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Innovations Session N°27

Empowering Youth and Women in
Agrifood: Bridging Entrepreneurship
and Job Creation for Sustainable
Impact



INNOVATIONS[📶]
SERIES

EXPERT SPEAKER SESSION

Youth & Women in Agripreneurship and Agrifood Value Chains

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01 THE OPPORTUNITY

Why Youth & Women in Agrifood Matter

- Critical role in transforming agrifood systems globally
- Potential for job creation, income generation, innovation and food security
- Investment in youth and women drives inclusive and sustainable economic growth

02 THE REALITY

Barriers to Agripreneurship & Quality Employment

- Key challenges across the value chain: production, processing, packaging, logistics and marketing
- Limited access to finance, markets, land, technology and infrastructure
- Gender-specific barriers: social norms, unpaid care work and limited digital access
- Weak networks, limited business development support and information gaps

03 LESSONS LEARNED

Supporting Agrifood Entrepreneurs

- Insights from digital accelerator and entrepreneurship programmes
- What helps businesses succeed — and why many remain small or informal
- Mindset, leadership, resilience and continuous learning are critical growth enablers

04 BEYOND TRAINING

Building Complete Support Ecosystems

- Training alone is not enough — mentorship, coaching and peer networks matter
- Access to finance, market linkages, inputs, equipment and business services
- Long-term, hands-on support accessible at different stages of growth

05 DIGITAL SKILLS & INNOVATION

Growth Accelerators for Agrifood Business

- Digital skills are now essential for agrifood businesses to compete and grow
- Tools for productivity, marketing, sales, financial management and market information
- E-commerce, platforms, data and AI as opportunities for agripreneurs
- Bridging the digital divide for women and youth in rural and peri-urban areas

06 BRIDGING ENTREPRENEURSHIP & EMPLOYMENT

In Agrifood Systems

- Helping agripreneurs grow from self-employment to businesses that create jobs
- Strengthening value chains to generate more stable, better paid and attractive jobs
- Technical, business, digital and soft skills for entrepreneurs and jobseekers alike
- Connecting training to real opportunities across agrifood value chains

07 THE WAY FORWARD

Recommendations for Greater Impact

- Governments, development partners and private sector to strengthen policies, funding and market systems
- Farmer organisations, cooperatives and MSMEs to link training to real entrepreneurship and employment pathways
- Address the specific needs of women and young women as a priority
- Invest in ecosystems connecting skills, financing, markets and opportunities for sustainable impact

Discussion Questions

1

How can youth- and women-led agrifood enterprises scale from small-scale activity to viable businesses that generate sustainable income and quality jobs?

2

How can agrifood value chains offer more stable, better paid and attractive employment for youth and women?

3

What support is needed from farmer organisations, cooperatives and MSMEs to connect training with entrepreneurship and employment pathways?

4

How can support ecosystems better address the specific barriers faced by women and young women across both pathways?

Thank You

*Together, we can build agrifood systems where
youth and women thrive — as entrepreneurs,
as employees, and as leaders.*

Fatoumatta Joof | Director of Programs | The Woman Boss





Thank you

