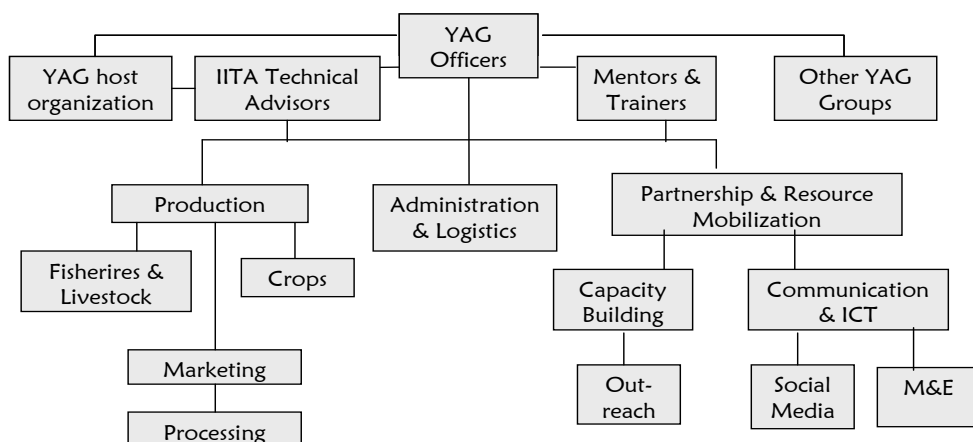


Figure 4. A generalized organogram of YAG operations (from IYA, Nigeria).

incubation. In some cases, departing Agripreneurs may continue to rely upon the group for services, such as land preparation or collective marketing. In other cases Agripreneurs may be retained for an additional 3 to 6 months until their departure packages are finalized and commercial loans awarded, often serving as trainers of the next intake group.

2. **The side route.** Interns arrange to spin-off the successful YAG rural enterprises they create during the business incubation process and continue to operate them in an increasingly independent fashion. Arrangements for this are situation specific but clearly some sort of revenue sharing or compensation package must be developed. This route is most appropriate when several interns seek to privatize a successful venture within the group. Similarly, departing interns may spin-off their relations with youth and other farmer groups by serving as service providers (Figure 2) or establishing market collection points. Enterprises may be reorganized at project's end in this manner unless they are required for further training purposes by the next intake group.
3. **The top route.** Agripreneurs that were previously unable to find suitable employment now find themselves better positioned to enter the professional agriculture jobs market. This option includes their becoming local product representatives, joining rural development initiatives or becoming government or private extension agents. In some cases, outstanding interns may be offered employment by outside interests before their internship is completed, and while painful to the group, it is consistent with wider project goals and saves the project from offering a departure package. It is possible that as many as 25% of interns may depart in this fashion. A few youth from the previous intake may be retained as YAG trainers of the next intake for a few months.

## YAG Structure

The YAG operates under the leadership and supervision of the two elected Co-Chairs, one woman and one man. The group is composed of different teams (or departments) with individuals assigned to head them. These Task Leaders perform their duties as described in this manual. The YAG holds weekly meetings intended to include:

1. Developing weekly work plans.
2. Providing updates from all teams.
3. Raising challenges encountered and discussing possible solutions.
4. Documenting recent lessons learned.
5. Addressing welfare concerns relating to the group members.

Initially, YAG Co-Chairs will conduct the meeting and the Secretary will record, compile and release its minutes. Later these duties may be allocated among members on a rotational basis. Short daily meetings may also be held each morning to confirm tasks and request assistance for tasks not completed the day before. Minutes need not be recorded and distributed of these short daily meetings. A list of YAGs in DR Congo, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda, and many of their members and their roles appears later in this booklet (pages 17 to 24).

## YAG Teamwork: Roles and Responsibilities

The YAG is separated into different operational teams (Figure 4). These may be thought of as departments although this designation may be too static. It is better to think of these components as flexible teams with rotational membership and leadership,



Fish farming is an important Agripreneur enterprise in many countries (top to bottom); pond construction in Kenya, fingerling release, catfish harvest in Nigeria, fish feed production in Kenya and Nigeria.

allowing interns to maximize experiential learning. It is essential that interns not be allowed to specialize (too soon), especially by performing solely administrative or ICT duties, but rather all interns must be attached to at least one agribusiness enterprise team at any time. Ideally, every intern belongs to two teams at any time, one in an agricultural enterprise and another in administrative operations, and that these team compositions rotate every month or so. While one member may serve as a Task Leader, that person is not solely responsible for undertaking tasks alone, rather, the group regularly discusses its priorities and undertakes joint efforts through teamwork. Roles and responsibilities of each Team follow.

### **1. Crop Production**

- a. Identify which farm enterprises are conducted, when and where, and assure that seeds and seedlings are available as needed.
- b. Supervise all production activities of the farm.
- c. Develop monthly work plans of the farm.
- d. Schedule management interventions such as irrigation, spraying and weeding.
- e. Ensure that all farm equipment is maintained in good working condition
- f. Designate Task Leaders for all individual crop and animal enterprises, appraise their progress and coordinate their efforts.

### **2. Fisheries**

- a. Fish farming is emerging as an extremely promising enterprise and may be operated through a separate team.
- b. Develop and expand new ponds as needed.
- c. Identify which fish are to be raised and where to obtain fingerlings.
- d. Establish feed sources and schedules and ensure water quality.
- e. Liaise with the Marketing Team concerning planned harvests of fish and their handling prior to sale.

### **3. Marketing and Processing**

- a. Conduct market surveys to source reliable buyers for group produce and products.
- b. Track trends of other products and in new markets for consideration of new enterprises.
- c. Coordinate efforts with the Finance and Production Teams.
- d. Manage the marketing budget for post harvest handling and packaging.
- e. Develop an overall YAG Marketing Plan and identify cost effective marketing strategies.
- f. Brand group produce and products and assure they meet regulatory and quality standards.
- g. Launch additional value-adding enterprises, although these may require the formation of additional, independent Teams for each processing enterprise.

### **4. Partnership and Resource Mobilization**

- a. Practiced at all levels of YAG including with IITA, other YAGs, institutional hosts, additional youth groups, local authorities and the private sector.



- b. Intended to strengthen training activities, mentorship and farm enterprises, access additional qualified interns, provide funds or loans, and to popularize youth achievement.
- c. Led by the YAG Co-Chairs in consultation with all Team Leaders and YAG members.
- d. Resource mobilization is conducted by IITA, YAG hosts or YAGs themselves to initiate additional groups, extend or expand their operations, improve upon their facilities or raise awareness of youth opportunities and achievements.
- e. Funds raised must be reported to IITA, and managed in accordance with YAG procedures and donor requirements.
- f. Seek outreach opportunities with other partners to share learning with wider youth communities beyond the YAG area of work.
- g. Align youth agripreneurship activities with other national or local youth initiatives whenever possible.

### **5. Training and Capacity Building**

- a. Organize YAG member training to improve entrepreneurial skill sets.
- b. Organize training of other youth in production, group organization and replication of agribusiness models.
- c. Compile and manage YAG training records and market training programs.
- d. Develop, review and update training materials as needed.

### **6. Finance and Logistics**

- a. The elected Treasurer typically serves as the Head of Finance and Logistics.
- b. Maintain records of the funds spent and generated by the YAG team, including invoicing and receipting of all farm sales as indicators of business viability.
- c. Develop revenue sharing formulae for the income generated from farm produce and oversee the disbursement of the funds to the team.
- d. In collaboration with the Youth Coordinator (at early stages of YAG operations) or the elected Co-Chairs, and the head of Marketing department, operate a group bank account that guarantees the safety and availability of funds generated from YAG enterprises.
- e. Oversee the budgeting and procurement process for the YAG activities in liaison with other teams



The IITA Youth Agripreneurs participate in a pesticide safety training course in Nigeria. The group actively trains other rural youth groups in crop production and marketing.



Youth Agripreneur Groups organize and host workshops and conferences that promote youth mindset change and agribusiness opportunity.

- f. Provide the YAG and IITA with cash flow, balance and profit and loss statements on a monthly basis.

**7. Communication and Information and Computer Technology (ICT)**

- a. The elected Secretary will typically serve as Head of this section.
- b. Prepare reports and publications required by the YAG and its sponsors.
- c. Capture events documenting important YAG milestones, including photographs and videos.
- d. Manage the social media describing the YAG, including the group Facebook page and IITA's website.
- e. Document important YAG efforts highlighting both successes and shortcomings of the group as contributions to IITA's Knowledge Management interests and obligations.
- f. Identify ICT needs of the YAG and undertake actions to satisfy them, assuring that all interns are fully computer literate and have regular access to ICT.
- g. Conduct M&E using standardized tools and key performance indicators. An example M&E tool appears in Appendix 2.
- h. Maintain up to date email and contact list of all group members, mentors and other YAGs.

**Additional YAG Management Procedures**

This section is intended to guide several situations likely to arise during YAG operations.

**1. Distribution of revenues and benefits**

- a. Interns are entitled to benefits based on attendance and participation within farm activities equally among members.
- b. Interns are required to sign a daily attendance worksheet used by the Finance Head to calculate weekly stipends.

- c. Upon generation of income from agricultural activities, interns will be required to develop a collective sharing formula with YAG Officers. When allocating revenues, care must be taken to recover production costs and invest in future expansion.

## ***2. Engagement of Casual Labourers***

- a. Casual labourers are hired only when workload at the farm exceeds intern capacities
- b. Casuals must be treated with respect and provided a safe working environment
- c. Interns cannot double up as casuals and receive money for the same.
- d. Casual labourers should be paid according to local practices, and the team should consult with IITA officers before establishing terms for and hiring casual labour.

## ***3. Documenting Group Activities***

- a. All interns must maintain an activities log that reflects their experience and learning through YAG engagement.
- b. The activity log book is reviewed by YAG Officers and mentors to ensure that the weekly, monthly and quarterly work plan is followed and that entries conform to daily attendance logs.
- c. All entered activities should conform with established work plans and team tasks, should contain sketches and attached photos, and may be used to complete reports and other publications as necessary.

## ***4. Purchase of Goods and Services***

- a. The Finance Head reviews, approves and allocates funds for specific purchases of goods and services.
- b. All teams requiring goods and services must forward their request, along with any available quotations or invoices, to the Finance Head for action.
- c. In some cases, Team and Task Leaders may find it necessary to spend their own funds for reimbursement. This may only be done with prior approval of the Treasurer and this privilege must be handled responsibly.
- d. All accounting documents will be compiled by the Co-Chairs and the Finance Head and used to develop regular financial statements submitted to IITA and then forwarded to respective donors.

## ***5. Procedure for Marketing Farm Products***

- a. The Marketing Team sources markets and buyers for farm produce and services.
- b. The Marketing Team assures that produce and products offered for sale comply with industry and regulatory standards and provides those standards to the Production and/or Processing Teams.
- c. The Marketing Team sells the produce to customers and clients, issues invoices and delivery notes where applicable, and always produces or obtains receipts upon sales.

- d. Money received is passed to the Finance Team or banked in the group's account and the Finance Officer (or Treasurer) notified of the transaction.

**6. Procedures for Operating Group Bank and Petty Cash Accounts**

- a. The group operates a current account for the purposes of banking income received from sale of farm produce and services.
- b. The group account is authorized by three signatories who will be selected by the team members; usually the two elected Co-Chairs and the Treasurer.
- c. Change of account signatories resulting from the departure of any signatory is decided by the YAG interns as a group (not appointed by group officers).
- d. The Treasurer (or Finance Officer if different) may operate a petty cash fund not to exceed an agreed upon amount (e.g. \$100 or equivalent) derived from sales of goods and services but not sponsor contributions for which they are personally liable.
- e. Stipends and equipment purchases may not be paid using petty cash and all transactions from the petty cash account are reported as an attachment to the monthly financial statement.
- f. The monthly financial statements issued by the group Finance Officer, including bank account balances and petty cash records, are open to all YAG members and IITA support staff.

**7. Intern Departure from the YAG**

- a. Interns may exit from the group at their own will following two weeks notice or on any of the following grounds.
- b. Interns shall depart the YAG as a group at the end of their scheduled internship, or as part of a successful agribusiness spin-off or offer of employment.
- c. Interns may be suspended or expelled from the group as a result of disciplinary measures arising from the intern's misconduct. An IITA Human Resources officer should be consulted whenever disciplinary actions are being considered.
- d. The Co-Chairs decide upon disciplinary measures as situations require but the intern may appeal any disciplinary decisions taken against them to the entire group membership. Suspension results from chronic absenteeism that, if continued, may lead to expulsion and recruitment of a new member. In general expulsion should only result from very extreme, repeatedly dangerous or criminal behaviour, and not be the result of merely interpersonal differences.
- e. Any intern exiting the group is fully relieved of all assigned duties and required to surrender any group property advanced to them.
- f. Interns departing the group to establish agribusinesses are permitted to work with the group as outgrowers or clients of YAG services, including marketing operations.

## Youth Agripreneur Training

Training of youth during agribusiness incubation covers both agricultural production and agribusiness skills. Training in production is both group and site specific, depending upon which enterprises the groups intend to pursue. Production training tends to be organized by the groups themselves and is conducted through site visits by IITA Technical Advisers and group mentors. In some cases, this training results from working side-by-side with commercial contractors, as when greenhouses are constructed or irrigation systems installed.

More universal and formalized training is provided in agribusiness skills. To a large extent, YAG interns are versed in agricultural production skills, especially those graduated from Faculties of Agriculture, but they lack realistic training in marketing and entrepreneurship. IITA has developed a curriculum in agribusiness training that is being formalized into a suite of training materials. The elements of this training fall into nine topics and accompanying subtopics as follows.

*Agripreneurial perspectives:* creativity and innovation, opportunity analysis, teamwork and leadership, rural transformation.

*Developing a business model:* Creative value, crafting business models, value chain innovations, new venture experimentation.

*Discovering the customer:* Customer segments and archetypes, value propositions, product features.

*Customer analysis:* The start-up environment, product fit and refinement, market traction, scaling sales to demand.

*Commercialization strategies:* Value chain positioning, judging commercial potential, commercial due diligence.

*Feasibility assessment:* Industry knowledge, demand conditions, product lifecycle, competitive advantage.

*Creating a marketing strategy:* The marketing mix, promotion and placement, pricing and sales forecasting, intellectual property considerations, direct and channel sales.

*Business plan preparation and case presentation:* Defining the business plan, authoring the business plan, keys to growth, conveying business propositions.

*Financing start-ups:* Early sources of capital. start-up financial issues, identifying investors, legal framework for investment, negotiation with investors.

The above training topics are not presented in a single intensive classroom setting, but rather delivered in three steps of three topics each, separated over a month or so. Between these steps, the youth group is assigned tasks that relate to their operations that place this training in a realistic perspective. More information on Agripreneur training, both technical and entrepreneurial, may be obtained by contacting the individual groups described later in this booklet (pages 17 to 25).



## YAG Finances

The costs of an 18-month agribusiness incubation of 35 interns as described in these guidelines range between US \$91,000 and \$163,000 depending upon the level of support from their hosts (see sample budget below). The budget items for a fully subsidized agribusiness incubation consist of salary, host facility, equipment (and supplies), communication, training workshops, transportation and departure incentives. Salary (50% of total) covers the costs of modest intern stipends as well as funds for a transitional Youth Coordinator and training mentors. Facilities (7%) include office, workshop and crop production areas, and modest funds for renovation. Equipment and supplies (8%) covers office, field, marketing and value addition operations. Communication and training together account for only 6% of the total. Experience suggests that new groups require a utility minivan able to accommodate staff and cargo and funds for insurance, fuel and maintenance (13% of total). The advantages of providing departure incentives (17%) to promote agribusiness spin-off were discussed previously in these guidelines.

The costs of conducting an 18-month agribusiness incubation among 35 interns.

Item	full incubation (US\$)	strategic incubation (US\$)
Salary	81,400	62,500
Facility	11,400	9,000
Equipment	12,300	12,300
Communication	2,985	2,985
Training	6,370	4,450
Transportation	20,550	0
Departure incentive	28,000	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$163,005</b>	<b>\$91,235</b>

These costs may be reduced in several ways. Hosts may absorb some of the expenses by providing facilities, transportation and mentors at reduced cost (see strategic incubation column, above). Arrangements with commercial lenders can preclude the need for departure incentives. As salaries represent a large proportion of the overall budget, groups that have fewer members result in cost reduction. For example, a group of 15 members reduces the costs of the full incubation by 27%. Costs may also be reduced as the group's pilot enterprises generate revenue and incubation ventures become self-supporting. Some groups in the past were launched for as little as \$78,000 over 18 months.

The budget for an agribusiness incubation (above) does not include technical backstopping, logistic and administrative costs of the sponsoring organization. Experience suggests that these costs range from \$40,000 to \$63,000 over an 18 month period, depending on the range of services offered.

## Youth Agripreneur Groups in DR Congo, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda

### ***The IITA Kalambo Youth Agripreneurs (IKYA, DR Congo)***

IITA-Kalambo Youth Agripreneurs (IKYA) was started in November 2013 as a youth-led venture in Bukavu town (South Kivu) to explore opportunities for self-employment through agribusiness. The group has 32 members (35% women) and three elected officers ranging in age from 25 to 33 years. Initially, the group was engaged in crop and seed production (bean, cassava, maize and soybean) then starting June 2014, it started agri-processing of cassava- and soybean-based products. Several baked products were developed that rely upon substitution with lower cost cassava flour, and protein fortification with soybean flour that comply with the standard of the National Food Control Agency. So far, 17 cassava-based and ten soy-based products were developed. These products are sold in local markets under the brand name IKYA. As a marketing strategy, the group has developed packaging materials with the IKYA label that has become a recognized brand within the market. More recently, IKYA has entered fish farming of tilapia to meet the high demand on the local market and is working with the Department of Fisheries to jointly manage a network of 38 ponds. In addition IKYA is engaged in training of women and youth to enable them to explore agro-processing enterprises and to diversify household diets. A total of 550 women and 400 youth were trained in these areas. With steady effort, the group is advancing its innovative ideas of farming and food processing, and is aiming to secure its own permanent farm and marketing location. Key contacts for IKYA follow.

**IITA Kalambo Youth Agripreneurs (IKYA).** Kalambo, D.R. Congo. Focus upon vegetable production, cassava multiplication, maize, legume production and tilapia fish farming, honey production. Group email: [IITA-YouthAgripreneursBukavu@cgiar.org](mailto:IITA-YouthAgripreneursBukavu@cgiar.org)  
**Kahasha, Gracia.** IITA Kalambo Youth Agripreneurs, D.R. Congo. Partnership and Marketing. Mobile phone: +243-994292278. Email: [gkbukavu2002@yahoo.fr](mailto:gkbukavu2002@yahoo.fr)



IKYA field team preparing to cultivate new land near Bukavu, DR Congo.

**Kashemwa, Arsene.** IITA Kalambo Youth Agripreneurs, D.R. Congo. Capacity Building. Mobile phone: +243-853710197. Email: [Kashemwa.arsene@yahoo.fr](mailto:Kashemwa.arsene@yahoo.fr)

**Kingolo, Christophe.** IITA Kalambo Youth Agripreneurs, D.R. Congo. Marketing and Processing. Mobile phone: +243-995365596. Email: [Christoph.Kongolo@yahoo.fr](mailto:Christoph.Kongolo@yahoo.fr)

**Migabo, Rosette.** IITA Kalambo Youth Agripreneurs, D.R. Congo. Administration and Logistics. Mobile phone: +243-994154303. Email: [rosettemigabo@yahoo.fr](mailto:rosettemigabo@yahoo.fr)

**Mulinganya, Noel.** IITA Kalambo Youth Agripreneurs, D.R. Congo. Production and Operation. Mobile phone: +243-976536579. Email: [noelmuling@yahoo.fr](mailto:noelmuling@yahoo.fr)

**Mulumbu, Jerome.** IITA Kalambo Youth Agripreneurs, D.R. Congo. Fisher farm manager. Mobile phone: +243-993359216. Email: [jeromemulumbu@gmail.com](mailto:jeromemulumbu@gmail.com)

**Yomeni, Marie.** IITA-Bukavu. Technical Adviser to Kalambo Youth Agripreneurs and Cassava Specialist (SARD-SC). Mobile phone: +243-815216368. Email: [M.Yomeni@cgiar.org](mailto:M.Yomeni@cgiar.org)



IKYA members preparing protein-enriched bakery products.



IKYA soybean value addition team proudly display their range of baked products.

### **The Kibwezi Hortipreneur Youth Group (KHYG, Kenya)**

KHYG is a recently founded group (March 2015) that conducts irrigated vegetable farming in semi-arid east Kenya at the University of Nairobi Dryland Research Station. It has 12 members (58% women) and four elected officers ranging in age from 23 to 29 years but remains open to additional qualified members. Its location is remote, lacking mobile phone and internet coverage, and even potable water, but the drip-irrigated growing conditions at Kibwezi are excellent and the farm is near the Mombasa-Nairobi commercial corridor. The group grows mixed vegetable in its 1700 m<sup>2</sup> greenhouses and has started fish ponds and fish feed production as well. It has assembled a strong group of mentors from commercial interests, other commercial farms and researchers, and received training in marketing, greenhouse production and seedling operations. Some of its important innovations include the development of fish pond aeration and feeding systems, seed and vegetative propagation of large numbers of hybrid vegetables, and accessing top-end tomato markets. Difficulties encountered include a rough transition from Youth Coordinator to elected



Tabitha Muli installs drip irrigation lines in the KHYG greenhouse.

group officers, a convoluted process of group registration, and finding fair local markets for smaller vegetable harvests. A huge problem is the abundance of baboons and other wildlife that attack field crops grown outside of the greenhouses and limit the types of crops that may be produced. Given their ingenuity and enthusiasm we expect the group to overcome such obstacles as a few dozen selfish monkeys and to pass its lessons learned to others. Key contacts for KHYG follow.

**Kibwezi Hortipreneurs Youth Group (KHYG)** formerly Makueni Youth Agripreneurs (MYA). Makueni County, Kenya. Focus upon greenhouse vegetable production and fish farming. Group email: [iitakibwezihortipreneurs@gmail.com](mailto:iitakibwezihortipreneurs@gmail.com). Facebook Page: *Kibwezi Hortipreneurs Youth Group*

**Bokonga, Mpoko.** AgroTEQ Consultants, Nairobi. Agribusiness training. Mobile phone +254-705-515564. Email: [mbokonga@hotmail.com](mailto:mbokonga@hotmail.com)

**Karanja, Nancy.** University of Nairobi, LARMAT. Kibwezi. Dryland Research Station Liaison to KHYG. Mobile phone: +254-722-472667. Email: [n.karanja@cgiar.org](mailto:n.karanja@cgiar.org)



**Mwikali, Elizabeth.** Kibwezi Hortipreneurs Youth Group, Kenya. Co-Chair, Stores Manager and Task Leader Cucumber Production. Mobile phone: +254-707-859015. Email: [mwikali82@yahoo.com](mailto:mwikali82@yahoo.com)

**Muli, Tabitha.** Kibwezi Hortipreneurs Youth Group, Vermiculture Specialist. Mobile phone: +254-712-683741. Email: [tabithamuli@yahoo.com](mailto:tabithamuli@yahoo.com)

**Mulindi, Linda.** IITA-Kenya, Nairobi. YADI Project Assistant. Mobile phone: +254-707-395335. Email: [L.Mulindi@cgiar.org](mailto:L.Mulindi@cgiar.org)

**Ndone, Gladys Nduku.** Kibwezi Hortipreneurs Youth Group, Marketing Manager. Mobile phone: +254-728-529179. Email: [gladotoday@yahoo.com](mailto:gladotoday@yahoo.com)

**Nthenya, Sylvia.** Kibwezi Hortipreneurs Youth Group, Kenya. Initial Youth Coordinator and Founder. Mobile phone: +254-721-611772. Email: [nthenyasylvia@gmail.com](mailto:nthenyasylvia@gmail.com)

**Ojwang, Alex Buke.** Kibwezi Hortipreneurs Youth Group, Kenya. Treasurer and Head of Fish Production. Mobile phone: +254-711-165331. Email: [alexojwang@gmail.com](mailto:alexojwang@gmail.com)

**Roing de Nowina, Kristina.** IITA-Kenya, Nairobi. Head, Proposal Development, Technical Adviser to Kibwezi Hortipreneurs Youth Group. Mobile phone: +254-726-739560. Email: [K.RoingdeNowina@cgiar.org](mailto:K.RoingdeNowina@cgiar.org)

**Sila, Dominique.** Kibwezi Hortipreneurs Youth Group, Kenya. Co-Chair and Head of Farm Production. Mobile phone: +254-737-610022. Email: [domixstarch@gmail.com](mailto:domixstarch@gmail.com)

**Woomer, Paul L.** IITA-Kenya, Nairobi. Technical Adviser to KHYG . Mobile phone +254-733-972722. Email: [plwoomer@gmail.com](mailto:plwoomer@gmail.com)



Elizabeth Mwikali amid healthy cucumbers in the KHYG greenhouse.



The greenhouse production team is proud of its 1st cucumber harvest at Kibwezi. A mentor explains top-end cucumber produce standards to the group.





IYA group members and a very special mentor, Charlotte Sanginga.

### ***The IITA Youth Agripreneurs (IYA, Nigeria)***

IYA is the first youth agripreneur group formed by IITA in 2012. It conducts a wide range of production, marketing and value adding enterprises, notably maize and soybean seed production, fish and vegetable farming and the manufacture of protein-rich snacks and soymilk. IYA primarily operates from IITA HQ in Ibadan but has developed several outfield and outreach activities. It has 35 members (57% women) and five elected officers ranging in age from 24 to 33 years. Recently the group replicated by recruiting an additional 30 members into a "IYA B" that will operate independently from the first group. Its location has excellent access to field, equipment and IT facilities, as well as a local market within the IITA campus itself and the large, nearby city of Ibadan. The group has not only assembled a strong group of mentors from IITA staff and commercial partners, but also forged strong partnership with over 500 youth throughout Nigeria and Africa through a variety of mechanisms. The group recognizes its larger role as "re-awakening the mindset of youth toward sustainable and profitable agriculture that creates employment and wealth". Some of its important innovations include the development of a fish hatchery, establishment of a food processing center and successful replication of the agripreneur approach in other countries. Difficulties encountered include reluctance of members to develop spin-off agribusinesses outside of the group that result in the larger economic benefits targeted through agribusiness incubation. One thing is for certain; however, the enthusiasm, commitment and innovation necessary to prove the agripreneur approach at the pilot stage materialized within IYA and led way to the replication of other groups elsewhere. Key contacts for IYA follow.

**IITA Youth Agripreneurs (IYA).** Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Focus upon greenhouse vegetable production, cassava stem multiplication, plantain and banana suckers, maize and soybean seed production and fish farming. Group email: *iita-*

*agripreneur@cgiar.org*, Facebook: *IITA Youth Agripreneurs*,  
twitterhandle: *@IITAYOUTHAGRIP*, Blog: *www.iitayouthagripreneurs.wordpress.com*, Youtube: *IITA Youth Agripreneurs*.

**Akinyele, Bankole.** IITA Youth Agripreneurs, Ibadan, Nigeria. Production and Operation. Mobile phone: +234-80-38753707. Email: *B.Akinyele@cgiar.org*

**Ezechi, Michael Nath.** IITA Youth Agripreneurs, Ibadan, Nigeria. Communication, ICT and M&E. Mobile Phone: +234-8037805807. Email: *m.nathaniel@outlook.com*

**Obafemi, Victoria.** IITA Youth Agripreneurs, Ibadan, Nigeria. Marketing and Processing. Mobile phone: +234-70-34319553 Email: *obafemivictoria@gmail.com*

**Odusanya, Oludare.** IYA-Ibadan, Nigeria. IYA Group Coordinator. Mobile phone: +234-70-38587093. Email: *O.Odusanya@cgiar.org*

**Ogidan, Oluwaseun :** IITA Youth Agripreneurs, Ibadan, Nigeria. Root, Tubers and Vegetable. Mobile phone: +234-80-32171893. Email: *ogidanoluwaseun@yahoo.com*

**Ohanwusi, Evelyn.** IITA Youth Agripreneurs, Ibadan, Nigeria. Partnership and Resource Mobilization. Mobile phone: +234-80-54096374. Email: *E.Ohanwusi@cgiar.org*

**Olaniyi, Ajibola.** IITA Youth Agripreneurs, Ibadan, Nigeria. Fishery and Livestock. Mobile phone: +234-80-34490318. Email: *A.olaniyi@cgiar.com*

**Owoeye, Molayo.** IITA Youth Agripreneurs, Ibadan, Nigeria. Training Coordinator. Mobile phone: +234-70-69387567. Email: *owoeyemolayo@gmail.com*

**Oyinlola Sylvia.** Technical Adviser for IITA Youth Agripreneurs and Regional Administrator for West Africa. Mobile phone: +234 0700800. Email: *S.Oyinlola@cgiar.org*

**Quadri, Mustapha :** IITA Youth Agripreneurs, Ibadan, Nigeria. Cereals and legumes. Mobile phone: +234-81-43123332. Email: *quadmust1075@yahoo.com*

**Sanginga, Nteranya.** Director General IITA and Technical Adviser to IITA Youth Agripreneurs Ibadan. Email: *N.Sanginga@cgiar.org*

**Tarawali, Gbassey.** IITA-Abuja Station. Technical Adviser to IITA Youth Agripreneurs Ibadan, and IITA representative in Abuja. Mobile phone: +234-80 34023910. Email: *G.Tarawali@cgiar.org*



Ajibola Olaniyi tends to baby catfish hatched at the IYA facility.



IYA members proudly display maize seed later sold to Nigerian farmers.

### ***Tanzania Youth Agripreneurs (TYA, Tanzania)***

The Tanzania Youth Agripreneurs (TYA) is a group of young graduates from different fields, aged between 18 and 29 years. The group was formed in March 2014 to set up and run successful agriculture businesses and become job creators rather than job seekers, to change the mindset and attitudes of young people towards agriculture and empowering them to be more productive. The group is engaged in different agribusinesses,



TYA planting tomato seedling in screen house.

including: packing of high quality cassava flour and selling under the brand 'Mpishi Mkuu', (the great cook; [www.mpishimkuu.com](http://www.mpishimkuu.com)), production of tomatoes under a greenhouse and drip irrigation, supply of clean cassava planting material, processing of soybean to products such as milk, yogurt, and tofu, providing weed control services to farmers using appropriate and safe herbicides, and the use of modern techniques (hermetic bags) for storage of maize and training farmers on making of high nutrient-dense foods from locally grown crops. Despite that the youth studied courses not related to agriculture and probably are having their first contact with modern farming, they are enthusiastic and eager to share their



Steam extraction of soymilk by TYA



Branded soymilk packaged for sale.

knowledge about farming after their first year of learning and piloting. The group started with nearly 48 members but is now down to 8 members (50% women) and three elected officers. The less committed youth withdrew after realizing that there are no immediate financial gains without hard work while many members got good jobs after gaining useful experience from the program. Another challenge has been lack of capital to inject and expand their ventures. Key contacts for ITYA follow.

**Tanzania Youth Agripreneurs (ITYA).** Eastern Africa Hub, Plot 25, Mikocheni Light Industrial Area, Mwenge Coca-Cola Road, Mikocheni B, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Focus on marketing cassava and maize, screenhouse vegetable production, and soybeans value addition. Group Email: [iita-tzagri@cgiar.org](mailto:iita-tzagri@cgiar.org), Facebook: *Youth Agripreneurs Tanzania*

**Abass Adebayo.** Technical Adviser to Tanzania Youth Agripreneurs. Mobile phone: +255-754 206853. Email: [a.adebayoabass@cgiar.org](mailto:a.adebayoabass@cgiar.org)

**Bupe, Solomon Gwasa.** Tanzania Youth Agripreneurs, Dar es salaam, Tanzania. Processing and Marketing. Mobile: +255-712 907 932. Email: [bupe.gwasa@yahoo.com](mailto:bupe.gwasa@yahoo.com)

**Frank Julius.** Tanzania Youth Agripreneurs, Dar es salaam, Tanzania. Packaging and Marketing. Mobile: +255-764 808 806. Email: [fkambuga@yahoo.com](mailto:fkambuga@yahoo.com)

**Manyong, Victor.** Director Eastern Africa IITA and Technical Adviser to Tanzania Youth Agripreneurs. +255-75-478 5122. Email: [v.manyong@cgiar.org](mailto:v.manyong@cgiar.org)

**Mariam, Aron Senn.** Tanzania Youth Agripreneurs, Dar es salaam, Tanzania. Processing and Marketing. Mobile: + 255-765 754-020. Email: [mariamsenn@yahoo.com](mailto:mariamsenn@yahoo.com)

**Mbaraka, Salum Kaombwe.** Tanzania Youth Agripreneurs, Dar es salaam, Tanzania. ITYA Group Treasurer. Mobile: +255-785 215 411. Email: [salummbaraka@yahoo.com](mailto:salummbaraka@yahoo.com)

Mobile: + 25-714 285-399. Email: [edwinndibalema@ymail.com](mailto:edwinndibalema@ymail.com)

**Odiambo Eveline.** Technical Adviser to Tanzania Youth Agripreneurs and Regional administrator. Mobile phone: +255-767 500657. Email: [e.odiambo@cgiar.org](mailto:e.odiambo@cgiar.org)

**Otaigo Elisha.** Tanzania Youth Agripreneurs, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Farm and field supervisor. Mobile phone: +255-713 594 688. Email: [otaigoelisha@hotmail.com](mailto:otaigoelisha@hotmail.com)

**Veronica, N.K. Kebwe.** Tanzania Youth Agripreneurs, Dar es salaam, Tanzania. ITYA Group Chairperson. Mobile: +255-712 055 990. Email: [kichantav@yahoo.com](mailto:kichantav@yahoo.com)

**Zakayo, Godwin Maseki.** Tanzania Youth Agripreneurs, Dar es salaam, Tanzania. Communication. Mobile: +255-754 549-356. Email: [zakayomaseki@gmail.com](mailto:zakayomaseki@gmail.com)





Uganda Youth Agripreneurs and well-wishers at the group's launch in June 2015.

### ***Uganda Youth Agripreneurs (UYA)***

UYA is the latest addition to the IITA Youth Agripreneur movement with their official launch taking place on 24 June 2015. The group consists of 18 members and is open to further recruitment. The group presently operates in different outfields and is looking for a central location where it may initiate additional enterprises. The group produces mixed vegetables and sweet potatoes and seeks to modernize production among themselves and affiliated youth groups in Uganda. IITA Director General and founder of the Agripreneur movement, Dr. Nteranya Sanginga was present at the launch to explain the vision of youth agripreneurs in Africa, advocating for mindset change of youth to focus upon job creation through well planned agribusiness ventures. With this start we can only expect good things in the future. Key contacts for UYA follow.



IITA DG N. Sanginga encourages UYA members to modernize their production methods and reach out to Ugandan youth.

**Uganda Youth Agripreneurs.** Kampala, Uganda. Focus upon field crop production including cabbage and sweet potatoes. Group Email: pending. Mobile phone: 256-789-449090

**Kaahua, Jean.** Uganda Youth Agripreneurs, Kampala, Uganda. Mobile phone: +265-782-243453. Email: [kaahuajeon@gmail.com](mailto:kaahuajeon@gmail.com)

**Kayonga, Carol.** Uganda Youth Agripreneurs, Kampala, Uganda. Mobile phone: +2656-774-626585. Email: [ckayonga@yahoo.com](mailto:ckayonga@yahoo.com)

**Kobusingye, Diana.** Uganda Youth Agripreneurs, Kampala, Uganda. Mobile phone: +2656-703-973404. Email: [kobusingyedianah@gmail.com](mailto:kobusingyedianah@gmail.com)

**Muchunguzi, Perez.** Technical Adviser to Uganda Youth Agripreneurs, Kampala, Uganda. Mobile phone: +256-752787826. Email: [p.muchunguzi@cgiar.org](mailto:p.muchunguzi@cgiar.org)



**Mutalya, Innocent.** Uganda Youth Agripreneurs, Kampala, Uganda. Mobile phone: +2656-567-758213. Email: [matalyaj@gmail.com](mailto:matalyaj@gmail.com)

**Nakyammbadde, Stella.** Uganda Youth Agripreneurs, Kampala, Uganda. Mobile phone: +2656-701-983608. Email: [ssnakya@yahoo.com](mailto:ssnakya@yahoo.com)

**Nansubuga, Theo.** Uganda Youth Agripreneurs, Kampala, Uganda. Mobile phone: +2656-775-279334. Email: [theonansubuga14@gmail.com](mailto:theonansubuga14@gmail.com)

**Ojwang, Emmanuel.** Uganda Youth Agripreneurs, Chairman. Kampala, Uganda. Mobile phone: +2656-789-449090. Email: [OJWANG@yahoo.com](mailto:OJWANG@yahoo.com)

**Sole, Anna.** Technical Adviser to Uganda Youth Agripreneurs, Kampala, Uganda. Mobile phone: +256-793-516-597. Email: [a.sole@cgiar.org](mailto:a.sole@cgiar.org)

**Van Asten, Pieter.** IITA Country Representative Uganda and Technical Adviser to Uganda Youth Agripreneurs, Kampala, Uganda. Mobile phone: +256-752-787812. Email: [p.vanasten@cgiar.org](mailto:p.vanasten@cgiar.org)

**Zaake Nakubugo Beckie.** Uganda Youth Agripreneurs, Kampala, Uganda. Co-Chair person. Mobile phone: +256-772-521221. Email: [bekyzaake@gmail.com](mailto:bekyzaake@gmail.com)



UYA members cultivate high value vegetable crops in their outfields.

Note that the membership of these five YAGs in these lists are not complete, and additional information on members, their contacts and current roles may be obtained from the individual groups. Also note that as these guidelines are being prepared, additional groups are being formed.

## Acknowledgements

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## Agripreneur Photo Gallery

The IITA Kalambo YAG fishponds (DR Congo) are visible by satellite via Google Earth (right). IKYA prepares soymilk by steam extraction (middle left). IITA Youth Agripreneurs (Nigeria) examine soybean harvester (middle right). Kibwezi Hortipreneur Youth Group (Kenya) prepares fish feed from local ingredients using simple technologies (lower center).



## **Appendix 1. Youth Agripreneur Group Intern Agreement (an example)**

This agreement form is intended to formalized relations of individual Interns with their Youth Agripreneur Groups (YAGs) established by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA). It describes the benefits, expectations, conduct and participation to and by interns engaged in IITA Agribusiness Incubations. Completion of this form with the Intern's signature is a requirement for full participation with a YAG. This form is somewhat generic and may be modified to suit individual YAGs but without substantially revising relations between interns and their YAG described in this form. The terms and conditions of engagement follow.

### **1. Position and Title**

The title of your position is: \_\_\_\_\_ (insert YAG) intern and you will operate under the supervision of either a Youth Coordinator or elected YAG officers. Internship is conducted over \_\_\_\_\_ months in \_\_\_\_\_ (YAG location).

### **2. Benefits**

You will receive a starting stipend of \_\_\_\_\_ (currency and amount) per day for participation in YAG and be entitled to a share of the revenues generated from its agribusiness activities.

### **3. Expectation of the interns**

Interns are required to participate in all training activities, engage in experiential learning and explore options for successful establishment of agribusiness. This should lead to development of a detailed business plan and commercial loan application, either as an individual or in partnership with other interns.

### **4. Code of Conduct**

- a. Interns must behave professionally and with respect toward others; report to their duties on time; operate YAG equipment in a safe manner; and remain free from influence of illegal drugs or excess alcohol. Any grievances must be reported to YAG officers for action.
- b. Interns must not resort to violence and threatening behaviour; misuse, misplace or misappropriate YAG property; or remain absent from duties without permission from YAG officers.
- c. Interns must comply with practices described in the Guidelines for IITA Agripreneur Business Incubation and their YAG Standard Operating Procedures.

### **5. Terms and Conditions of engagement**

Your engagement is subject to these Terms and Conditions and may be periodically reviewed and amended. The acceptance clause follows:

I \_\_\_\_\_ agree to the terms and conditions of this agreement as an Intern with \_\_\_\_\_ (YAG).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ (print legibly)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2. YAG Questionnaire useful for routine monitoring.

**Purpose.** All Youth Agripreneur projects and agribusiness incubations include a strong Youth Empowerment component. This component necessarily includes both M&E and Knowledge Management. IITA has developed conceptual models, M&E tools and Knowledge Management mechanisms in support of the Youth Agripreneur approach, a novel agribusiness incubation strategy. IITA and its Agripreneur stakeholders collect, collate, analyze and share data from its Agripreneur actions and publish its findings as an international public good. M&E is based upon a series of questionnaires completed by the group's themselves after their first year of activities. This three-page, 18 query questionnaire requires about one hour to complete and we thank you in advance for your cooperation. Results are compiled across all stakeholders, a database compiled and its analysis distributed among all Agripreneur groups for their inputs.

Group \_\_\_\_\_ Contact person \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

Contact email \_\_\_\_\_ Contact mobile \_\_\_\_\_ Website \_\_\_\_\_

Facebook page \_\_\_\_\_

1. When was your group founded? \_\_\_\_\_

2. **Status.** Is your group registered with national or local authorities? ☐ yes ☐ no

if yes, as what sort of organization? ☐ farmer association ☐ NGO/CBO (e.g. youth group)

☐ private business ☐ other \_\_\_\_\_

3. **Officers.** Does your group have elected officers? ☐ yes ☐ no

if yes: when last elected \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

specify officers (no more than five) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

how many of these officers are young women \_\_\_\_\_

if no: how is your group led? \_\_\_\_\_

are group officer elections planned? \_\_\_\_\_

4. **Members.** How many youth belong to your group? \_\_\_\_\_ How many young women? \_\_\_\_\_

What are the youngest and oldest members of your group? \_\_\_\_\_ yrs, youngest \_\_\_\_\_ yrs, oldest

Do new members continue to join your group? ☐ yes ☐ no

if yes: how are they recruited? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

if no: why not? \_\_\_\_\_

5. **Hosts.** What organization hosts your group? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you pay rent? ☐ yes ☐ no if yes monthly rent \_\_\_\_\_ (\$ per month)

6. **Enterprise.** What are the main enterprises conducted by your group, how many youth are involved and how are products marketed? (describe the top five enterprises)

	Enterprise	number	production/yr	value (\$ year)	market
a)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
b)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
c)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

d) \_\_\_\_\_

e) \_\_\_\_\_

How much land is under production by your group? \_\_\_\_\_ ha

Do you market other's produce? [ ] yes [ ] no

Do you practice value-added processing? [ ] yes [ ] no

if yes, what product(s)? \_\_\_\_\_

is this product registered with authorities? [ ] yes [ ] no

what is the most income generated by your group in a single day? \$ \_\_\_\_\_

and what was its source? \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Mentors.** Who are the five leading mentors of your group, where are they from and what is their role? Designate male (m) and female (f) mentors.

mentor (m/f)	organization	role
a) _____	_____	_____
b) _____	_____	_____
c) _____	_____	_____
d) _____	_____	_____
e) _____	_____	_____

Does your group mentored other youth groups? [ ] yes [ ] no If yes how many? \_\_\_\_\_  
and in what areas \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Training.** What training has your group received this year, by who and how many were trained?

training received	trainer(s)	number of trainees
a) _____	_____	_____
b) _____	_____	_____
c) _____	_____	_____
d) _____	_____	_____

What training has your group provided to others this year, who was trained and how many were trained?

training provided	trainer(s)	number of trainees
a) _____	_____	_____
b) _____	_____	_____
c) _____	_____	_____
d) _____	_____	_____

**9. Remuneration.** How much income do group members receive per month? \_\_\_\_\_ \$ per month

How much of this is derived from project funds? \_\_\_\_\_ \$ per month

How much from group's profits? \_\_\_\_\_ \$ per month

Are members paid uniformly (yes) or based on participation in specific activities (no)? [ ] yes [ ] no

**10. Group dynamics.** Have any member left the group? [ ] yes [ ] no

if yes, how many \_\_\_\_\_ (number) and reason(s) for departure [ ] offered other employment

[ ] discouraged [ ] started own business \_\_\_\_\_ (type) [ ] expelled \_\_\_\_\_



[ ] other (or specify) \_\_\_\_\_

11. **Finances.** What is the core group operating costs per month? \_\_\_\_\_ \$ per month

Has your group applied for and received a loan from a finance institution? [ ] yes [ ] no

If yes [ ] loan application rejected [ ] loan application approved for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ amount

Have any group members applied for a commercial loan as an individual? [ ] yes [ ] no

Application 1. If yes [ ] loan application rejected [ ] loan application approved for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ amount

Application 2. If yes [ ] loan application rejected [ ] loan application approved for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ amount

12. **Innovation.** What are two key innovations developed by your group, how were they developed and what is their impact?

Innovation 1. \_\_\_\_\_

how developed \_\_\_\_\_

impact \_\_\_\_\_

Innovation 2. \_\_\_\_\_

how developed \_\_\_\_\_

impact \_\_\_\_\_

13. **Difficulties and solutions.** What are two main difficulties and corrective responses by the group?

Difficulty 1. \_\_\_\_\_

Solution(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Difficulty 2. \_\_\_\_\_

Solution(s) \_\_\_\_\_

14. **Major achievements.** What are three major achievements of your group?

Achievement 1. \_\_\_\_\_

Achievement 2. \_\_\_\_\_

Achievement 3. \_\_\_\_\_

15. **IITA supervision.** What can IITA do better to assist your group?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

16. **This questionnaire.** How do you rate this questionnaire? [ ] weak [ ] satisfactory [ ] very good and how may it be improved in the future? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

17. **Photographic support.** Please provide **one** photograph each of ....

[ ] your group members \_\_\_\_\_ .jpeg

[ ] your group's facilities \_\_\_\_\_ .jpeg

[ ] a crop production enterprise \_\_\_\_\_ .jpeg

[ ] a marketing activity \_\_\_\_\_ .jpeg

[ ] a value addition activity \_\_\_\_\_ .jpeg

[ ] a training activity \_\_\_\_\_ .jpeg

[ ] your groups other best photo \_\_\_\_\_ .jpeg topic

18. **Any other comments** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

	<b>Skills Checklist: an IITA Youth Agripreneur is able to ...</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Identify entrepreneurial opportunities along agricultural value chains
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Develop a business model through feasibility assessment and new venture experimentation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Install and maintain profitable crop and animal ventures using modern agricultural methods
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Diagnose and manage pests, diseases and nutrient deficiency symptoms
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Develop production and harvest schedules, and link them to best market opportunities
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Liaise with other youth groups and promote their common interests
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Recognize their responsibilities, operate creatively and practice teamwork and leadership
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Create a marketing strategy that includes promotion, pricing, sales and forecasting
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Prepare a business plan, pitch and loan application, and understand start-up financing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Utilize information technology and social media to promote their agribusiness interests
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Work across a wide variety of agricultural ventures and in several capacities
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Identify and adhere to commodity and product industry standards and regulations
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Operate in gender-balanced settings and respect diversity and cultural differences
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Develop and maintain a safe working environments and respect the rights of employees
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Grasp commercialization through due diligence, product lifecycle, and competitive advantage
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Recognize opportunities for value addition and establish simple production lines
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Secure an acceptable livelihood while passing their very special skill sets on to others

**So many opportunities:** agricultural eco-tourism; *animal feed production*; cereal, legume and root crop production; *establishing out-grower networks*; greenhouse and field vegetable production; *farm input supply*; fish farming; *fish hatchery and fingerlings*; floriculture; *irrigation and pond design and services*; flour milling and blending; *herb and spice production*; land conservation services; *leather works*; market aggregation centers; *organic fertilizer production*; pest control services; *plant propagation*; potting mixtures; *poultry raising*; private extension services; *product representation*; seed production and marketing; *soymilk manufacture*; tree seedling nurseries; *value addition to agricultural products*; vermiculture *and more!*

Back cover photos (top to bottom): IKYA members in DR Congo, first cucumber harvest by KHYG in Kenya, rainy day farming in DR Congo, IYA members in Nigeria.



**Meet the Agripreneurs.** The IITA Agripreneurs are becoming the missing link to jumpstart rural transformation in Africa. It is a means to build the confidence and skill sets of under-employed, educated African youth, and to transform them into agribusiness persons able to recognize and capitalize upon opportunities that abound along agricultural value chains. IITA's youth-led, gender-balanced, interdisciplinary agribusiness incubation works with relatively modest investment but requires the engagement of committed hosts and experienced mentors. These guidelines describe how to establish and operate a Youth Agripreneur Group, and provide information on these groups in DR Congo, Kenya, Nigeria and Tanzania, including contact details to stimulate youth networking.

