




MALABO  
MONTPELLIER  
PANEL

# The Malabo Montpellier Panel African Youth in Agrifood Systems Forum

 December 6, 2023  
 Virtual Event

 10:00 AM GMT/ 12:00 PM CAT/ 13:00 PM EAT  
**Duration:** 2 hours and 30 minutes



Organized jointly by



**zef**  
Zentrum für  
Entwicklungsforschung  
Universität Bonn



**African Food  
Changemakers**

Nourishing Africa and Changing Global Narratives

## 1. Context

Training and educating young people to take up decent employment opportunities in agri-food systems is a political imperative for African governments, not only because of the contribution of agricultural growth in reducing poverty but also due to the alarming rise of un- and underemployed youth on the continent. Africa's growing urban population and middle classes demand more nutritious, varied, and processed/ready-to-eat food. This generates new jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities for young people through expansion along the African agribusiness value chain. A continent full of promise, Africa's agri-food transformation can be realized by catalyzing an entrepreneurial environment that starts on the farm coupled with the entrepreneurial spirit amongst its young population.

With carefully crafted skill development programs and investments, African countries can turn the "youth bulge" into a demographic dividend. It is, therefore, crucial to ensure that more young people are equipped with the relevant knowledge and skills to harness the opportunities within each segment of the agri-food system. Additionally, African governments need to provide enabling environments that support and facilitate young people to create or take on employment opportunities in the sector. This could result in decent and stable employment or entrepreneurship opportunities for young people, contributing to national and regional economic development.

Cognizant that education and skills are key factors for the successful integration of youth in the agrifood systems industry, the Malabo Montpellier Panel will be publishing its next report with a focus on employment opportunities for youth in agrifood systems. The report will draw attention to fields of innovations that are rapidly evolving worldwide and where Africa can adapt the innovations to fit the local context. Africa has a real opportunity to focus its policy and investment towards increasing youth enrolment in STEM education, utilizing informal approaches for training in agri-food systems, and establishing more ICT infrastructure for increased accessibility to ICT technologies. This would equip Africa to meet the demands of the transforming and rapidly evolving agri-food systems largely triggered by the 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution.

The report includes four systematically identified country case studies that have shown the most success and progress in terms of empowering youth in agrifood systems.

## 2. Aim of the Support Function by the Malabo Montpellier Panel

The proposed Youth Forum aims to provide a platform to capture the voices, aspirations, and demands of African youth within the context of agrifood systems transformation. The proposed approach to realizing the above objective is to organize a set of activities implemented by the Malabo Montpellier Panel. These activities will culminate in the publication of its next flagship report in February 2024 and the Malabo Montpellier Forum:

- » **Online Forum:** The Youth Forum provides a platform for a frank exchange on the barriers and opportunities as well as on possible entry points, policy and institutional innovations, and mutual learning. The Forum will take place on 6 December 2023 and facilitate an in-depth exchange between 15-20 invited young Africans representing different stakeholder groups within the agrifood system (scientists, entrepreneurs, farmers etc.) and members of the Malabo Montpellier Panel. The outcomes of the Forum will feed directly into the report by the Malabo Montpellier Panel.
- » **Survey Tool:** To capture the views and opinions of a larger constituency, a survey will also be shared with additional youth. The results of the survey will be analyzed and will feed directly into the report by the Malabo Montpellier Panel.

- » **Advocacy Support:** A few select youth will be supported to produce an issue paper highlighting recommendations to African governments. Particular emphasis will be placed on the need to create an enabling environment for youth engagement in public policy processes, access to resources, skills, and STEM education. This paper will be published alongside the report by the Malabo Montpellier Panel and launched at the Malabo Montpellier Forum.
- » **Flagship Report Launch at the Malabo Montpellier Forum:** The 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Malabo Montpellier Forum will hence take place in February 2024 to accommodate the above set of activities. Youth will be invited to actively participate in the meeting and shape the discussions.

### 3. Contact Details

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### 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).



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