

Young Leaders Incubation Programme (YLIP)

Personal Development for Future Leaders in Agribusiness and Farmers' Organisations

What is YLIP?

Globally, farmers' organisations (FO) share common challenges, including the lack of young agripreneurs stepping up as future leaders in farming and within their organisations. The Young Leaders Incubation Programme (YLIP) is empowering selected young agripreneurs who show great potential, fostering their self-effectiveness as they pave the way for the future of the agricultural sector. YLIP is seeking to support a fresh breed of leaders to be the driving force behind a new era of leadership in their businesses, within farmers' organisations and across the agricultural sector.

"YLIP has been the switch I hadn't realised I needed to turn on. YLIP is indeed a turning point in my life."

Kayise Bhembe, YLIP 2023 graduate, Eswatini

With the support of Andreas Hermes Akademie (AHA) and its trainers, the Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU) - a regional apex farmers' organisation - hosted two cohorts of 20 participants. The programme consisted of two major in-person training courses lasting eight days each, complemented by four intermittent online sessions over a period of two months. Participants selected for these workshops were nominated by their respective national FOs based on a set of criteria. Workshops focus on boosting the successful candidates' self-effectiveness, expanding their leadership perspectives and honing their entrepreneurial and advocacy skills. The group works on communication strategies, feedback, moderation and refining attitudes, thus enhancing participants' ability to connect with others.



In the online sessions, which are moderated by the participants themselves, they meet prominent speakers from the African agricultural sector to discuss a wide range of topics. Course graduates form a network that expands far beyond their cohort to continue to shape the agricultural sector and the food systems in which they are actively participating.

Personal Development

1. YLIP's greatest impact lies in **significantly enhancing communication skills** across all spheres (professional, personal and business), developing robust **leadership attitude and skills**.
2. YLIP graduates are building and **nurturing collaborative environments and networks**. This is crucial for sustainable development and collective success in their lives, individual businesses and in their FOs.
3. Thanks to skills acquired in YLIP, **graduates have reported growth in their businesses of over 65% during a two-year period**.
4. YLIP graduates are making marked contributions to their fields, whether through engaging in strategic business improvements, **taking on leadership roles in farmers' organisations or gaining international recognition**.
5. YLIP graduates have reported **improvements in tangible skills** like strategic business planning and operational efficiency, but also in personal attributes such as self-confidence, self-awareness and empathy.

On a scale from 1- to 10, YLIP graduates rated 8.5 the impact of the training on their personal development and 7.8 the impact on the development of their FO. FOs are currently involving their YLIP graduates in various forms. Some have been nominated to become youth representatives and speak on behalf of their peers at national and international events.

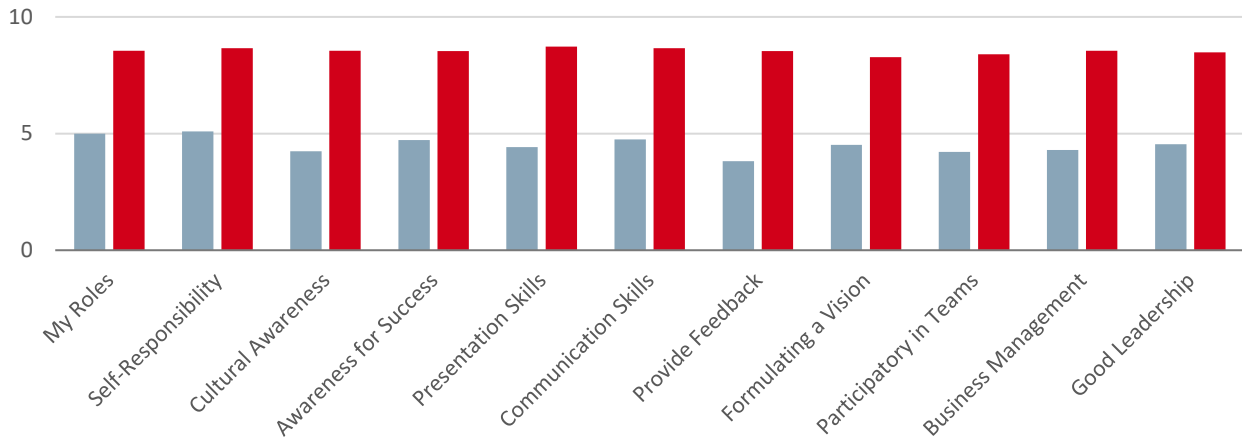
Impact of YLIP

Self-evaluation on a scale from 1-10



Enabling Participants to grow: Skills enhanced over time

Self-evaluation on a scale of 1-10 before and after YLIP



Why attend YLIP?

Evaluation of two training cohorts reveals that YLIP participants are making remarkable progress acquiring key skills essential for success. Scores show a significant increase from 5.0 to 8.6 in course graduates' understanding of and clarity about their professional roles. All graduates witnessed notable growth in their understanding of diversity among people, behaviour, cultures and attitudes. Graduates' understanding of success factors saw significant improvement, while confidence in public speaking skyrocketed with scores climbing from 4.4 to 8.7. Involvement within teams flourished, with scores rising from 4.2 to 8.4, maximising collaborative synergy. This is all ultimately resulting in healthier and more resilient businesses as role models for others in the sector.

"I now feel confident and my company won business of around 24,000 € from five big beekeeping companies in Malawi, just because of confidence and believing in myself."

Roselyn Kasunda, YLIP 2022 graduate, Malawi

Forging Connections

YLIP graduates remain connected and are becoming part of a thriving network of agripreneurs. Beyond the valuable learning experience, the programme is offering a unique opportunity to establish lasting connections and support. The network is also strengthening the respective national FOs. These skills are enabling them to play leading roles in their businesses and farmers' organisations.

How to get involved

With the approach producing remarkable effects, various farmers' organisations have expressed strong interest in applying similar training methods to their own younger generations. In other regions of Africa, but also at national level with national farmers' organisations, everybody needs qualified future leaders with a strong grounding in agriculture. The Young Leaders Incubation Programme is in great demand.



Andreas Hermes Akademie is committing its trainers to the project. Experienced AHA Master Trainers are working alongside trainers from Southern Africa and SACAU. Their additional cultural experience has further added to the success. Further training of trainers would enable more such courses at reduced costs. Interested partners can tap into an established approach to course programming that sets out to empower future generations of agricultural leaders, to secure long-term participation in SACAU and, by extension, other farmers' organisations.

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