

Commentary



The Role of the Youth in Enhancing Food Security: The untapped potential

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In the recent past youth leadership and empowerment is indeed gaining momentum in the development agenda of many governments and international development organizations. The fact that key organizations such as the African Union's Commission, United States Agencies and the United Nations have initiated programs to build youth capacities for quality and meaningful participation in development and decision making processes, means that the issue deserves serious attention by all [1]. Investing in youth development has been shown to have the potential to yield greater economic growth and social well-being, not only for today but also for the future.

Developing countries, most of which are within Africa are faced with challenges that can be attributed to failure to harness the enormous potential of science, technology and indigenous innovations in Africa [2]. Africa has, therefore, been crippled by poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition among other shortcomings. The ever increasing impact of climate change has only served to make things worse. It is, however, worth noting that the youth in Africa have shown a strong sense of will to soldier on, the will and determination to advance in education, research and development amidst difficult circumstances and hence the need to be hopeful. "Food security is a situation that exists when people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life" [3]. Whereas there exist many avenues through which the youth have tremendously contributed towards reduction of food insecurity, many challenges prevail. In Kenya for instance, many youths have migrated to the urban centres leaving most of the agricultural productivity to the older generation [4]. Development and adoption of new and improved technologies is required. This indeed sounds a bleak future for this sector unless more awareness and capacity building are geared towards youth development in the agricultural sub-sector. It is, therefore, important to develop a sustainable action oriented process with good training modules to ensure that the trained young professionals are ambassadors of technology leading to food security and safety.

References

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