WORLD FARMERS' ORGANISATION

THE GYMNASIUM

A HIGH-LEVEL CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME

Providing a wide spectrum education to young farmers to train them to become future farmers' leaders

Third edition
2024

With the support of

BAYER

ANDREAS HERMES AKADEMIE

DBV Deutscher Bauernverband

THE CONCEPT

The name derives from the ancient Greece where young people were trained in a ***gymnasium*** by a mentor, who was responsible for their education path. During this period, they were taught all kind of arts, economics, politics, law, to make sure their education was complete and successful.

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CONTEXT

The **WFO Gymnasium Program** is a high-level capacity-building initiative, in partnership with **Bayer** and the **Andreas Hermes Academy**, aimed at cultivating future leaders in the agricultural sector. Given the current economic landscape, education is more crucial than ever, serving as the foundation for all professional experiences. The Gymnasium Program emphasizes the **development of soft skills** and **intellectual management**, essential for success in a highly competitive environment that demands **diverse knowledge and specialized expertise**.

Today **young farmers play a pivotal role in achieving global food security, addressing climate change, improving farm viability, and promoting sustainable and resilient food systems**. This role has been acknowledged by the **UN Rome-based agencies** and will be further reinforced during the **UN Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028**, among others. As a UNDFF Steering Committee member, **WFO is committed to empowering young farmers and recognizing their contributions to food security and sustainable development**.

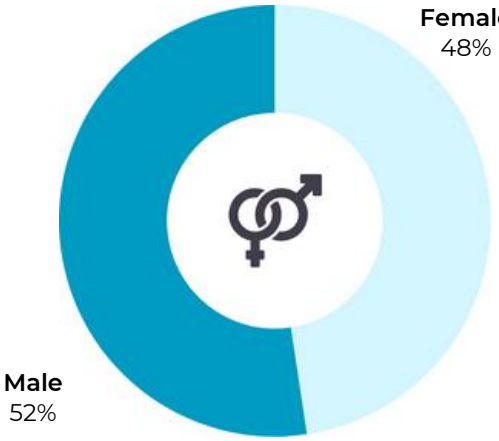
The Gymnasium Program achieves this by providing young farmers with training modules on topics related to the **global agricultural agenda**, as well as training sessions to improve their **leadership skills**. Participants learn from international leaders in various policy areas and have the opportunity to attend and engage in **global agricultural events**.

THE THIRD EDITION IN NUMBERS

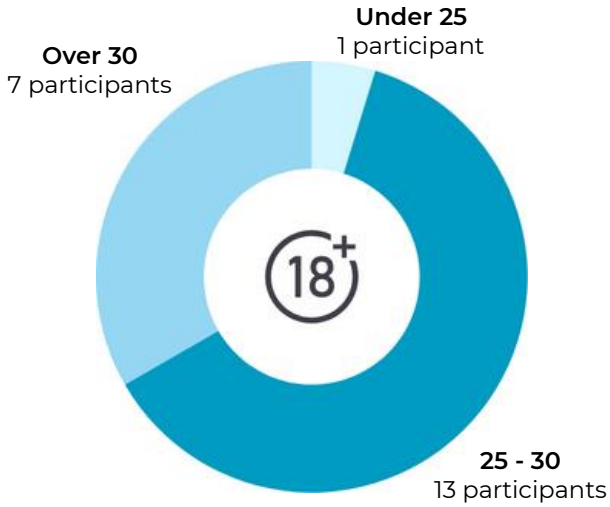
21 YOUNG FARMERS PARTICIPATING

Demographics

Gender



Age



Geographical Distribution

Australia, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, Germany, Ghana, Finland, Italy, Ireland, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Kenya, Malawi, New Zealand, South Africa, Uganda, UK, Zimbabwe

Visibility

FARMERS FIRST! MEET THE YOUNG LEADERS

Marlize Grobbelaar

Marlize Grobbelaar is a 25-year-old young farmer from South Africa. She just finished her BScAgri Animal Science degree at the University of Pretoria. Her family farms avocados in a small town called Tzaneen in the Limpopo region of South Africa. She is currently farming with goats just outside of Pretoria and has a very big passion for breeding exceptional and well-adapted animals She is passionate about the agricultural industry for we as young farmers are keystone people in an ever-growing population.

Zunon Gbotta Linsay Sarah

Zunon Gbotta Linsay Sarah is an Ivorian 34-year-old young fish farmer. She has a BAC+2 in Finance Accounting and Business Management and she is a member of the National Association of Seed Companies of Ivory Coast. Linsay Sarah is also President of Fish farmers of Daloa, in charge of women fish farmers and traders in the Haut-Sassandra region. Moreover, she is the Administrator in charge of gender and social affairs of the National Union of Cooperative Aquaculture societies of Ivory Coast, and the Focal point FAO FISH4ACP project.

Conrad Vanessen

Conrad Vanessen is a 35-year-old farmer, who farms with his wife and children in Southern Alberta, Canada. Since purchasing his farm in 2011, he has expanded his veal operation to 4,500 calves, established a 20,000-layer egg production operation, and also purchased irrigated land to raise his crops. He is an active farm leader, sitting as vice-chair of the Egg Farmers of Alberta, serving on various committees at both the provincial and national levels, while also being actively involved in his local water association focused on the provision of potable water to local communities. Conrad participated in the Egg Farmers of Canada's National Young Farmer Program, where he built leadership skills, expanded his knowledge, and was recently recognized as one of the Top 4 under 40 in the Canadian poultry industry.

Ebenezer Abbeyquaye

Ebenezer Abbeyquaye is a young farmer with 10 years plus experience, especially in horticulture managing my own and family farms, growing other young farmers and young entrepreneurs. He is a member of the Coalition of Farmers Ghana (COFAG), having held different positions including being the current president of COFAG.

Kemei Mark Kiprono

Kemei Mark Kiprono is a small-scale youth farmer interested in potato farming. Mark is an active member of Kapkures Youth and Women Self Help Group in Nakuru county, Kenya, a group of youths and women engaging in diverse farming activities. As a member of this group, Mark sensitizes them on best practices in farming, their legal rights, and modern ways to prevent post-harvest losses and value-addition strategies, among others. His interest in agriculture led to his appointment as the agent for a Netherlands-based company specialising in manufacturing agricultural and ambient stores and warehouses, which are used to prevent post-harvest losses, thus enhancing food security. Apart from farming, Mark is a practising advocate of the High Court of Kenya with a great interest in land rights, litigation, and advocacy.

Patrick Kuyokwa

Patrick Kuyokwa is the co-founder and CEO of Agricentre, an agricultural enterprise by promoting sustainable agriculture and agribusiness among farmers in northern Malawi. Agricentre is youth-led and works across agronomy, animal health and marketing. Aside from working with farmers, Patrick is a farmer. Currently into the production of crops, legumes, bananas, ginger and cereals while raising chickens and pigs. He believes in agribusiness as a way to improve livelihood in both rural and urban areas. Patrick holds a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Economics attained from Lilongwe University of Agricultural and Natural Resources (LUANAR) in 2016. As an agricultural economist, he has more than 5 years of experience in Agricultural and Natural Resource Management Projects for both the private sector and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

Cynthia Tewete

Cynthia Tewete is a 32-year-old Community Development Coordinator at NASFAM. She coordinates all cross-cutting issues at NASFAM national wide. A holder of a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Extension from Bunda College of Agriculture, now known as Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources. She has experience in community development programs for over 7 years. Cynthia is also a farmer with 25 employees. She grows legumes and cereals for one of the seed multiplication companies Seed Co.

Siobhan Wakeling

Siobhan grew up on a small farm in Northland, New Zealand, where her family farmed pigs, Purebred Hereford beef, and reared calves. At sixteen, she started working in the shearing industry (starting during her school holidays as a way to raise funds for her 12-month student exchange to Denmark), where she then spent the next nine years working as a wool handler, wool classer, and shearer throughout New Zealand and Australia. She attended Massey University and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in April of 2022, majoring in Environmental Science. She now works as a GIS Analyst at Federated Farmers of New Zealand, the country's leading farming organisation for policy and advocacy. She has a passion and enthusiasm for all things mapping and GIS, especially when the use of this technology makes a real difference to farmers around the country.

Dainalyn Swaby

Dainalyn Swaby is a Development Communication Specialist and climate change advocate with over eight years of professional experience in leading internal and external communications for climate change projects, promoting climate and agriculture themes among various audiences. Her partnership with youth-led organizations, government agencies, ministries, international organizations has resulted in numerous outreach projects, capacity-building workshops and conferences promoting climate and agriculture resilience, several climate-focused youth engagement campaigns and research projects, including co-developing a global Youth Engagement Plan through the NDC Partnership Youth Task Force and coordinating a Climate Change Position paper as a 2021 Global Youth Climate Network Ambassador through the World Bank's youth-to-youth initiative. Dainalyn holds an MA. in Global Communication and Development from Loughborough University, London. She currently serves as a member of the institution's Development and Social Change Advisory Board. Dainalyn is a podcaster and has created several podcasts exclusively focused on culture, climate and sustainable development.

Mawejje Harbert

Mawejje Harbert is a 25-year-old Ugandan Male with a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Land Use and Management from Makerere University. Harbert is an Agronomist and soil scientist by profession. Harbert is a Project Officer at the Young Farmers Federation of Uganda, a position he has held since 2020. He also owns and operates a soya bean seed multiplication farm in Mityana District in Central Uganda. He has engaged in national, regional and international platforms such as GIZ Land hub Eshborn 2019 and GIZ land forum digitally in 2020, advocating and representing youth interests. Harbert is a skilled data scientist who believes data-driven decisions are the way to go for precision agriculture, especially when combating climate change. He strives to inspire, transform, and empower youth in agribusiness, leveraging cooperation, networks and the use of technology

Silvia Caprara

Born in 1996, Silvia Caprara grew up in her family winery in the countryside of Verona, Italy. In 2020 she obtained the Master's Degree in Chemical Engineering at Politecnico di Milano and then decided to come back to work with the family. At the moment, Silvia is trying many tasks in every sector of the winery: from the vineyard to the office. Being an only child, she is getting ready to run it as a third generation after her father and grandfather. She belongs to the group ANGA Verona.

RAN Sineat

RAN Sineat was born in 1993 in a rural area of northwest Cambodia. His parents cultivate rice and raise the pig. So, Ran is very interested in rural development and helping people experiencing poverty. He Community Development at Meanchey University and finished his bachelor's degree in 2015. To strengthen his career, he also attended a master's degree in general management, which concluded in 2022. He started working in 2017 as a stock supervisor and provincial broker in agriculture. In 2021, he started his collaboration as a value chain and investment officer for the Cambodian Farmers Federation Association of Agricultural Producers (CFAP-Cambodia) under the AIMS project, intending to enhance the prosperity of Cambodian smallholder farmers through increasingly profitable links to agri-businesses and markets, with the intermediate objective to increase returns from farming for smallholders, including poorer farmers and youth, through efficient public sector investment.

Elia Bettelli

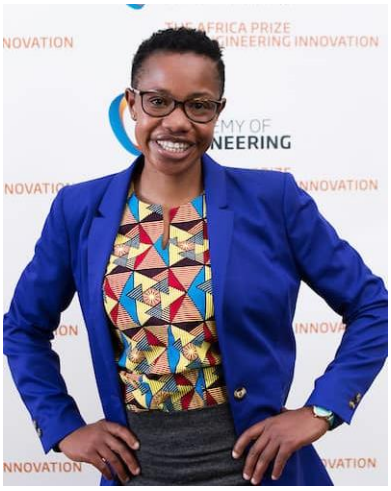
Elia Bettelli is a 28-year-old young Italian farmer. He has a degree in Marketing and Management and a Master's in Sustainable Management. After the University period, he became more and more involved in farming, and so he started a new company with his friend Matteo; now they run together a small organic apple farm in Trentino, North Italy. Since 2022 he is the vice president of AGIA-CIA TRENTINO young farmer association.

Nicolò Bertorello

Nicolò Bertorello is an agronomist, he studied agricultural science at the University of Turin. He comes from Revello (CN) - Italy. After his degree, he worked in a plant nursery in Switzerland in order to make abroad experience and improve his skills in the German language. Now, he is currently employed on his family's farm. With his relatives and other workers, he grows up several kinds of orchards on 30 hectares circa: many species of berries, cherries, table grapes, apples, chestnuts, kiwi green and gold. Actually, he is involved in Coldiretti Giovani Impresa committee of Cuneo province. That's a good chance for him to better know all the agricultural realities of his area. He likes travelling, but he loves a lot his land. He thinks that is very important to improve agriculture with new technologies and their best application through a scientific-based approach, in order to increase productivity by doing as little damage as possible to the environment.

James Johnson

James Johnson farms alongside his father on their mixed arable and livestock business in North Yorkshire, England. He graduated from Harper Adams University in 2014 and since helped steer the farm into a more regenerative farming system focusing on soil health and farm resilience. James has also been a National Farmers Union North East Ambassador, leading him to help represent farming at both COP26 and COP27 where he has presented about his journey into nature-friendly farming and the importance of a sustainable food system.



Evangelista Chekera

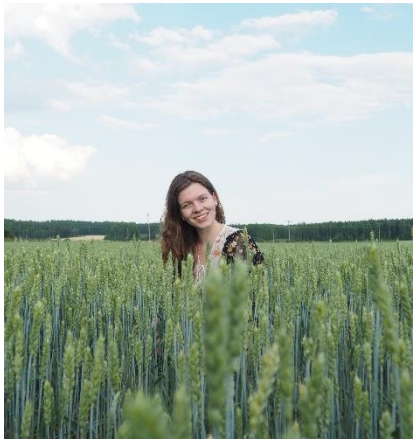
Evangelista Chekera is the Founder and Lead Innovator at Passion Poultry (Pvt) Ltd. They work with scale poultry farmers by designing, manufacturing and distributing off-the-grid chick brooding devices and poultry slaughtering devices. She was introduced into the poultry industry by her parents at the age of 10. Currently, she is the provincial Zimbabwe Farmers Union Youth (ZFU) Leader. In 2019 she was granted two patents in the form of utility models by ARIPO for her two poultry equipment innovations.

Louise Crowley

Louise Crowley is a 28-year-old dairy farmer based in Croom, County Limerick in Ireland. She and her father are milking 200 cows in a spring-calving grass-based system. She is the 3rd generation of her family to be involved in the farm. She studied Dairy Herd Management at Salesian Agricultural College, Limerick, and BSc in Agriculture at Cork Institute of Technology. Louise has been involved in Agricultural Policy and lobbying for several years now. She is a member of Macra na Feirme and the Irish Farmers Association. She was the Macra na Feirme representative in the founding of the Women in Agriculture Stakeholders Group in Ireland. Now, she is the County Secretary for Limerick IFA and farm ambassador for the National Dairy Council, which promotes and advocates for the Irish Dairy Industry and our produce.

Jamie Pepper

Jamie Pepper is a young beef and sheep farmer in southern Australia from the state of Victoria. He helps to operate the family farm with his father and uncle, and they manage Angus and Hereford cow breeding operation, Prime Lamb production, Merino wool production and a Poll Dorset stud. Jamie sits on the National Farmers' Federation Young Farmers' Council to help drive policy change affecting young Australian farmers and is a board member for Food and Fibre Great South Coast which is a representative body for food and fibre production in southwest Victoria.



Katariina Latva

Katariina Latva comes from a small crop farm in Finland, but mainly she is a forest owner with 100 hectares, whose family has farmed around the same fields for hundreds of years. She graduated as an Agronomist M.Sc. (Agric.) in 2023, with agroecology as her major. Now Katariina is studying forestry while looking for a job and working as an entrepreneur. Her family's fields were rented to a neighboring farmer, as her father got severely ill. After his passing, Katariina took the reins and has been educating herself on agriculture and forestry. She is eager to get the voice of young farmers heard and also takes great pride in her young farmer friends who take great pride in their work. Katariina is also a vice chair of our Finnish young farmers' association.

Leon Ranscht

Leon Ranscht is a 23-year-old young farmer from central Germany. He grew up on a family farm growing rapeseed, wheat, barley and sugar beet. He graduated from the University of Hohenheim in 2021 with a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Science, majoring in Economics and Plant Production. Currently, he is studying for a Master in Agricultural Economics at the Universities of Göttingen and Wageningen. Leon is an active member of "Bund Deutscher Landjugend" the German rural youth. In his spare time, he enjoys playing the harp and cycling.

Ana Carolina Zimmermann

Ana Carolina Zimmermann is a farmer and produces beef cattle in Goiás. She is a Production Engineer who graduated from the University of Brasília holding two MBAs in Project Management and Agribusiness, both from the University of São Paulo. Winner of the 4th edition of CNA Jovem, she is a Nuffield Scholar, an Ambassador for NGIN - Next Generation Ag Impact Network and co-founder of BASE - Brasil Agro Society Environment. Ana Carolina is passionate about studying the integration between rural and urban areas. She received an award from Sebrae in the category of rural producer of Goiás State of the Businesswoman award.

THIRD EDITION DEEP DIVE

Throughout the duration of the program, the Gymnasium 2023 cohort was fully immersed in a rigorous curriculum. This curriculum was divided into two distinct pillars: **Leadership and Advocacy.**

Under the Leadership pillar, the cohort had the opportunity to participate in a series of skill development sessions, expertly led by the WFO coaching team. These sessions aimed to cultivate and enhance the participants' leadership skills.

On the other hand, the **Advocacy pillar** focused on fostering the active participation of these young farmers in crucial global policy processes in the field of agriculture and related topics (food security, climate change, food systems among others). This pillar aimed to establish a valuable connection between the cohort and key stakeholders.

By skillfully coordinating both pillars, the Gymnasium program aims to equip the young farmers with the necessary tools and knowledge to advocate for a brighter future in the agriculture sector. It recognizes that the ability to effectively influence global policy spaces is intrinsically linked to the development of strong leadership skills among farmers.

The curriculum followed a timeline that kicked off online in February 2023, following the major global agricultural events of the year, to culminate in COP 28 with the active in-person participation of the young farmers in the conference.

Outlined below is a comprehensive overview of both pillars.

Advocacy Pillar

1ST SESSION - BACK-TO-BACK THE UN WATER CONFERENCE

A two-day digital technical session on "**Sustainable water management to protect and restore biodiversity**" was organised following the **UN 2023 Water Conference**. Several experts spoke with the young farmers cohort about various topics, including the importance of effective water use in agriculture for food security, combining best practices and innovative technologies for water management, disaster risk management in agriculture, sustainable water management practices in Eastern Africa, building water security for sustainable and resilient food systems, and the challenges and opportunities of nature-positive agriculture. The session aimed to share knowledge about sustainable water management practices.

Guests: **Mr Ruhiza Boroto**, Head of the Secretariat of the Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture (WASAG); **Mr Romano De Vivo**, Vice President of Sustainability at WFO's Partner CropLife International; Mira Markova, a DRR expert at the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR); **Ms Elizabeth Nsimadala**, President of the Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF) and WFO Board Member; **Mr Inga Jacobs-Mata** from the International Water Management Institute (IWMI); **Mr Francesco Brusaporco**, Policy Officer at the WFO Secretariat, reported on the takeaways from the UN 2023 Water Conference for the global farmers' community; **Mr Matt Inbush** and **Ms Ruth Thomas** from the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD).

2ND SESSION - BACK-TO-BACK THE UNFSS +2 STOCKTAKING MOMENT

The session focused on the topic of "**How Can Inclusive Technology and Innovation in Agriculture Boost the Efforts Towards the UNFSS Implementation**". The **WFO Gymnasium students** had the unique chance to **learn from agri-innovations experts and farmer leaders about what the private sector, research centers, farmers' organisations, and UN agencies are doing to foster best agriculture practices toward more sustainable food systems**. The students engaged in meaningful conversations with these speakers, sharing their insights and visions on pressing food systems issues.

Guests: **Mr Nelson Agyemang** from Coalition of Farmers Ghana (CoFaG); **Ms Sharon Verah**, Senior Technical Assistant at the Kenya National Farmers Federation (KENAFF); The Food and Land Use Coalition (FOLU), presented by **Mr Jeremiah Rogito** from FOLU Kenya Secretariat; **Mr Adam Gerstenmier**, the Food Action Alliance (FAA) Executive Director; **Mr Stefano Marras**, Director of Global Partnerships at Bayer, also representing the Zero Hunger Pledge; **Mr Anil Turkmayali**, Senior Project Manager at the International Data Spaces Association (IDSA); **Ms Alessandra Diana**, and **Ms Giulia Antonucci** representing the DIVINE project; **Mr Peter Oksen**, Green Technology and Research Manager from the UN agency The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO); **Mr Juan David Caro**, **Ms Pramisha Thapaliya**, as well as Ms Maria Kolesina representing the World Food Forum; **Ms Sophie Cowppli-Bony**, representing the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub.

3RD SESSION, BACK-TO-BACK THE WORLD FOOD FORUM, AND THE COMMITTE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY

> *"Challenges and Opportunities for young farmers to shape the future of global advocacy "*

The session was a truly immersive experience that fostered collaboration and critical thinking among the participants. Through a series of interactive activities and discussions, the session aimed to enhance the program's hands-on approach, empowering students to engage in peer-to-peer conversations and tackle real-world problems. It provided a solid foundation for the students' future involvement with other youth stakeholders in policy spaces. By familiarizing themselves with the structure and advocacy actions of influential organizations in the field of food and agriculture policy negotiation, the participants gained valuable insights into the importance of youth engagement and their impact in COP negotiations.

The session also encouraged students to harness the power of storytelling and networking, enabling them to effectively communicate their ideas and aspirations as policy advocates. By enhancing their storytelling skills, they could effectively share their perspectives and concerns, while networking provided an opportunity for them to build valuable relationships and collaborations with relevant youth stakeholders.

Experts: **Glindys Virginia**, representing the Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD); **Alexis Ballimann**, representing the YOUNGO Food and Agriculture Working Group; and **Nele Herrmann**, representing the NextGen Ag Impact Network (NGIN), **Anoush Ficiciyan**, representing the Andreas Hermes Academy (AHA)

The GYMx Project

As part of their training, the **Gymnasium Young Farmers** had the opportunity to create their own **key messages to be presented** in an interactive format at the culmination of the program, **during COP 28**. The **GYMx** consists of a series of events led by the young farmers that encompass these essential messages. The project was divided into two parts:

1. **Individual sessions** – This interactive task required the students to build a TEDx-style lecture on a topic related to water and sustainable water management practices within the framework of the UN Water Conference, to be delivered online to the extended WFO community. Through their personal stories and effective storytelling abilities, they were able to share their call to action and make an impact. At the end of their presentations, the audience voted on the best speaker, and the winner was awarded the opportunity to deliver the speech in person to all stakeholders present at the WFO 2023 GA.

2. **Group Panels** – In this collaborative assignment, the students were paired up in thematic teams to apply the knowledge they acquired through various modules. Their objective was to design advocacy sessions that would be conducted in different pavilions at COP 28. More details on the results of this assignment can be found in the COP 28 session of this report.

To have a detailed overview of the students' key messages, find below their final manifesto, based on policy asks of their national farmers' organizations, as well as the ones of WFO.

COP 28 KEY MESSAGES

1. FOOD AND WATER SYSTEMS

Given the ever-increasing global population, it is crucial for farms to strive for maximum efficiency and stability in order to meet the growing demand for food. To address this need, we must implement various strategies.

Firstly, it is essential to develop, apply and democratize new technologies for use by farmers. We fully support and encourage the adoption of innovative farming practices and technology, as well as value-added activities that enable farmers to establish sustainable agricultural businesses. Furthermore, we advocate for studies and research focused on developing highly productive plants that are resilient to climate change and diseases.

Access to water is absolutely vital for the long-term success of agriculture, particularly as farmers seek to increase production, diversify land use, and build climate resilience. It is crucial to improve access to water technologies, such as solar-powered irrigation pumps (SIPs), drip irrigation systems, rainwater harvesting tanks, and water quality testing kits. These technologies can assist farmers in overcoming water scarcity, reducing labor burdens, enhancing water efficiency, conservation, and quality, as well as diversifying their crop production.

Moreover, we must ensure that investment in plant cultivation research and new water storage for farmland is supported. This support should be accompanied by appropriate policies, regulations, and responsibilities that prioritize the interests of all stakeholders involved and uphold their integrity.

2. NATURE, LAND USE, AND OCEANS

Farmers' practice of climate resilient agriculture through adoption of sustainable practices need to be strongly encouraged by all key players in the sector. Farmers recognize the high value of biodiversity in their practices and are aware of the relationship between agricultural production and environmental issues. They continually take steps to ensure proper resource use and environmental sustainability.

The adoption of agricultural practices such as crop selection, irrigation management and soil conservation are a fundamental pillar of sustainable land use practices and food security and inherently part of any long-term planning for agriculture production.

Farmers are willing to mitigate emissions by improving the climate efficiency of their production. They can maintain and increase carbon sequestration by using carbon sinks in the land use, land use change, strengthening illegal deforestation controls, and ensuring forestry sectors engagement without losing productive land.

We should encourage practices that promote sustainable agriculture and livestock production such as: regenerative and conservation farming, no-tillage, crop-livestock-forestry integration, biological nitrogen fixation, dejects treatment, circular food systems, recovery and management of pastures and restoration of native vegetation, rotational grazing, integrated pest management, organic production, among others.

It is important to design and implement regulatory frameworks that promote biodiversity conservation at regional levels without placing undue burdens on farmers. In the same vein, the adoption of climate justice needs to be spearheaded in both developed and developing economies for inclusivity and desired impact.

3. YOUTH, EDUCATION, AND SKILLS

We advocate for the development of education programs that combine theoretical knowledge with practical hands-on training, specifically tailored to meet the unique needs of young farmers. Actively involving young farmers in the development of educational programs is vital to ensure their relevance and effectiveness.

These programs should emphasize the promotion of entrepreneurship and innovation, encouraging young farmers to adopt innovative farming practices, embrace technology, and engage in value-added activities that contribute to the growth and sustainability of their farms.

The utilization of information and communication technology (ICT) can play a significant role in facilitating access to information and technological tools that enhance young farmers' productivity. By leveraging ICT platforms and access to the internet, young farmers can gain access to valuable resources, market information, and innovative solutions to improve their agricultural practices.

Strengthening young farmers' organizations is also crucial, in local, regional and international scales, as they serve as platforms for collaboration, experience sharing, networking, and collective problem-solving. By empowering these organizations, an enabling environment is created for young farmers to access support, resources, opportunities for partnerships and market expansion.

4. FINANCE

Finance plays a vital role in agriculture. The work of farmers stands at the foundation of everyone's food supply, often lacking the necessary financial support and recognition. To encourage future generations to embrace their family farms or establish new ones, we require the following.

Improved business environment: farming needs to become a profitable venture in its own right. This can be achieved by enhancing market connections to increase profits and cover costs

throughout the entire value chain. Alternatively, financial assistance such as incentives, low-interest loans, and other forms of support can be implemented to facilitate farmers' investments.

Inclusive policies: It is essential to develop policies that consider the needs of small-scale farmers, women, youth (including planning and facilitating intergenerational integration), and minority groups. These policies should include subsidies, training programs, educational initiatives, and general support to ensure equal opportunities and participation. Targeted policies and payment mechanisms that recognize the provision of environmental services. This includes activities such as preserving native vegetation, protecting natural habitats, and participating in carbon markets. By promoting the well-being of our planet, these initiatives contribute to a sustainable future.

Strong representation through organizations: to address these challenges, it is crucial to have influential advocacy groups and lobbies that unite and represent all the aforementioned stakeholders. These organizations can champion the interests of farmers, push for inclusive policies, and advocate for the necessary financial support and recognition they deserve.

5. HEALTH / RELIEF, RECOVERY, AND PEACE

Agriculture is heavily impacted by climate change which jeopardizes food security. Adaptation measures need to be developed to ensure that food systems can better respond to these challenges, strengthen food resilience and promote a healthy global space.

Rural communities are extremely vulnerable to natural disasters. All measures directed at implementing emergency response in rural communities should give careful consideration to ensure that procedures are aligned with the particular needs of the community. These policies must also include guiding strategies to address potential migration (internal and international) issues which may emerge in the aftermath of disasters.

Keeping farmers and their communities safe and healthy can be challenging in such diverse physical, social, and economic environments.
Additionally, health is closely linked with nutrition and access to food supplies.

Farmers' capacity must be strengthened to enhance production and post-harvest practices to improve food safety at the initial stages of the value chain. We need to ensure that informative and educational resources are available to support balanced nutrition, without excess or deprivation, and support informed consumption of food. Exaggerated warnings on food's labels will not substitute poor nutritional education, nor will it reduce unhealthy eating patterns, yet would reduce performance of primary sector producers and threaten supply markets. We need to ensure that access to nutritional food remains a priority but maintain that food producers are not burdened with over-prescriptive regulations and policies.

A strengthened global partnership would facilitate the sharing of knowledge and resources to support rural communities that have been affected by adverse events, climate change, famine, and poor health.

The Leadership Programme: A Training within the Training

The Leadership Program is designed to support young leaders in their continuous growth of skills and capabilities essential for their roles within their farmers' organizations and communities.

As they embark on an advocacy-driven journey, the program enhances the students' soft skills and immerses them fully in the process of becoming the next-generation leaders in the agricultural sector.

Find below a detailed overview of the leadership modules and how they supported the advocacy pillar.

Who we are

Annalisa Maffey

Born in Rome, she lived and travelled in several countries in Far East Asia, Middle East, the Americas. A native Italian speaker with English as her second language, she also speaks Japanese, Spanish, French and Portuguese.

Having lived and worked in multicultural and multi-language environments she has developed a strong ability in communicating and bridging the gaps within teams, which she is now using in her training and coaching activity with teams and individuals.

She worked for over 25 years supporting business owners and visionaries in transforming ideas and expanding them into successful and innovative businesses.

The desire to combine her experience and her passion for personal development, human psychology, empowerment of teams and individuals and enabling professionals and companies to access their full potential led her to fully embracing her training and coaching business in 2015.

In 2018 Annalisa joined Robbins Research International as a coach and trainer and in 2020 she joined forces with Giada Bono to create a unique, well rounded and highly customized training experiences for their clients to create high performing teams,

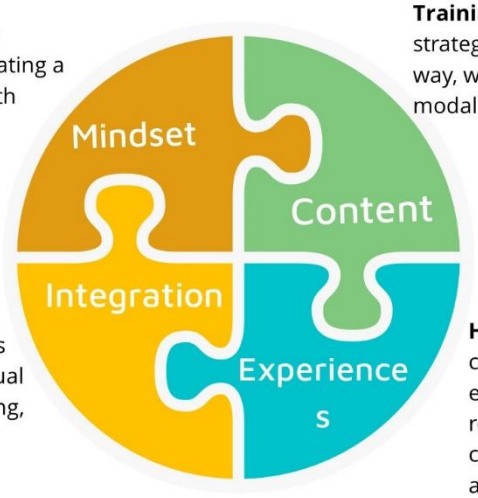
Giada Bono

Born in Biella, tech by training turned leader for the passion in human potential; after her first decade of corporate career focused on development and R&D she started her leadership career by leading the Global Dev and training department and then moving to manage an oversees unit.
Giada spent a considerable part of her adult life travelling and moved to India where she lead the Global Inhouse Center of Banca Sella Group in Chennai for over 11 years.
A multifaceted leader with competencies and experiences in technology, innovation and people,
She spearheaded intrapreneurship , change management and leadership development initiatives; specialized in organizational design and development over the course of two and half decades she shaped functions and initiatives in different geograpahies spanning across several departments.

Giada is a coach from 2008, she holds Neuroleadership and Stakeholder Center Coaching certificates, she is a Master practitioner in NLP and has several additional certifications from AMA and the most reputed international organizations.
She is currently engaged as a coach for Robbins Research and partners with Annalisa in crafting highly customized organizational development interventions to create high performance teams.

Method

Mindset oriented approach aiming at creating and integrating a powerful **Leader Identity** with empowering beliefs.



Training modules to teach concepts, tools and strategies in a simple and effective way, with high energy levels and interactive modalities.

Integration of concepts, tools and learnings through individual and team reflection and sharing, facilitated by trainers in a team coaching modality.

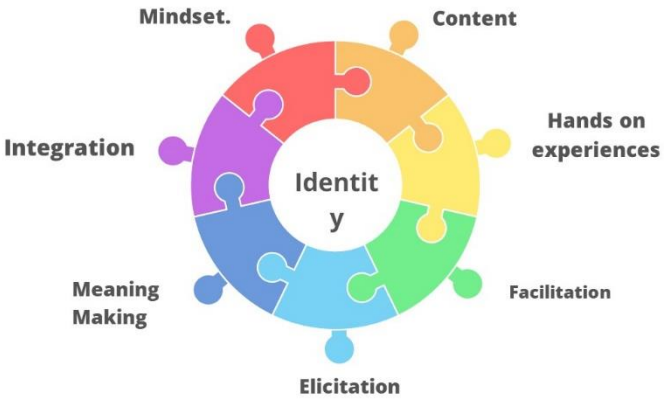
Hands on approach where participants can practice in a safe and protected environment real life experiences and reinforce learning through personal and collective knowledge and obtain visible and tangible results

Method

We have a **Mindset oriented approach** aiming at creating and integrating a powerful **Leader Identity.**

Our Training modules are coposed of:

- **Content,** where we teach concepts, tools and strategies in a simple and effective way, with high energy levels and interactive modalities.
- **Hands on Experiences**, where participants can practice learnings in a safe and protected environment. We have a real life approach and use experiences to reinforce learning through personal and collective knowledge and obtain visible and tangible results.
  Our motto is *"become while actively doing"*.
- **Debriefs,** designed to facilitate sharing and elicit insights and learnings, create new meanings and access collective intelligence.
- **Integration** happens throughout the process, as we constantly seed and apply all components of our "circular puzzle", while keeping the focus on the ultimate outcome of building innovative leaders identity-



Gymnasium 2023 Soft Skill Track Outcomes

- To equip young farmers with leadership skills and tools.
- To become innovative advocates in agriculture.
- To build and integrate a powerful leader identity
- To be solution focused and resourceful.
- To practice real life experiences in a safe and protected environment.
- To experience new ways of learning and facilitating that they can use and apply in their own communities and environments.
- To become aware of their own beliefs and strengths.
- To master peer learning and the power of collective and innovative intelligence.
- To create a strong bond among the participants and be fully engaged and supportive of each other.

Topics

For the Gymansium edition 2023 we designed a journey to acquire mindset and soft skills needed in political processes, followed by experience labs aiming at practicing the learnings

- **Module 1: Story Telling & Public Speaking (Online)**
  - Training topics:
    - Presence and State - using posture, voice and presence to show up in a powerful state.
    - How to create and share engaging content.
  - Labs: practice sessions on public speaking and story telling about water and in the occasion to the UN Water Conference.
  - Experience practice: Mini GymX Experience, delivering a speech in TedX style.

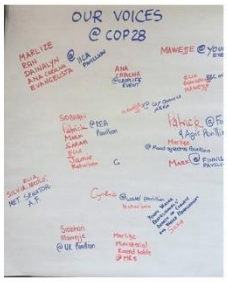
- **Module 2: Negotiation (Online)**
  - Training topics:
    - The 3 negotiating styles.
    - Match the 3 negotiation styles in communications.
    - Negotiation techniques
    - Planning & strategies for negotiations.
  - Labs: Real life scenarios on matters related to their learning journey > Negotiating and defining key messages on advocacy themes to represent Gymnasium Young Farmers position at COP 28.

- **Module 3: Networking (Online)**
  - Training topics:
    - Beliefs - what they are and how they impact the ability to network.
    - Tools for successful networking.
    - How to be a "conference commando".
  - Labs: Creating a RAP (Relationship Action Plan) to prepare to network actively and effectively with key people at COP28.

- **Module 4: Leadership and innovation (live in Dubai)**
  - Training topics:
    - Leadership identity.
    - Creating a Leadership identity.
    - Leadership vision and vision board.
    - Co-creating and innovating through Open SpaceTechnology.
  - Lab: Open Space Technology.
  - Experience: GymX at Cop28, delivering speeches at Cop 28.

Impact

BELOW ARE SOME IMPACT EXAMPLES IN THE FIRST 3 MONTHS AFTER COMPLETION OF GYMNASIUM EDITION 2023:



- **GFFA, Jan 2024 Young Farmers Forum at the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture - Dainalyn Swaby, Mawejje Harbert, Jamie Pepper, Ana Carolina Zimmermann, Katariina Latvia,** and **Leon Ranscht** actively participated with contributions drawn from personal farm experiences, playing a crucial role in shaping future global food policies, as they used their mediation and negotiation skills to draft the forum's official youth statement, demonstrating the outcomes of their gymnasium learning experiences.
- **UNEA assembly, Feb 2024 - Kemei Mark Kiprono** successfully negotiated for his organization's participation in the WFO 2024 task force regulations to work on the governance of WFO Young.
- **8th Global Meeting of the Farmers Forum in IFAD, Feb 2024 - Mawejje Harbert, Evangelista Chekera,** and **Marlize Grobbelaar** used their negotiation and storytelling skills to contribute to the event showcasing the impact of effective negotiation for youth in global agricultural discussions.
- **UNDFF - Evangelista Chekera** shared her innovative farming story during a technical workshop, urging stakeholders to support young farmers. She displayed excellent storytelling skills were clear in her outstanding speech showing the challenges and opportunities that youth face in family farming, and how she has been contributing to positive change, inspiring youth action.

SUCCESS STORIES AND INITIATIVES:

- **Jamie Pepper** is negotiating and **raising funds** within his organization to have their participation in the WFO 2024 general assembly, where youth will be a key topic.
- **Evangelista Chekera** has been negotiating within her organization, as the head of their youth branch. She aims at **replicating the Gymnasium program** at national level.
- **Silvia Caprara** used her networking skills to expand her engagement as a young farmer in Italy. Through her determination, she earned a position on the **board of directors of a bank foundation in Verona** and was selected to join an **expert group meeting on SDG2 organized by the United Nations**.

Media presence

- **Katariina Latva** leveraged her skills in networking, storytelling, and negotiation to become the **Chair of the MTK Young Farmers Select Committee for 2024.**
- **Mawejje Harbert** has been interviewed by **BBC World Service, https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/w172z0w5q6l6h8f**
- **Katariina Latva, Kemei Mark Kiprono** interview **Think Landscape - What does the future of agriculture look like?**
- **Evangelista Chekera and Elia Bettelli** interview at **BBC Radio 4 – Farming Today, - Young farmers at COP28**

Gymnasium at COP28

The quality of the content and of their delivery as well as their ability to network, granted Gymnasium students a lot of visibility at COP28, with a total of **21 participations to panels and speeches** both within the **GymX** they organised to bring young farmers voice to COP28 and with participation at **panels in various pavilions at COP28 they were invited to**.

Both during and after COP28, several Gymnasium participants got the attention of the media and have been interviewed by several **international press, tv and radio channels**, with the result of **making Gymnasium young farmers voice heard also outside of COP28**.

OST - Open Space Technology

Open Space Technology (OST) has been chosen as an innovation tool because of its flexibility and scalability.
By providing a platform for self-organization, collaboration, and creativity we created an experience that served as an experiment of the future of engagement.

.Through OST The Gymnasium Young Leaders :

- Took ownership of the most pressing matters for them.
- Brought together diverse perspectives and expertise.
- Created an exchange of ideas that transcended any kind of boundary or bias.
- Gained new awareness and perspectives.
- Thought creatively, brainstormed, experimented and challenged conventional thinking.
- Shared knowledge and expertise.
- Engaged in peer learning that brought insights and inspired new ideas, approaches and solutions.
- Practiced the principles of co-elevation and co-creation while networking and negotiating.

The themes that emerged from OST where:

- Evolution of their Farmer identity.
- Change of narrative around farmers and climate impact.
- Evolution of farming risk profile and the role that academia and FO have in the derisking process.
- Overall keys to farmers empowerment.
- Innovation potential and the impact of Data, digitalization and technology at large on farming and sustainable food systems.
- Success stories to prove that profitability and positive climate impact are compatible and can both be achieved.
- Role of the FO in the evolution and empowerment of the Agripreneurs

By creating this co-creation opportunity, GYM Leaders aligned, converged and integrated their perspective creating an even stronger foundation for their advocacy opportunities at COP and laying the foundation for WFO Young.

Leadership Identity

At the end of the program the team worked on creating their leadership identity and leadership vision board. They supported each other acknowledging the leadership traits they saw in theri peers, described their vision boards to the rest of the team and committed to show up as the leaders they are, committing to walking the talk and to holding each other accountable.

Leading with Purpose - Future Pacing

Crafting a leadership identity has been the cornerstone for every participant of Gymnasium, serving as the bedrock of the integration and impact-generating process.

This identity represented by their vision boards, acts as a guiding star, illuminating the path forward with clarity and purpose, while ensuring authenticity and providing stability during uncertain times.

While the soft skills track at the Gymnasium aspires to be a journey of self-discovery, self-awareness, and self-improvement, the transformative experience of "Find Your Why" in Dubai served as a catalyst for this profound process.

Through Simon Sinek's "Find Your Why" approach, participants delved deep into their core beliefs and aspirations, unveiling the guiding principles that drive their actions and decisions.

Aligning their personal "why" with their leadership vision not only provides a sense of purpose , meaning and direction, it also sets the base to inspires others to join them on their journey as they lead in their own environments.

Quotes from end of program survey

"I was a beginner in everything regarding advocacy, public speaking was a great way to start, to boost the energy with some competition. Training was clear and labs were very useful. It really gave me self-confidence, I loved how you focused on the mindset, how the same signs of anxiety can be turned into excitement. There is still a lot of room for improvement, but I think I have now all the tools I need to get there, I will for sure keep trying and accepting every opportunity to test and train! "

"Political processes involve working with people and to facilitating successful outcomes. Tools such as Public Speaking have enabled me to communicate effectively and positively articulating my issues."

"Maybe it's something you don't even think about, but bringing the focus to the potential of networking gave me the idea that it's not something lateral, it can be the core. I really saw huge results during the program with the students, at the GA, at COP and now with people from my org and also at work."

"I really enjoyed the process of this. I think it was very collaborative and a powerful way to combine the collective minds of the group. It's a process I will use again and I think valuable insights were gained. Probably a good tool for WFO Young"

"Was great see the POVS of the others. I think that we needed more moments like the one we had in person in Dubai, cause was a moment of true and honest confrontation in which was possible to share an idea and find together solutions or shared visions."

"I realised that one needs to be intentional about what they want. This will help in setting proper goals which one can follow through."

"Negotiation is key and in the recent GFFA I used these skills to get keywords close to the young farmers from Uganda into the declaration of the young farmers forum that is to be presented to the 70 government ministries . But also taught me how leave the table with a desirable option even if you have not got exactly what you really wanted."

"Negotiation Skills has enabled me understand the art of balancing interest and positively deliver successful outcomes"

"I Learnt that as a leader you need to be prepared hence you should always know and understand what is happening in your surroundings."

"Inspired my team by sharing my experience and method to run the event, speaking in front the people and they could see the opportunity in their career and helping to farmers."

"The skills learnt were very key at Cop-28 especially during speaking sessions. Preparation of the session before was a great assest since it enabled me to get ready, built confidence and enabled me to speak slower and express myself better."

"These skills coupled with networking are greater impact in my public speaking and leadership sphere."

"The entire training as a package prepared me to effectively participate at COP28 through team work, public speaking, and networking."

Creating a community

Working together both online and in person allowed the team to create a **strong bond** of young farmers across the globe that as of today are still **co-creating, supporting** each other, holding each other accountable for their continued growth, asking for insights and perspectives, **learning** from each other, **sharing best practices,** proactively looking for and sharing opportunities for themselves and their peer group and cheering each others success.
This is the start of a **powerful community of young leaders in agriculture**.

ENGAGEMENT AND ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITIES

Building upon its mission to amplify the voices of young farmers, the Gymnasium serves as a bridge for young farmers to convey their messages and initiatives within the global agricultural sphere. Through the collaborative efforts facilitated by WFO and its partners, students of the Gymnasium were given opportunities to be represented in numerous significant events over the course of the year, thereby significantly boosting young farmers participation within WFO and external policy processes. Please find below a comprehensive overview of the reinforced young farmers engagement in 2023, a result of the instrumental contribution made by the Gymnasium.

THE FAO GLOBAL YOUTH DIALOGUE ON SUSTAINABLE LIVESTOCK TRANSFORMATION

The **Global Youth Dialogue on Sustainable Livestock Transformation** was an event by The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) held from the 25th to 27th of September in parallel with the **Global Conference on Sustainable Livestock** in Rome, Italy, at FAO premises. It offered **a platform to global youth**, enabling them to exchange their experiences and ideas to advocate for **a sustainable future in the livestock sector**. The Dialogue brought together delegates from various backgrounds, ranging from academia to farming, and allowed young people to engage with diverse stakeholders. This effort facilitated the inclusion of youth as an integral and crucial part of the discussion.

Within the Dialogue, WFO was represented by **Ms Ana Carolina Zimmermann**, a WFO Gymnasium Alumna from the 2023 edition, **Ms Josiane Irakarama**, a Gymnasium Alumna from the 2020-2022 edition and Mr João Ricardo Morais, intern from the WFO secretariat. They participated in the Dialogues to ensure that the voice of farmers was heard during the discussions. Also, they actively contributed to creating a youth statement, a product of more than 10 hours of negotiation. The statement emphasized ideas of youth and collective efforts required to pave the path towards a better future for the livestock sector. Mr Joao Morais, who supports the WFO in building the **WFO Young** platform, had the opportunity to communicate the action points that emerged from the discussions during the Dialogue. He underlined the significance of providing capacity-building opportunities for young people involved in agriculture, enabling them to share their stories and expertise in international advocacy for a sustainable future. As an excellent example, he mentioned the **WFO Gymnasium**: a high-level capacity-building program that trains young farmers to become future leaders in the international agriculture sector.

THE WORLD FOOD FORUM

The **2023 World Food Forum (WFF)** flagship event took place in Rome, Italy, from 16 to 20 October at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) headquarters. This global gathering, powered by the World Food Forum, an independent, youth-led global network facilitated by FAO, aimed to advance actionable solutions for the transformation of Food Systems, emphasizing the power of intergenerational collaboration across various sectors, from policy and science to education and investment. A delegation from WFO actively participated in numerous panels and roundtables, bringing the global farmers' perspective to the forefront. Among the members of the delegation were two young WFO representatives, **Ms Josiane Irakarama**, Gymansium Alumna from the 2020-2022 edition from INGABO (Rwanda), and **Ms Silvia Caprara**, WFO Gymnasium Alumna from the 2023 edition ANGA (Italy).

The WFF was the occasion for the WFO delegation to advocate on behalf of the global farming community for a sustainable transformation towards more resilient and inclusive food systems, which must be first and foremost farmer-driven.

Furthermore, the **participation of young farmers into the debates**, with their innovative ideas, enthusiasm, and commitment to sustainable agriculture and food systems as well as to farmer-driven climate actions, was key to ensuring that governments, as well as all other relevant stakeholders, recognized the **need to actively involve young farmers as equal partners in such for a and policy processes**.

THE UNDFF YOUNG FARMERS ROUNDTABLE

Within the Scope of the **World Food Forum**, **Ms Josiane Irakarama** and **Ms Silvia Caprara** had the opportunity to share their experiences and advocate for the voices and actions of young farmers in the **Young Farmers Roundtable** organised by FAO within the framework of the **United Nations Decade on Family Farming**. This event provided them with a platform to present the unified perspective of young farmers on the global stage. Subsequently, an internal discussion was organized by the UNDFF to deliberate on the future steps for engaging youth in the Decade. As a follow up of this meeting, a **youth working group within the UNDFF** will be created and **young farmers voice will be represented through the Gymnasium Alumni**, among others.

PARTICIPATION IN THE GFFA

The **Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA)** stands as an important international conference discussing critical issues within global agricultural and food policies. Hosted annually by the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) in Berlin, Germany, it serves as a pivotal gathering for stakeholders worldwide.

This year's event, held from January 17 to 20, had the theme "Food Systems for Our Future: Joining Forces for a Zero Hunger World!" A notable feature of the GFFA was the active involvement of young farmers. For the eighth consecutive year, **a delegation of young farmers from the WFO Gymnasium program** participated in the **GFFA International Young Farmers Forum (YFF)**.

During the event, these young farmers collaboratively crafted a joint statement **addressing global food security, sovereignty, and the pressing issue of the generational renewal crisis facing the agricultural sector**.

PARTICIPATION IN IFAD FAFO

The **International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) Farmers Forum**, which meets every four years, in 2024 gathered over 80 leaders of farmers from across the globe. The primary objective of this year's assembly was to explore avenues for enhancing the partnership between IFAD and Farmers' Organizations to advance rural development collaboratively. The WFO delegation included **three young farmer representatives from the Gymnasium Program**: **Harbert Mawejje** from the Uganda National Farmers Federation (UNFFE), **Marlize Grobbelaar** from the Southern Africa Agricultural Initiative (SAAI) and **Evangelista Chekera** from the Zimbabwe Farmers' Union (ZFU). They supported WFO in mainstreaming the voices of farmers in this important endeavour.

ENGAGEMENT IN WFO YOUNG

The participation of **young farmers from the Gymnasium program** is integral to establishing **WFO Young**—a global community of young farmers within WFO. This initiative aims to empower youth across various levels and provide **a unified platform for their engagement in global agricultural policy spaces**. They have contributed to the development of this platform by sharing their ideas, participating in consultations, and engaging in collective constructive dialogue.

The Gymnasium at COP 28

The **GymX** was an integral component of the **WFO Gymnasium** capacity-building program and served as a vital element in the training curriculum. It aimed to enhance and equip the young farmers in the 2023 gymnasium cohort with the **necessary skills and knowledge to effectively advance their perspectives on agricultural issues and ideas in COP 28**.

Through a series of 5 high-level sessions, the young farmers were able to spearhead a transformative endeavour in GymX, continuously amplifying their voices in matters of food and agriculture. The sessions represented high-level panel discussions, fully prepared, conducted, and moderated by students, featuring speakers from the relevant sectors, including WFO members.

The first session of the series called *"Harvesting Hope: Empowering Youth for Agricultural Sustainability"* took place on December 3 in the Pavilion of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA). It was organised by Gymnasium participants, namely **Mr Ran Sineat** (CFAP), **Ms Marlize Grobbelaar** (SAAI), and **Ms Dainalyn Swaby** (JNRWP), who also moderated the discussion. Two students of the program, **Ms Ana Carolina Zimmermann** (CNA) and **Ms Evangelista Chekera** (ZFU), along with **Mr Curt Delice**, IICA Special Affairs Coordinator for the Caribbean Region, and **Mr Enrico Parisi**, National Delegate of Coldiretti Giovani Impresa, participated in the panel. The conversation centred around **sustainable practices promoting conservation and sustainable land usage**.

On December 9, followed the second session of GymX, titled: *"Youth as the Caretaker of Nature for Tomorrow"*. **Mr Mawejje Harbert** (UNYFA), **Ms Cynthia Tewete** (NSFAM), and **Ms Silvia Caprara** (ANGA), all young farmers of the Gymnasium program, led the discussion at the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Pavilion. The panel featured **Ms Betty Chinyamunyamu**, CEO of the National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi (NSFAM), and **Mr Magdi Batato**, Executive Vice President of Nestlé. The session focused on increasing awareness about **the significance of preserving and safeguarding nature, land, and oceans**, highlighting **the pivotal role of youth in this process**.

The 3rd GymX discussion, *"Can Agriculture as We Know It Financially Survive?"* took place on the same day in the Renewable Energy Association (REA) Pavilion. It was organised by **Mr Conrad Vanessen** (CFA), **Mr Patrick Kuyokwa** (FUM), and **Mr Elia Bettelli** (Coldiretti Giovanni), participants of the 3rd Gymnasium edition. The panel was joined by **Mr Keith Currie**, CFA President. Speakers delved into the **challenges young farmers encounter in acquiring financial resources for their businesses.**

The panel, *"Powering Change: Sustainability and the Future of Food"*, was held in the (REA) Pavilion on the same day. Young farmers led this discussion — **Mr Leon Ranscht** (BDL), **Mr Kemei Mark Kiprono** (KENAFF), **Mr Jamie Pepper** (NFF), **Ms Zunon Gbotta Linsay Sarah** (ANASEMCI) — alongside **Mr Paolo Di Stefano**, Head of the Coldiretti Office in Brussels. The panellists exchanged insights on the challenges, opportunities, and **innovative solutions that sustainable energy systems can offer to create a resilient future for agriculture**.

The last GymX session, titled *"Cultivating Resilience: Exploring the Interconnected Impact of Agriculture and Renewable Energy"*, also took part on the 9 of December. The session was organised and led by Gymnasium students, namely **Ms Siobhan Wakeling** (FED), **Mr Nicoló Bertorello** (Coldiretti Giovani Impresa), and **Ms Katariina Latva** (MTK). The panel engaged in discussions regarding **the potential of renewable energy** not only to help mitigate the impact of climate change on agriculture but also **to foster sustainable practices that safeguard the well-being of communities worldwide**.

On December 7, while COP 28 had a rest day, the WFO Gymnasium reached its pinnacle with the 3rd edition's Graduation Ceremony. It was attended by the program partners, including representatives from Bayer, **Ms Jennifer Crall**, Global Head Partnerships-Growers Engagement, and **Mr Mauricio Rodrigues**, Head of Bayer Crop Science, alongside **Mr Andreas Quiring**, Director at Andreas Hermes Akademie, who joined the ceremony remotely.

At this event, students shared feedback on their one-year journey, describing their experiences and the soft and leadership skills they acquired.

CONCLUSIONS

Throughout its seven-year existence, the Gymnasium has exemplified the significance of collaborative efforts among multiple stakeholders in ensuring the **active involvement of young individuals in promoting a more prosperous future for the agricultural sector**. The visionary nature of the program has yielded a substantial **impact** on the lives of over sixty youthful farmers from various parts of the globe, who are presently championing progress within their respective communities.

This pioneering initiative has paved the way for invaluable partnerships that support the interests of farmers, including the esteemed opportunity for one student per year to receive a full scholarship for participation in the one-year master's program on Food Law at LUISS university. Moreover, owing to this program, the selected young farmers have gained an extraordinary chance to engage in international events centered around agriculture, ultimately enabling them to actively contribute to ongoing negotiations, such as those related to the UN Food Systems Summit, Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA) in 2021 and 2022, the High Level Political Forum on the Sustainable Development Goals (HLPF), the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), the World Food Forum, UN Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028, among others.

The Gymnasium has fostered invaluable connections between young farmers from different regions and backgrounds. These connections not only enhance the farmers' perspectives but also **create a network of support and shared learning**. By incorporating diverse ideas and experiences, agricultural practices can become more diverse, adaptable, and inclusive. By empowering young farmers, promoting collaboration, and enabling participation in global discussions, these platforms drive positive change, innovation, and sustainability. The benefits extend far beyond the individual farmers themselves, with implications for the entire agricultural community and the world's food systems. **Investing in the capacity of young farmers is an investment in a prosperous and sustainable future for agriculture**.