



## **SE26: From Global to Local – Translating Policy Recommendations on Youth Engagement and Employment into Tangible Action at the Local Level**

This side event held at sidelines of CFS 51 explored the most suitable modalities for shifting CFS global policy guidelines on youth to the national/local level so they can inform youth–transformative initiatives catalyzing local change efforts and processes. The speakers demonstrated currently ongoing, concrete and good practices of youth engagement and called on the CFS Membership to support successful and good practice examples more actively, and allow for youth to report to CFS on these successes.

The event was hosted by the World Food Forum and co-organized together with FAO's Office of Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environment (OCB Youth), the International Association of Students in Agricultural and Related Sciences (IAAS), YOUNGO Agriculture Working Group, International Forestry Students' Association (IFSA) and the CGIAR Gender Impact Platform.

<p><b>Speakers</b></p> <p><b>Opening remarks:</b> VICTOR MUGO MUIRU – Head of Local Youth Action, World Food Forum</p> <p><b>Keynote Remarks:</b> Amb. H.E. MARCEL BEUKEBOOM - Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the United Nations Organizations in Rome, Italy</p> <p><b>From WFF to CFS: Connecting the Dots:</b> PRAMISHA THAPALIYA – Head of Youth Policy, World Food Forum</p> <p><b>Panel Discussion:</b> Member Based, youth-led organizations translating policy recommendations on youth engagement and employment into tangible action at the local level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RABI RAUT, President IAAS</li> <li>• RAYAN KASEEM, Act 4 Food, Real Food Systems - Youth Leader</li> <li>• RIZKA AFIF, International Forestry Students Association (IFSA)</li> <li>• FAMBA KAZIMOTO, WFF National Chapter, TANZANIA</li> <li>• SARA ALAWIA, Focal Point, OCB Youth, FAO</li> </ul> <p><b>Closing Remarks:</b> Dr. NICOLINE DE HAAN – Director, CGIAR Gender Impact Platform</p>
<p><b>Event summary:</b></p> <p>To set the scene for the session, Victor Muiro began by emphasizing the vital need for a bottom-up approach to agrifood systems transformation that focuses on empowering concrete youth actions at the country, local and grassroot level. He presented WFF's National Chapters that are advancing local initiatives and strengthening youth engagement and employment locally and urged the CFS</p>

membership to support such initiatives that are bolstering the usability of CFS policy products on the ground.

In his inspiring Keynote Remarks, Amb. H.E. Marcel Beukeboom highlighted the history behind the CFS recommendations on youth and the contribution of the Netherlands in the process leading up to the endorsement of the guidelines. He stressed some invaluable lessons drawn from the process including the need for:

- Permanent seat for youth at decision-making tables;
- Fostering intergenerational leadership to connect the leaders of today to the leaders of today and tomorrow;
- Enhancing professional networks to facilitate effective youth participation;
- Financial support for resource effective youth engagement initiatives;
- The use of language that does not deter youth participation such as policy jargon;
- Empowering and strengthen the capacity of youth to engage at the table of food governance;
- Ensuring wider diversity of youth to enable inclusive youth participation;
- Encourage learning by doing recognizing that youth are on a learning curve and can make mistakes.

He underscored the Netherland's commitment to youth inclusion and spotlighted some youth transformative initiatives including the adoption of the Youth at Heart Principles, the country's appointment of an ambassador for youth, employment and education, a solid record of inclusion of youth delegates in the country's official delegation to the United Nations (including having UN Youth representatives on food and biodiversity) as well as the support for the WFF Youth Food Lab and the development of a WFF National Chapter in the country.

While concluding, he inspired the participants to heighten their engagement and advocacy and to keep decision makers accountable. "You're ambitious, and you, of course, want that your good ideas make it to the finishing line. That's not always going to happen, but it should not be by lack of trying".

Ms. Pramisha's remarks focused on connecting the dots between the CFS and the WFF flagship event that was held a week before. While summarizing the outcomes of the forum, she shared ongoing efforts to craft a Global Action Plan for 2024, rooted in the youth-driven policy priorities discussed during the WFF flagship event in 2023. These priorities spanned critical areas like food waste, agronomy, education and climate-resilient agrifood systems.

Acknowledging implementation challenges, Pramisha proposed forming country-specific alliances to monitor government actions and ensure accountability. She suggested the active involvement of youth actors like WFF National Chapters, IAAS Local Chapters, and IFSA National Chapters in translating these priorities into local actions. Additionally, she drew attention to the importance of learning from country best practices, highlighting successful approaches that others could emulate.

The panel discussion brought forth a mosaic of perspectives from diverse youth-led organizations. Rayan Kaseem delved into Act for Food's global consultation involving 300 000 young people and emphasized their advocacy against using food as a weapon in the Middle East. Rizka Afif shed light on IFSA's expansive commitment to forestry education and engagement across 60 countries. Famba Kazimoto shared insights into the Tanzanian National Chapter's efforts to align global policies with local priorities, citing a critical need for domestication. Sara Alawia highlighted FAO's Climate Change Knowledge project, underlining the importance of youth-friendly communication in connecting global

policies with local initiatives. The overarching narrative underscored the imperative for strategic interventions, comprehensive engagement across the agrifood system, and the translation of policy recommendations into accessible formats for effective local implementation.

Dr. de Haan, in her closing remarks, underscored the critical role of global policies in holding individuals accountable. She emphasized the necessity of utilizing research and data to comprehensively grasp and overcome structural barriers confronting youth, reiterating that youth encompasses both boys and young men, as well as girls and young women. She encouraged a nuanced understanding of youth, moving beyond binary perspectives. Dr. de Haan also highlighted the significance of finding allies across sectors and leveraging connections to advance youth initiatives.

Overall, the event highlighted the World Food Forum's efforts to bridge the gap between global policy recommendations and local youth engagement. The speakers and panelists collectively emphasized the need for evidence-based approaches, systemic change, and collaboration to make meaningful strides in youth participation in agrifood systems.

**Recording:**

Speaker-view:

<https://fao.zoom.us/rec/play/w6YWhZYk43WTJ88H9Ocsx9iv5DPfS9okxD5UCWxRHhDHXzvkaAQxB96Jsa8vr7f5QEjQZ1YYiCZ38D.OJvscBPNipCdX299>

Passcode: SE262023+

Gallery-view:

[https://fao.zoom.us/rec/play/iNzczse3jxSnegN9qrL3fLu6odn0drSyntveXz1A8e\\_bBQbvOcOdh7EXOW71bMYzLMwGyEQz1LB-RcrY.UY3OB7iPkTlfqv7q](https://fao.zoom.us/rec/play/iNzczse3jxSnegN9qrL3fLu6odn0drSyntveXz1A8e_bBQbvOcOdh7EXOW71bMYzLMwGyEQz1LB-RcrY.UY3OB7iPkTlfqv7q)

Passcode:SE262023+