



WORLD
FOOD
FORUM

GLOBAL
YOUTH
ACTION

GOOD FOOD FOR ALL, TODAY AND TOMORROW

Global Youth Engagement

Highlights from the
World Food Forum
International Youth
Day marathon



Table of Contents

01 Introduction

02 Highlights from the marathon

2.1 Africa

2.2 Asia and the Pacific

2.3 Europe and Central Asia

2.4 Latin America and the Caribbean

2.5 Near East and North Africa

1. Introduction

On 12 August 2024, the World Food Forum (WFF) celebrated International Youth Day and took its commitment to transforming global agrifood systems to new heights with a remarkable 24-hour marathon of youth-driven regional events. Spanning 21 countries, the WFF and its National Chapters organized 18 impactful events showcasing young people's power, unity and creativity in tackling the pressing challenges of our agrifood systems. Through dynamic discussions, innovative solutions and shared experiences, these global efforts underscored youth's pivotal role in driving the transition toward more sustainable, resilient and inclusive agrifood systems.

Throughout the day, young leaders from across the globe came together to define local priorities, craft policy recommendations and celebrate various impactful activities, including the launch of the National Chapter in Bhutan.

Another highlight of the marathon was the Youth20 (Y20) Side Event in Brazil, hosted in collaboration with the [Y20 Engagement Group](#). This session brought together local youth to contribute their perspectives to the upcoming G20 Leaders' Summit in Rio de Janeiro, offering a crucial platform for young Brazilians to voice their views on reducing global hunger and poverty. The outcomes of this session will directly influence Y20's contributions to the global process.

In Kenya, the [Pre-Local Conference on Youth](#) (LCOY) Side Event provided a unique space for young people to discuss the interlinked issues of agrifood systems and climate change. At the [Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations](#) (FAO) headquarters in Rome, the WFF National Chapter Italy held its first event, focusing on mobilizing youth-led organizations to establish a national youth agrifood platform under the theme "Collective Action: Italy's National Chapter as a Catalyst for Youth in Agrifood Governance."

Meanwhile, in Ecuador, a vibrant youth fair hosted by the FAO Country Office brought together young professionals from various agrifood sectors to network and showcase innovative solutions with significant local impact.

These events collectively highlighted the voices, perspectives, innovations and experiences of young people, playing a crucial role in shaping local and regional priorities. The WFF remains dedicated to empowering and investing in youth-driven research and innovation, ensuring that the next generation continues to lead the charge toward a more sustainable and resilient food future.

2. Highlights from the marathon

2.1. Africa Region

GAMBIA



On International Youth Day, the WFF National Chapter in Gambia organized dynamic field visits that highlighted the crucial role of youth in agriculture. The day was a celebration of young agriculturalists, focusing on their contributions to the agrifood system and the importance of their involvement for sustained economic growth and global food security.

These visits provided a firsthand look at the innovative work being done by young farmers. Observing their efforts, participants gained insight into the challenges these young agriculturalists face and the successes they have achieved. The visits also served as a platform to offer encouragement and highlight the significance of youth involvement in agriculture, not just as a career but as a critical component of regional cooperation and economic resilience.

Engagement continued with interactive sessions, where young agriculturalists were invited to discuss their experiences and explore opportunities for growth within the sector. These conversations were rich with ideas on improving agricultural practices and accessing available resources. The sessions emphasized that youth involvement in the agrifood system is crucial to ensuring global food security.

GHANA



In an exciting and dynamic event hosted by the WFF Ghana National Chapter, senior high school students from [Accra Academy](#) were engaged in a thought-provoking exploration of “The Role of Ghanaian Students in Sustaining the Agrifood System.” This vibrant gathering emphasized the crucial role that young people can play in revolutionizing agricultural sustainability and addressing youth unemployment in Ghana.

The event kicked off with an interactive series of workshops on sustainable agriculture, nutrition and food security. Students had the chance to dive into practical sessions with local farmers, experts and young entrepreneurs to discover exciting career opportunities in agriculture.

Alberta Nana Akyaa Akosa, Founder of [Agrihouse Foundation](#) and the Ghana National Chapter Lead, underscored that with the right platform, resources and empowerment, youth can drive the change to make agrifood systems sustainable. Enyonam Manye, a renowned Ghanaian journalist and host of *The Ghanaian Farmer TV Show*, spoke about leveraging social media to enhance the agrifood sector. Her call to action highlighted how social media can be a powerful tool for students to promote agricultural produce and potentially create new livelihood opportunities.

Anthony Aidoo, Chairperson of the Ghana National Chapter Steering Committee, stressed the need to cultivate a passion for agriculture among young people from an early age. Aidoo emphasized that the success of Ghana's cash crop sector, which significantly contributes to the nation's gross domestic product, hinges on the active involvement of today's youth. His vision for a thriving agricultural future underscored the importance of empowering the next generation to ensure the continued growth and sustainability of the sector.

KENYA



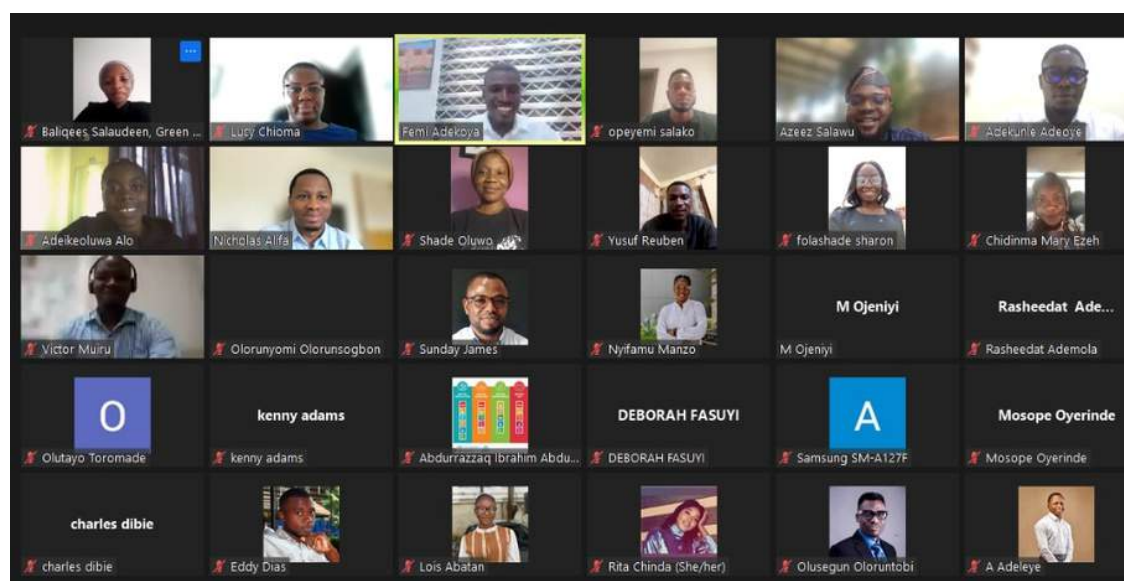
For International Youth Day, Kenyan youth seized the spotlight through their active participation in the LCOY Kenya. Organized by Fridays for Future Kenya and the Society for International Development under [the official Children and Youth Constituency of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change \(YOUNGO\)](#), this event served as a powerful platform for young climate advocates to shape discussions on climate action, policy development and sustainable practices, aiming to influence both national and global agendas.

A highlight of the LCOY Kenya 2024 was the pre-LCOY event held in Nairobi on 12 August, timed to coincide with International Youth Day. Organized in collaboration with the United Nations Food Systems Coordination Hub and the WFF, this event focused on the theme "Empowering Kenyan Youth for Sustainable Food Systems and Climate Resilience", underscoring the vital role of youth in driving sustainable food systems and climate action in Kenya and beyond.

The Pre-LCOY event was designed to create a space for young people to share ideas, collaborate on innovative solutions and draft a youth statement that addressed the critical nexus between climate change and agrifood systems.

This statement emphasized the need for stronger youth involvement in climate and food systems policymaking, calling on governments and international organizations to prioritize the voices of young people in these critical areas. The statement also highlighted the importance of integrating sustainable practices into all aspects of food production and distribution, as well as the need for increased support for youth-led initiatives that promote climate resilience. The outcomes of these initiatives are expected to have a lasting impact as participants carry forward their insights and advocacy to regional and global forums like the 2024 United Nations Climate Change Conference, contributing to the broader movement for a sustainable and resilient future.

NIGERIA



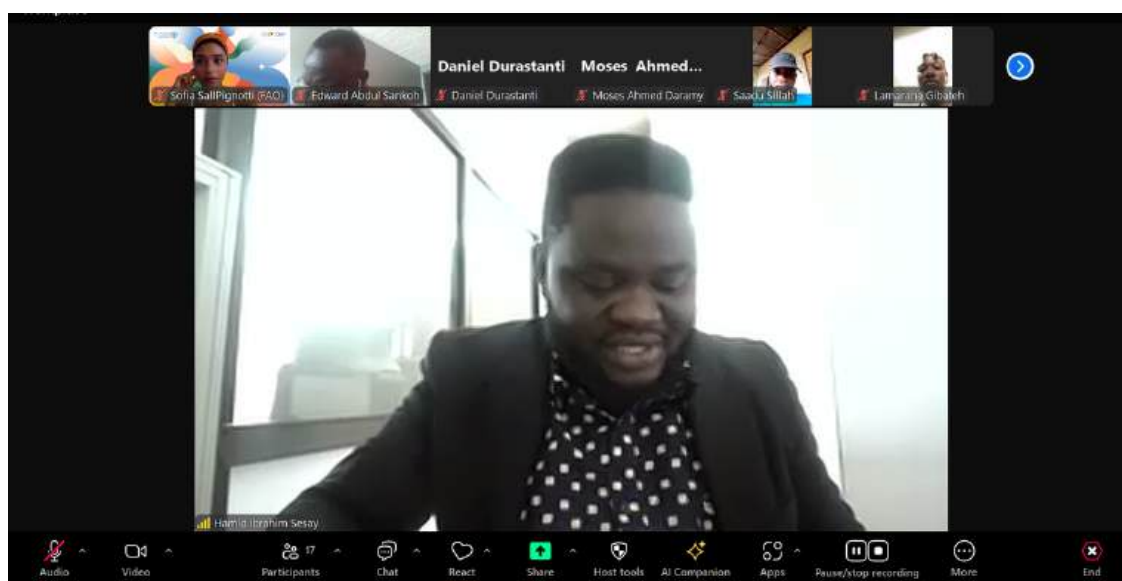
The WFF Nigeria National Chapter's exciting celebration for International Youth Day centered on the theme "Youth-Driven Solutions for a Resilient and Sustainable Nigerian Agrifood System." The event explored how young people can drive innovations and practical solutions to enhance Nigeria's agrifood systems.

The panel discussion was a captivating centerpiece of the event, bringing together a wealth of expertise and fresh perspectives on transforming Nigeria's agrifood systems. Chidimma Ezeh, the visionary behind [FarmCAS](#), passionately highlighted the need for profitability and fairness in rural development. It was an engaging opportunity to showcase practical solutions and highlight the crucial role of youth in building a more resilient and sustainable future for agriculture in Nigeria.

Nicholas Alifa, a dedicated research assistant at the National Centre for Food Manufacturing, ignited excitement with his focus on innovation in food product development and safety. He urged the audience to explore research opportunities and enhance local food products. Also, Afeez Adeoye, a policy advocate and consultant for [Green Republic Farms](#), emphasized the crucial role of developing local dairy production. Baliqees Salaudeen-Ibrahim, a climate-smart farmer and Founder of Green Republic Farms, shared inspiring stories of how community involvement has fortified farm security and driven success. Her experience underscored the transformative power of engaging local communities.

Each panelist offered valuable insights, weaving together the themes of innovation, community involvement and supportive policies to paint a vibrant picture of a more resilient and sustainable agrifood system.

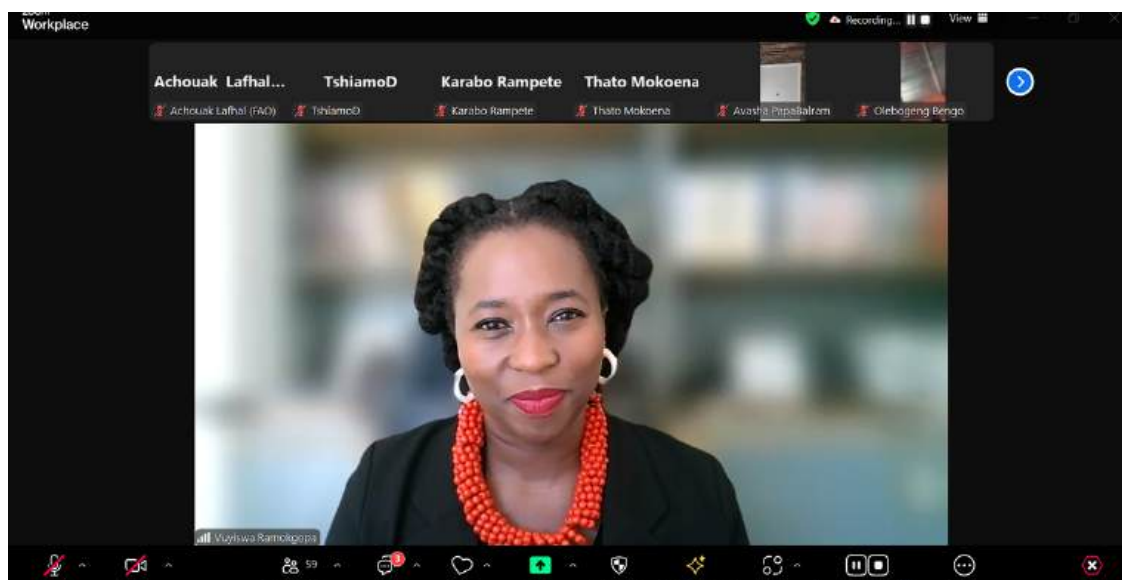
SIERRA LEONE



On August 12 2024, the WFF Sierra Leone National Chapter hosted an impactful event titled "Youth in Action: Shaping Solutions for Food Insecurity and Climate Challenges". This event was designed to empower young leaders to take an active role in addressing the pressing issues of food security and climate change. The conference brought together a diverse group of participants, including young people, experts, decision-makers and organizations, fostering a collaborative environment to share information, develop innovative solutions and strengthen cooperation across sectors.

The event included keynote remarks from Hamid Sesay, a programme support specialist with the FAO Sierra Leone Country Office. Sesay emphasized the crucial role of young leaders in shaping the future of food security and climate resilience in Sierra Leone. He highlighted the importance of involving youth in decision-making processes, noting that their perspectives and innovative ideas are vital for creating sustainable solutions that can address the unique challenges faced by the country.

SOUTH AFRICA



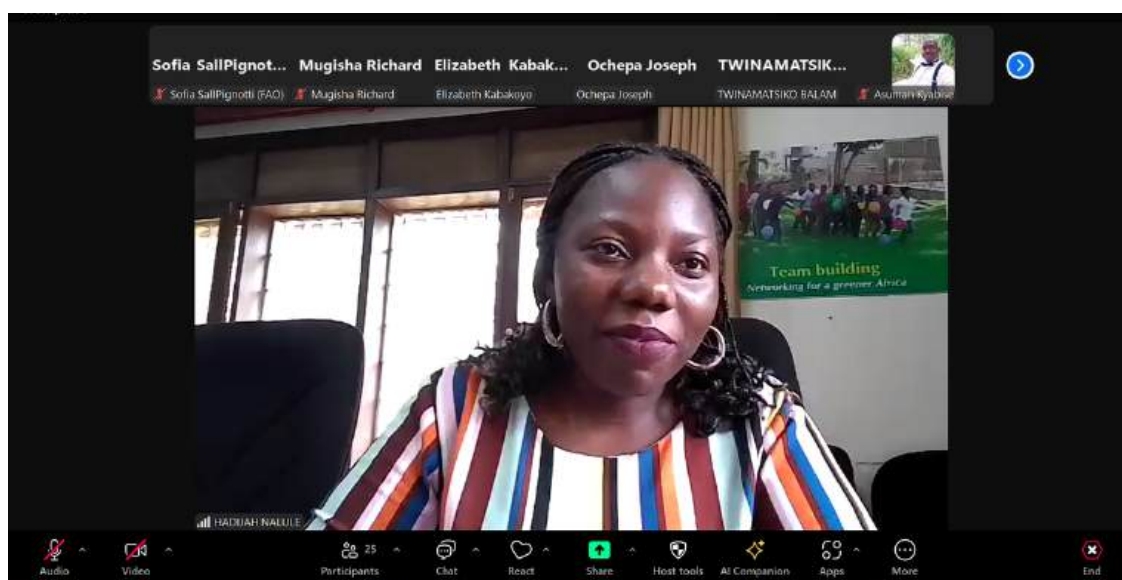
The WFF South Africa National Chapter, currently in its formative stages, rheld a workshop focused on empowering youth to shape the future of agrifood systems. The workshop's core mission was to empower young agricultural entrepreneurs by developing youth-owned and managed enterprises.

This initiative aimed to make these enterprises commercially viable and ready for export, thereby addressing unemployment and poverty while strengthening the security of agrifood systems across South Africa.

In her keynote address, Vuyiswa Ramokgopa, Member of the Executive Council for Agriculture and Rural Development and National Chairperson of RISE Mzansi, emphasized the importance of youth and women's engagement in agriculture. Her remarks highlighted the need for ongoing dialogue between young people and policymakers to foster knowledge sharing, innovation and effective information dissemination within the sector.

Women are pivotal in driving innovation, ensuring sustainability and promoting social justice within the agrifood systems of South Africa. The event underscored the need to address the challenges faced by women farmers, including barriers to inclusion and decision-making. By focusing on their empowerment, the workshop aimed to transform ideas into actionable solutions that support the full participation of women in agriculture.

UGANDA



The WFF Uganda National Chapter, still in its development phase, hosted a pivotal dialogue to celebrate International Youth Day. This event aimed to engage and empower young people in driving innovation, entrepreneurship and ideas focused on enhancing bio food safety.

The initiative sought to unite youth, stakeholders and experts to explore innovative solutions, address challenges and promote collaboration towards a healthier, more sustainable and resilient food future.

A central feature of the event was a dynamic panel discussion, showing youth innovators in bio food safety. The panelists shared their groundbreaking solutions and insights, demonstrating the vital role of young innovators in advancing food safety and security. The discussion addressed current challenges and explored opportunities for fostering collaboration among various stakeholders.

ZIMBABWE



The WFF Zimbabwe National Chapter, in collaboration with the FAO Country Office, hosted an impressive event celebrating the power of youth and digital innovation. The event highlighted the vital role of young leaders in transforming Zimbabwe's agrifood systems and featured partnerships with the Green Jobs for Rural Youth Employment project and the FAO Digital Villages Initiative.

The event included a presentation by the African Youth Agripreneurs platform, highlighting youth entrepreneurship in African agriculture. Caesar Vulley from FAO Regional Office of Africa delivered the main address on "Youth Digital Pathways for Sustainable Development," stressing the importance of youth in transforming agrifood systems. The Deputy FAO Representative in Zimbabwe concluded with remarks on FAO's continued support for youth in this transformation.

2.2. Asia and the Pacific Region

BANGLADESH



On International Youth Day, the WFF Bangladesh National Chapter team delivered an inspiring video that highlighted the transformative power of youth in shaping agrifood systems through technology and digital tools. The video showcased innovative approaches and the potential impact of digital solutions on agriculture. It emphasized how young people are leveraging technology to drive advancements in food production, enhance sustainability and address global food challenges. By featuring practical examples and success stories, the video illustrated the significant role of youth in pioneering new methods and solutions within the agrifood sector, underscoring their potential to lead meaningful change.

BHUTAN



On International Youth Day, Bhutan launched its WFF National Chapter, an event that underscored the country's commitment to empowering its youth in the agrifood sector. The launch, which drew over 100 enthusiastic young participants, was a centerpiece of the National Youth Symposium – a dynamic two-day event organized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock in close collaboration with FAO. With over 200 attendees, including youth, government officials, UN representatives and local entrepreneurs, the symposium became a vibrant platform for dialogue and innovation.

The event highlighted the essential role that young people play in the future of agriculture and food systems. It was an inspiring showcase of how youth can drive policy development, enhance essential skills and spearhead entrepreneurial ventures that address the pressing challenges of today's agrifood landscape.

A standout feature of the event was the introduction of the Bhutanese version of the ["X \(Cross\)" UN Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) action card game. Developed by the [Kanazawa Institute of Technology](#) in Japan, in partnership with FAO Bhutan and the newly launched National Chapter, this online game offers a creative approach to understanding and tackling the trade-offs inherent in achieving the SDGs within the agrifood sector. The game encourages participants to think strategically about how different actions can contribute to – or detract from – the broader goals of sustainable development, making it both an educational and engaging tool.

Bhutan's Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Yonten Phuntsho delivered a powerful message, urging young people to see themselves as agents of positive change. He encouraged youth to explore creative agrifood business opportunities and to tap into the substantial support offered by the government. His words resonated with the audience, reinforcing the idea that the future of Bhutan's agrifood sector is in the hands of its youth; youth who are ready to innovate, lead and make a lasting impact.

CHINA



For this special event, the WFF China National Chapter, in collaboration with the [Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences](#), organized an event, titled "Youth Action for Rural Revitalization", aimed to inspire young people to return to rural areas, engage in agriculture, or start their own enterprises. It highlighted how technology can transform the future of agriculture and contribute to solving global agrifood challenges.

The event featured five successful entrepreneurs and influencers from the rural sector who shared their experiences and insights. The gathering sought to raise awareness about the WFF's mission and the current state of rural development in China. It provided a platform for discussing strategies to address the global food crisis and promote rural revitalization.

The event also marked the launch of the Shanghai Youth Commons, a collaborative platform designed for youth and youth organizations to exchange ideas, share insights and organize various activities.

Supported by Beyond the City, a social enterprise focused on bridging the education gap between rural and urban areas, the event underscored a collective commitment to empowering the next generation and driving positive change in rural communities.

NEPAL



The WFF Nepal National Chapter, in partnership with PYT Madesh, FAO Nepal and the Nepal network of International Association of Students in Agriculture and Related Sciences (IAAS) LC Bardibas, hosted an event titled "Driving Youth Towards Sustainable and Digital Agri-Innovation". The event took place at the [College of Natural Resource Management](#) in Bardibas, Mahottari and was conducted in a hybrid format, combining both virtual and in-person sessions.

The session offered insightful presentations on digital agriculture in Nepal, highlighting both opportunities and challenges. Key initiatives like the Digital Soil Map and the Agricultural Market Information System were showcased, stressing the importance of inclusive, gender-sensitive digital solutions in a female-dominated sector.

After the virtual discussions, the event moved to an interactive in-person group competition. Teams pitched innovative project ideas to address local agricultural issues, with the standout proposal focusing on rainwater harvesting for irrigation, offering a practical and sustainable solution to water scarcity.

2.3. Europe and Central Asia

ITALY



At FAO headquarters in Rome, a groundbreaking event marked the first appearance of the WFF Italy National Chapter. The initiative aimed to ignite a movement of young leaders dedicated to transforming Italy's agrifood systems.

The event kicked off with an inspiring presentation emphasizing the role of the National Chapter as a unifying force for youth-led initiatives across the country. The event featured a rich agenda that included panel discussions, interactive design sprints and guided networking sessions. Breakout rooms allowed for in-depth brainstorming on stakeholder engagement, decision-making and entrepreneurial opportunities.

A recurring theme throughout the event was the importance of inclusive leadership. As Victor Muiru, Head of the Local Action Team at WFF, noted, "There is power in numbers. When we bring people together, we can achieve so much more". This sentiment was shared by Catlin Breed from the WFF Ireland National Chapter, who stressed that legitimacy in leadership also comes from the support and trust of peers working in the field.

The event underscored the necessity of connecting young leaders with policymakers to ensure that youth voices are heard and valued in decision-making processes. Participants were encouraged to move beyond dialogue and towards actionable steps that can create real change in their communities.

2.4. Latin America and the Caribbean

ARGENTINA



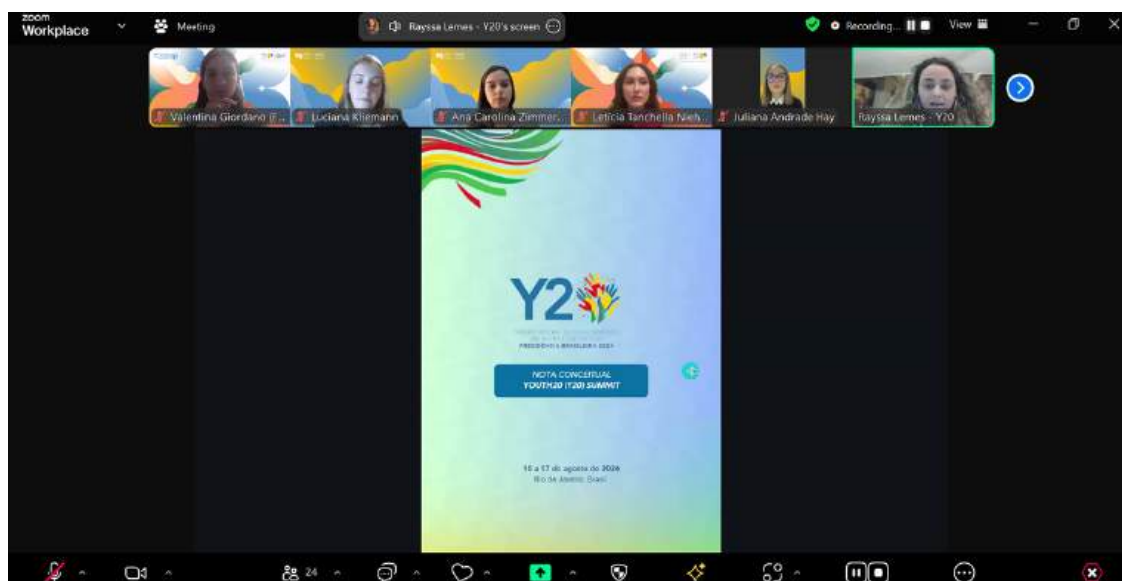
Held on International Youth Day, the “Connecting Youth: Engaging the Next Generation in Agrifood Systems” event was a dynamic and engaging platform dedicated to empowering young leaders in the realm of agrifood systems. This gathering provided a unique opportunity for young voices from various backgrounds to converge and discuss their pivotal role in creating a more sustainable and equitable food future.

Stephanie Cabovianco, Co-leader of WFF Argentina National Chapter, opened the event with a compelling introduction that framed the day’s discussions on youth-driven agrifood system transformation. From the [International Fund for Agricultural Development](#), Julián Astarloa highlighted the vital role of strategic alliances in advancing food systems. He demonstrated how partnerships among international organizations, governments and youth can drive significant change, supported by real-world examples of successful collaborations and resource mobilization.

Lucía del Barrio, representing the [National Institute of Agricultural Technology](#) in Mendoza and the [Sociedad Argentina de Agroecología](#), highlighted the vital role of agroecology and biodiversity in creating resilient and sustainable agrifood systems. She emphasized that integrating these ecological practices is essential for longterm effectiveness.

Building on this, Maximiliano Beltrán, a committed advocate for sustainable agriculture, shared the inspiring success story of the Munro Garden in Buenos Aires. His narrative demonstrated how urban agriculture initiatives can impact communities meaningfully, motivating youth to adopt sustainable practices and contributing to a healthier and more sovereign food future. Together, their insights underscored the importance of ecological integration and community engagement in advancing a sustainable agrifood system.

BRAZIL



The WFF Brazil National Chapter organized a side event as part of the Y20 initiative, focusing on the transformative role of Brazilian youth in addressing global agrifood challenges. Held under the themes of combatting hunger, poverty and inequality, alongside climate change, energy transition and sustainable development, the event placed youth at the center of the conversation, exploring how local solutions can drive significant change on a global scale.

The event was part of the Youth20 engagement group's [Regional Dialogues](#), designed to foster collaboration on [G20](#) Social priorities. Insights from this event will be compiled and presented by the Brazilian delegation at the Youth Engagement Group Summit. Key figures like Y20 Organizational Secretary Rayssa Lemes, and Letícia Tanchella Niehues from the WFF opened the event, emphasizing the crucial role of youth leadership in sustainable food practices.

The event featured panels on various aspects of youth involvement in food systems. Ana Carolina Zimmermann from the [Confederation of Agriculture and Livestock of Brazil](#) Youth Commission led a panel on rural leadership in agricultural debates, while Phillippe Diogo Alves da Silva, Y20 delegate for combating hunger, poverty and inequality, discussed youth-driven initiatives against hunger. Other panels included insights from Julia Cristina Campos on integrating young professionals into agribusiness and Nátali Maidl de Souza on academic contributions to agronomy. Elienai Trindade from Cooperacaju Network focused on reducing waste in cashew production to increase its economic value. Gabriel M. Amorim, representing the WFF Brazil National Chapter and serving as National Director of [IAAS Brazil](#), delivered a key presentation on engaging youth in Brazil's food systems.

Throughout the event, the challenges of increasing rural youth participation in policy debates were highlighted, along with the need for greater empathy and dialogue within agrifood systems. A significant proposal emerged to develop a youth position paper for the 2023 United Nations Climate Change Conference, aiming to influence global discussions on food security and sustainability.

ECUADOR

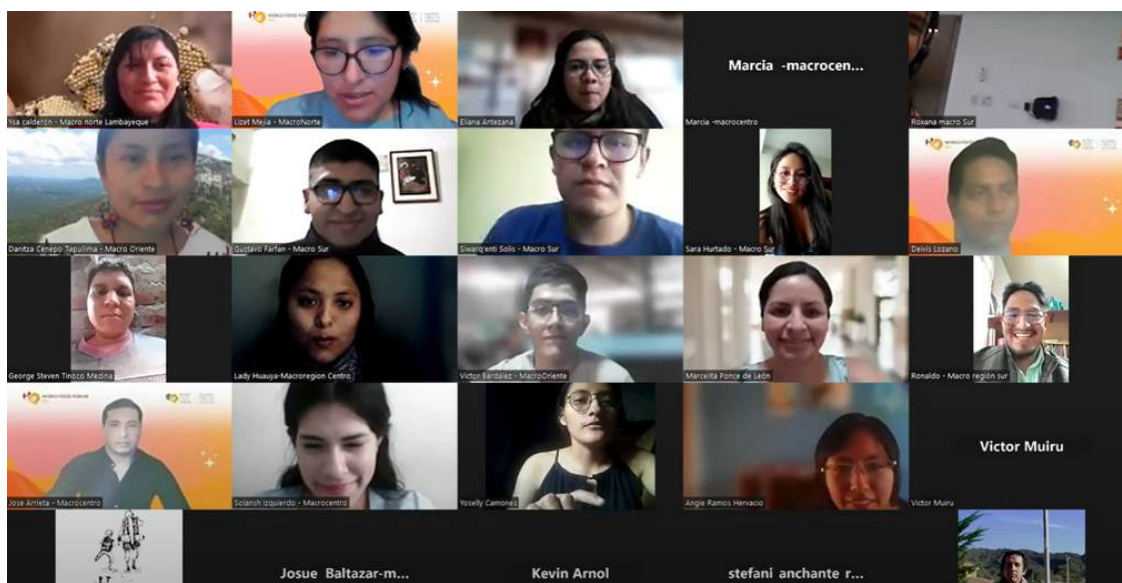


The WFF Ecuador National Chapter organized the Youth Fair for Food Security, a vibrant event designed to highlight and advance youth-led initiatives in sustainable agriculture, cultural enrichment and innovation. Held at Spacio Cultural in Quito, this gathering provided a dynamic opportunity for young entrepreneurs to present their projects, share visionary ideas, and contribute to a more sustainable and equitable future.

Youth participation was a central focus of the fair, providing young entrepreneurs with the opportunity to present their projects and initiatives to a diverse audience. Dedicated networking spaces facilitated the exchange of ideas, experiences and contacts, promoting collaboration and strengthening networks among those committed to food security and sustainable development. The fair welcomed substantial engagement from UN agencies, including FAO Ecuador and the [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization \(UNESCO\)](#), whose involvement underscored the event's importance and reinforced the global commitment to sustainable development and youth engagement.

The event also celebrated cultural enrichment through a variety of activities, including food, music, dance and artistic performances. These cultural events highlighted the community's diversity and promoted social cohesion and well-being.

PERU



On International Youth Day, the WFF Peru National Chapter hosted an engaging and inclusive event titled “New Voices, New Solutions: Youth in Agrifood Systems”. This gathering aimed to spotlight the pivotal role of young leaders from Peru’s rural and urban areas in shaping political discourse and enhancing local food systems.

The event kicked off with a video presentation that showcased the significant contributions of Peruvian youth towards developing equitable and sustainable food systems. Following this, a trust-building activity led by the WFF team created a sense of community among participants from diverse backgrounds.

Jose Luis Zevallos Anfossi, an agroecologist with a background in Agrarian Economics and Philosophy, led a reflective journey on the importance of agroecological systems. He emphasized how these systems integrate into today's globalized world while preserving local cultural practices. Christian Florencio, an engineer and project coordinator from Ancash with DIACONIA, prompted discussions on the role of food in daily life and decision-making. He guided participants through the entire food system, from production to consumption, to raise awareness about how food reaches our plates. Javier Condori Catañeda inspired attendees with his insights into urban agriculture in Lima, stressing the need to reclaim urban spaces for farming as a vital component of life.

Overall, the event effectively amplified the voices of young leaders, fostered connections between rural and urban youth and generated actionable insights for improving their involvement in decision-making processes related to food systems.

2.5. Near East and North Africa Region

EGYPT, MAURITANIA AND QATAR



The event, "How Can Youth Transform Agrifood Systems in the NENA Region?" was a high-energy gathering that united a diverse array of youth networks and organizations, all driven by a shared mission to revolutionize agrifood systems across the region. Fueled by enthusiastic backing from the FAO regional youth focal point, this dynamic forum became a hotbed of collaborative problem-solving and innovative thinking.

The session revolved around three main topics: international, regional and local.

On an international level, the WFF Local Action Team introduced the working of WFF to a global audience. Mohammed Alyatari took center stage with a riveting presentation on the Arab Youth Development Organization (ASDN), as an initiative for the regional level. Spotlighting the critical need to amplify youth voices in the realms of sustainability and agrifood security, he showcased ASDN's role in linking and empowering young change-makers and unveiled exciting opportunities for collaboration with FAO, including the creation of the Yemeni National Youth Forum. Alyatari urged attendees to dive into WFF and FAO initiatives, emphasizing the potential for personal and collective growth.

The WFF Egypt National Chapter in Egypt impressed with their presentation on an ambitious initiative and work plan, highlighting their commitment to enhancing youth involvement and tackling agrifood system challenges through collaboration. The FAO Model Egypt added depth to the discussion by outlining its vision, structure and objectives, with a focus on labor market readiness, entrepreneurship, and strategic programming. Additionally, Almamy Chouaibou Diagana provided valuable insights into Mauritania's strategies, showcasing how regional efforts are effectively engaging youth and addressing agrifood challenges.

Through these events, young people were given a platform to voice their perspectives, share their innovations and contribute their unique experiences. Their active participation not only shaped local and regional priorities but also informed the development of policy recommendations aimed at influencing agrifood policies on both a local and global scale. By engaging in these discussions, youth played a critical role in addressing pressing challenges within agrifood systems and proposing innovative solutions.

The event underscored the importance of youth leadership and participation in shaping a sustainable future for agrifood systems, reinforcing the idea that the insights and contributions of younger generations are essential to achieving lasting, positive impact.