



## YOUNG FARMERS' COALITION OF UGANDA

P.O. Box 3340, Kampala - Uganda

Mob: 0783 937496 /0700 388060

### ABOUT YOFACO

The Young Farmers Coalition of Uganda (YOFACO) is a legally registered umbrella body of young farmers in Uganda. Founded in September 2014, its mission is to: (1) advocate for an enabling environment that promotes youth involvement in profitable and sustainable agriculture for social economic transformation of Ugandan youth; and (2) promote a greater role for youth in commercial farming, value addition and agribusiness via enterprise development, linking members to markets, promoting financial and business management skills and engaging youth in the delivery of extension and advisory services.

*Vision* - To be the leading umbrella organisation in the transformation of agriculture and livelihood of vibrant and innovative young farmers in Africa.

*Mission* - To lobby and advocate for enabling environment that promotes youth involvement in profitable and sustainable agriculture for social economic transformation.

### Why Young Farmers Coalition of Uganda (YOFACO)

Currently, the agricultural sector in Uganda employs over 78% of Uganda's population, accounts for 53% of the national export revenue and contributes 24% of GDP. It has great potential to address youth unemployment currently at 83%. We also believe that agriculture can do much better if more youth are attracted given their natural vibrancy and creativity.

With the current population growth rate at 3.24% annually, total population expected to double in the next 20 years and youth continuing to shun agriculture, Uganda's food security is at risk. The Ugandan labor market is able to absorb only 80,000 new workforce entrants out of the 400,000 youth entering the labor market each year. Youth represent 83% of the country's unemployed. Yet youth engagement in agriculture is declining amidst rising youth unemployment levels. The country's ability to achieve its most strategic goals – wealth creation, poverty reduction, economic development and food security are all at risk if the youth potential in agriculture is not harnessed now.

Significant gains are possible from more active engagement of youth members of farm families; youth represent more than 50% of the total farm population, from which less than 10% are currently paid for their efforts. On-farm youth also face empowerment challenges; when working their parents' land, less than 5% of youth report being able to make decisions regarding work and

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crop cultivation. Access to finance is a particular youth challenge; their access is estimated to be only one third of other sector actors. While youth are more likely to have access to land in the North, they lack the capacity to prepare it and lack access to basic machinery including oxen, tractors and common agricultural tools.

### YOFACO CURRENT ACTIVITIES

#### **Block Farming Brings Youth Together.**

YOFACO is mobilising youth in agriculture via the use of block farming. This one-year project, funded by Feed the Future's Commodity Production & Marketing Activity (CPMA), targets 4,000 young maize and beans farmers in 10 districts across the four regions of Uganda. The project aims to establish a total of 160 block farms with 33 block farms already established in Mubende, Masindi, Oyam, and Lira. The initiative is to act as an example to inspire fellow young people to engage in agriculture.

The program includes training of youth in agribusiness skills and group dynamics, assisting members in forming block farm groups, and linking them to competitive markets and agro input dealers for genuine products and in this aspect YOFACO has successfully linked its members to Pearl Seeds for contract farming of maize and beans seeds.

Initial results of the program are promising. Over 9,200 farmers have been trained on group dynamics, leadership and governance as well as in seed multiplication systems and good agricultural practice (GAP). Two tons of Longe 5 maize, three tons NABE 4 & NABE 15, 600Kg of DAP and Urea, 21 sackets of Victory 72 wp, and 4 litres of Weed All herbicide have been given out to 33 young farmers groups under the project. A total of 180 acres of maize and 106 acres of beans foundation seed have been planted in Mubende, Masindi, Oyam and Lira.

#### **Practical Member Services: YOFACO'S Knowledge Exchange Program**

YOFACO has exposed its members to new agricultural opportunities through hands-on farm visits and farmer-to-farmer knowledge sharing.

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*YOFACO members at GLAD farm in Kapeeka*

### **Theme – Youth Inspiring Each Other - Coffee Night**

YOFACO organises monthly coffee nights where people come and taste different blends of coffee with the objective of increasing local coffee consumption. Successful young farmers use this opportunity to share experiences and an influential person is there to provide advice to the hundreds of young farmers who have attended these events. This has also been an effective way to increase YOFACO membership.



*Pictures at YOFACO coffee promotion evenings*

### **Talent Development**

In 2015, YOFACO put in place an initiative that focuses on the nurturing of talents of young farmers and agribusiness through sports – with the ultimate goal of creating business opportunities in the agriculture. This led to YOFACO winning the Uganda National Coffee Football Tournament, which came with several opportunities that included mass awareness, branding and exposure.

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### Financial Literacy

YOFACO understands that access to finance is important for youth in agriculture – but so is financial literacy. YOFACO is expanding young farmers' financial literacy capacity by partnering with GIZ to promote Financial Literacy among the young farmers in Uganda. This included, in 2015, (i) a TOT to train 24 YOFACO staff and members staff in Financial Literacy who are now training their farmers' VSLA groups all over the country; and (ii) financial literacy awareness campaigns including for the Muslim community. Two members of YOFACO have upgraded to certified financial literacy trainers recognised by bank of Uganda to further this cause of empowering young farmers with financial literacy skills.

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### **YOFACO and Climate Change**

YOFACO understands the risks to Ugandan agriculture posed by climate change and is currently promoting climate smart agriculture among school children. This has included the formation of 8 young farmer clubs in different secondary schools and delivery of on-farm trainings for producers of passion fruit and coffee. Three YOFACO members have also been trained as District Climate Change champions.



*YOFACO team promoting climate smart agriculture among the school children in Namutumba*

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