



MALABO  
MONTPELLIER  
FORUM

# 13<sup>TH</sup> MALABO MONTPELLIER FORUM

## YOUTH AHEAD:

**Policy Innovations to  
Create Opportunities  
for Young People  
in Africa's Agrifood  
Systems**



- 📅 February 14, 2024
- 📍 Kampala, Uganda & Online
- 🕒 9:00 – 13:30 (EAT)



MALABO  
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is jointly facilitated by



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The [Malabo Montpellier Forum](#) provides a platform to facilitate dialogue and exchange among high-level decision-makers on African agriculture, nutrition and food security to promote policy innovation using evidence produced by the [Malabo Montpellier Panel](#), a group of 18 leading African and international experts in agriculture, ecology, nutrition, and food security.

The Co-Chairs of the Forum are [H.E. Hailemariam Dessalegn Boshe](#), Former Prime Minister of Ethiopia, and [H.E. Dr. Assia Ben Salah Alaoui](#), Ambassador at Large to His Majesty King Mohamed VI of Morocco. The Forum meets twice a year, and every meeting is guided by a technical report prepared by members of the Malabo Montpellier Panel.

The theme of the Malabo Montpellier Panel's forthcoming report, which will be launched at the Malabo Montpellier Forum meeting on **February 14, 2024 in Uganda (and online)**, focuses on successful approaches, that is, institutional and policy innovations and programmatic interventions, among African countries to empower Africa's youth in the transformation of agrifood systems.

Africa's population mainly comprises youth, who also face high unemployment. Although the agrifood system provides numerous opportunities to generate income across the value chain, many youths cannot tap the opportunities partly because they lack the necessary knowledge and skills, perceive agriculture as labor-intensive and unattractive, and also due to volatile political and economic circumstances. Access to land and finance are large constraints for young women and men in rural areas.

There is a need for African governments to provide practical actions for enabling environments that support and facilitate young people to create or take on employment opportunities in the agrifood system. To support governments' efforts with evidence-based and practical recommendations, the Malabo Montpellier Panel prepared a report on successful and effective approaches to providing the youth with opportunities in agrifood systems. The report highlights areas of progress, presents opportunities for replication and scaling up successful interventions, and possible entry points for youths in generating income in agrifood systems.

The first part of the Panel's report analyses continental and global frameworks that guide countries' **goals related to youth** in the agrifood system. This is followed by a review of the challenges limiting young people's engagement in agrifood systems and then a demonstration of **opportunities to empower Africa's youth in agrifood systems**, focusing on providing market-relevant skills for decent employment and entrepreneurship. Additionally, examples of government action that resulted in positive youth outcomes are included.

The second part of the report includes four systematically identified country case studies: **Uganda, Ghana, Zambia, and Zimbabwe**, which have shown the most success and progress in empowering youth in agrifood systems. Each case study reviews the institutional and policy innovations and programmatic interventions contributing to advancing youth empowerment among the actors in their agrifood systems.

To supplement the findings in the report, the Malabo Montpellier Panel provided young people with a platform, the [African Youth in Agrifood Systems Forum](#) held on December 6, 2023, to capture their voices, aspirations, and demands within the context of agrifood systems transformation. The outcomes of the concluded youth forum are incorporated in an issue paper to be published and launched alongside the Malabo Montpellier Panel's main report. The Forum highlighted the challenges emanating from the stressful and frustrating interactions of unemployment, lack of economic opportunities, and conflict situations in a number of countries.

In the issue paper, the Forum puts forward a series of recommendations to African governments, including the need to create a business environment for enterprise creation and growth, youth engagement in public policy processes, and access to resources, quality education and skills such as vocational training and ICT. Increased investment and enrolment in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education would equip Africa to meet the demands of the transforming and rapidly evolving agrifood systems triggered mainly by the 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution.

The Malabo Montpellier Forum provides an opportune moment to reflect on challenges and opportunities for youth engagement in food systems and to draw a roadmap of action and support to African countries seeking to empower youth in close alignment with the African Common Position on Food Systems.

The Forum will be conducted in three parts: a technical part drawing on the findings and recommendations from the Panel's report and Youth Issue Paper, Reflections on the outcomes and lessons from the report and issue paper, and a high-level policy roundtable, composed of senior representatives from African governments, development partner agencies, youth organizations, and the private sector.

### **About the Malabo Montpellier Panel**

The Malabo Montpellier Panel convenes 18 leading experts in agriculture, engineering, ecology, nutrition, and food security. It aims to facilitate policy choices by African governments to accelerate progress toward food security and improved nutrition. The Panel identifies areas of progress and positive change across the continent and assesses what successful African countries have done differently. It identifies the institutional and policy innovations and program interventions that other countries can best replicate and scale. The related Malabo Montpellier Forum provides a platform to promote policy innovation; it uses the evidence produced by the Panel to facilitate dialogue among high-level decision-makers on African agriculture, nutrition, and food security. For more information, please visit: [www.mamopanel.org](http://www.mamopanel.org)





## Contacts

### For questions about the Forum and the Panel

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