COUNTRY ACTION PLAN (CAP) – GHANA

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH IN AFRICA (OYA): ACCELERATING JOBS CREATION IN AGRICULTURE AND AGribusiness.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

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Executive Summary

Africa is a continent of tremendous wealth and enormous untapped potential with 420 million young people aged 15 to 35 (AfDB, 2018). By 2050, the numbers are expected to almost double. Each year, 10 to 12 million young Africans join the job market according to the African Development Bank (year of publication?). The continent is home to a population of 1.2 billion which is projected to more than double by 2050, will host one-fourth of the world’s population, and will also remain the world’s youngest region, with a median age of 25. Harnessing this young growing working-age population is expected to drive Africa’s economic transformation.

However, this opportunity could pass Africa by if the issue of youth unemployment is left unattended to. The majority of youth do not have secure work or economic futures. Of the 420 million youth aged between 15 and 35 in Africa today, the majority are unemployed, have insecure jobs or are in casual employment. On average, youth unemployment is roughly double the rate for adults (AfDB, 2018).

The situation is not different in Ghana. The youth employment challenge in Ghana, like other African countries, is vast and requires a multifaceted, deliberate, and consistent response. The government has invested heavily in tackling this challenge, implementing a number of programs aimed at providing skills training and creating new jobs. Some of these programs are the Youth in Agriculture Program, National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Challenge (NEIP), National Service Scheme, ENABLE Youth etc. The private sector has also made significant contributions to youth employment in Ghana. For instance, in October 2020, Absa Bank Ghana Limited is partnered the Mastercard Foundation to impelment the Absa Young Africa Works programme. However, unemployment and underemployment remain a major problem, and the challenges will only intensify with a projected surge in the country’s youth population over the next decade.

According to the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS), youth (15-35) make up about 40 percent of Ghana’s population. Of these, 54 percent live in urban areas and 46 percent live in rural areas (Ghana Statistical Service 2018).

The youth in urban agricultural households form 37.7 percent of the total population of agricultural households while the proportion for rural agricultural households is 35.4 percent. Female youth constitutes 51.0 percent of the total youth population. It is interesting to note that there are more female youth in agricultural households in both urban (51.5% and 48.5% respectively) and rural areas (50.6% and 49.4% respectively).

The youth population engaged in agriculture is 902,174 (GSS 2018). There are more youth in rural areas (31.3%) engaged in agriculture than those in urban (24.3%) areas. About two-thirds (66.7%) of the youth engaged in agriculture are males with the proportion of females in the rural areas (34.2%) higher than their counterparts in the urban areas (29.7%).
in ten persons engaged in agriculture are youth with similar proportion of males (30.1%) and females (28.9%).

The GSS estimates that the youth (15-24) unemployment rate increased from 9.16 percent in 2019 to 9.46 percent in 2020 while unemployment rate among youth (15-35) increased from 12.1 percent in 2015 to 16.9 percent in 2019 (GSS, 2019).

The proportion of unemployed youth in urban areas is higher (13.6 percent) than in rural areas (10.4 percent) as reported by the Ghana Labour Force Report (2015). This is largely due to internal migration of youth to city centers in search for employment opportunities.

With respect to youth employment, 59.6 percent are employed, 16.9 percent are unemployed, and the rest are not in the labour force (Ghana Statistical Service, 2019). More males (62.8 percent) than females (57.2 percent) are employed, and the majority (90 percent) of employed youth are engaged by the private sector. The civil and public services together employ 8.4 percent of youth. The labour force participation rate of youth is 71.7 percent, and it is higher among males (75.1 percent) than females (69.2 percent) and higher in rural areas than in urban areas.

In 2016, it was projected that, given the country’s growing youth population, 300,000 new jobs would need to be created each year to absorb the increasing numbers of unemployed young people. Yet the employment structure of the Ghanaian economy has not changed much from several decades ago. Most jobs are low skilled, requiring limited cognitive or technological expertise, reflected in low earnings and work of lower quality. An additional challenge for Ghana is the need to create access to an adequate number of high quality, productive jobs.

Key challenges to youth employment identified in this report include lack of employable skills, mismatch between education and industry, inability of the economy to create new jobs, limited access to start-up capital for the youth, and limitations in accessing physical resources such as land, and equipment. Other challenges encountered by youth include high cost of technology, an unattractive business environment for investment, lack of and inaccessible skilled labour, high costs to obtain licenses to operate formally, and lack of networking opportunities.

Ghana has a strong policy environment for youth development despite the above challenges. Government institutions such as the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations, National Youth Authority, Youth Employment Agency, Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture lead the implementation of the sector policies. In 2019, the country developed the Ghana Youth Policy to steer the affairs of youth development. In recent times, the Government of Ghana has been promoting youth development through public agricultural initiatives such as the Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJ), Planting for Export and Rural Development and other youth in agriculture programs through direct collaborations with the private sector, international development partners and
youth networks. An effective collaboration with these key sector partners is recommended to promote the UNIDO/FAO Opportunities for Youth employment in Africa (OYA) project in Ghana.

This baseline report therefore, seeks to increase knowledge about Ghana’s job landscape and youth employment programs to assist policy makers, key stakeholders and the FAO/UNIDO Opportunities for Youth in Agribusiness Project, in identifying value chains with potential to create sustainable jobs for the youth of Ghana. A combination of desktop review, stakeholder engagement, key expert interviews, and feedback from validation workshop form part of the approach used in putting this report together.

The primary agricultural sector accounts for 22% of Ghana’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employs more than half the labor force. The broader agri-food system, covering agribusiness, transport of agricultural goods, agro-processing, and the catering, restaurant and hotel industries, generated 38.2% of GDP and 54.8% of employment in 2017. During 2013-2017, the agri-food system GDP grew annually at 2.6% and employment in the agri-food system grew annually at 1.7%, reaching $20.8 billion and 6.1 million workers in 2017.

Proposed value chains for the OYA project were based on factors such as the alignment of the selected value chains with current government sector development priorities, agro-ecological zones, youth preferences, potential for innovation and technology application (e.g. digitalization), consideration of COVID-19, climate change, gender and other cross cutting issues. Value chains such as cocoa, fruits (mango and pineapple), aquaculture and maize were selected through an extensive stakeholder engagement at national, regional and district levels. Other interventions that seek to increase youth access to finance, promotion of value addition using modern and innovative technologies, digitalization, entrepreneur innovation centres, gender specific value chain activities, among others, are proposed for consideration by the OYA project.

Additionally, youth can be engaged in rural enterprises that focus on value chain activities including agro-dealerships that source inputs in advance of seasons, mechanization services for land preparation, spraying and harvesting; post-harvest handling; aggregation, agro-processing; and marketing of produce. With the fast-changing nature of work due to technology and artificial intelligence, Ghana needs to develop a Technical, Vocational Education and Training system (TVET), which is versatile and helps young people to adapt and thrive in the twenty-first century world of work.

The report also identifies a number of initiatives currently ongoing that can be replicated or up-scaled to create sustainable jobs for the youth. Some of these initiatives include Kosmos Innovation Center (KIC) which natured initiatives such as Trotro Tractor, Farmerline, PULA insurance, ESOKO, Kwidex, and Sesi Technology etc.

Finally, the report recommends the following targets to be set by the Ghana OYA project, based on the overall targets of the continental Africa program and the baseline analysis of the youth profile in Ghana:
Country Level Targets:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Ghana OYA Programme</th>
<th>Overall Programme</th>
<th>OYA Programme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of beneficiaries</td>
<td>5000 – 6000 (50% females)</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of youths led-SMEs to be supported</td>
<td>100- 150</td>
<td>600</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Public-private development (and B2B) partnerships established</td>
<td>10 – 12</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>USD$12 Million</td>
<td>USD$ 50Million</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>2020 – 2025 (5years)</td>
<td>2020- 2025 (5years)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
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**Thematic Areas:**
Reduce poverty through decent employment and self-employment creation; enhance shared prosperity and job creation through agribusiness and agro-industries; promote sustainability through inclusive agricultural value chains and food systems; increase the resilience of communities to shocks and crises; foster economic competitiveness and SMEs development in agriculture.

**Expected duration: 5 years (January 2020 – December 2025)**

**Target Budget: USD$50 Million at the continental level.**
PART 1: Baseline Study and Key Findings

This section focuses on the overall Africa-wide “Opportunities for Youth in Africa” (OYA) programme and outcomes of the national baseline study. It also gives a clear definition of the country’s context, situational analysis of youth employment in Ghana, demographic distribution of youth, the level of education, present situation of youth employment with focus on the agribusiness sector and others such as migration and human security.

I. Youth profile and situation in country

a. The demographic profile and distribution of youth

According to the Ghana Statistical Service and the Youth Employment Agency (YEA), youth (15-35) make up about 40 percent of Ghana’s population. Of these, 54 percent live in urban areas and 46% live in rural areas (Ghana Statistical Service 2018) with female youths constituting 51.0 percent of the total youth population. It is interesting to note that there are more female youths than males in agricultural households in both urban (51.5% and 48.5% respectively) and rural areas (50.6% and 49.4% respectively).

To effectively address the needs of youth, the government has classified the youth into seven categories: (1) male and female; (2) rural and urban; (3) adolescence and adult; (4) physically challenged and able-bodied; (5) educated and uneducated; (6) skilled and unskilled; (7) in school and out of school (Ghana Ministry of Youth and Sports 2010).

b. The level of education of youth

According to a World Bank’s 2013 Enterprise Survey in Ghana, inadequately educated labor force ranked higher as a constraint to hiring than labor regulations. Another major constraint identified during consultations with industry experts is the skills mismatch—that is, the skills of potential employees are mostly irrelevant to industry needs. The government of Ghana’s medium-term development policy framework document, “An Agenda for Jobs: Creating Prosperity and Equal Opportunity for All,” also identifies the skills mismatch as a key challenge for reducing unemployment (Ghana National Development Planning Commission 2017). The government intends to address this issue through its strategic plans for education and for Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET).

Youth literacy in Ghana is among the highest in Africa at 91.32% for males and 89.86% for females. In comparison, youth literacy for sub-Saharan African countries is about 77%. The demographic analysis shows that Ghana is yet to experience a youth bulge, as the majority of the population is not within the youth age bracket. However, with 38% of the population less than 14 years old and an annual population growth rate of about 2.17%, Ghana is on course to reach the stage for a youth bulge within the next 30 years.

A recent World Bank report on opportunities for youth employment in Ghana (World Bank 2018), indicates that the country’s educational system sends about 210,000 unemployable, unskilled and semiskilled, young Ghanaians (including about 60 percent of graduates at various education levels and those who exit early) into the labor market each year (Ghana
The quality of education in Ghana and the weak link between the education sector and the productive sectors of the economy remain a major challenge.

Academic training in Ghana is generally not aligned with labor market dynamics, which constantly calls for new and different skill sets. In addition, the usage and application of technology are limited, but those tools are critical, given the changing nature of work. Preemployment support services are minimal, and most of the existing services are ineffective, particularly those offered by public training academic institutions. Over the years, this situation has resulted in a large pool of unemployed youth who are ill-prepared for the job market.

The 2015 Labour Force Report estimates that 4 percent of Ghanaian youth have no education, and only 3.8 percent have acquired a tertiary education qualification (Ghana Statistical Service 2016). Education empowers people to live healthier lives and attain more productive livelihoods, and can break the poverty cycle. The level of education attained can also influence the aspirations of the youth.

The 2015 Ghana labor force survey estimates that more males (5.4 percent) have a tertiary-level education than females (2.6 percent), and more than half (57.0 percent) of youth living in rural areas have no education compared with 26.3 percent of their urban counterparts (Ghana Statistical Service 2016). Only 1.7 percent of youth in rural areas have a tertiary education compared with 5.6 percent of their urban counterparts.

c. The present employment situation of youth with a focus on the agriculture and agribusiness sector

The youth population engaged in agriculture is estimated at 902,174 (National Agriculture Census, GSS 2017/2018). There are more youth in rural areas (31.3%) engaged in agriculture than those in urban (24.3%) areas. About two-thirds (66.7%) of the youth engaged in agriculture are males with the proportion of females in the rural areas (34.2%) higher than their counterparts in the urban areas (29.7%). In Ghana, three in ten persons engaged in agriculture are youth with similar proportion of males (30.1%) and females (28.9%).

The youth population in agricultural households represents 36.0 percent of the total agricultural household population. The youth in urban agricultural households form 37.7 percent of the total population of agricultural households while the proportion of youth in rural agricultural households is 35.4 percent. Female youth constitutes 51.0 percent of the total youth population. It is interesting to note that there are more females than male youth in agricultural households in both urban (51.5% and 48.5% respectively) and rural areas (50.6% and 49.4% respectively).

d. Other (migration, human security etc.)

Youth unemployment worsens as years go by because, whereas more graduates are pushed into the labor market, there are not enough job opportunities to absorb these youth, and access
to start-up capital is limited. Urban youth unemployment is further exacerbated by rural-urban migration. In the rural parts of Ghana, employment is mainly focused on the farming sector, and those engaged do not earn any significant amount of income due to the lack of capital for commercial investment. Rural migrants believe that more jobs and social opportunities are available in urban areas, but once in the cities, they find themselves without a job and with limited social networks. Trapped and discouraged by bleak job prospects, some turn to transactional sex, criminality and drug industries to survive. In many cases, their aspirations are frustrated. Some employers also take advantage of the high demand for jobs in the cities and tend to underpay the youth who also have no other choice than to accept underpaid jobs.

Some unemployed youth endanger their lives and others to engage in illegal jobs such as cyber fraud, illegal mining, arm robbery and terrorism which is expected to make them quick and big monies. These tend to put them and others at risk of losing their properties or lives and also defames the country as a whole, thus deterring investors.

II. The agriculture and agribusiness sector, challenges and opportunities for job creation for youth

a. The characteristics of the agriculture and agribusiness sector in the country

Agriculture continued to provide valuable contribution to Ghana’s economy although the share of its contribution declined from 21.7 percent in 2013 to 18.5 percent in 2019. This trend is expected because as the economy expands, the contribution of agriculture to GDP declines whereas services (2013 – 41.4 percentage to 2019 – 47.2 percentage) and industrial (2013 – 36.9 percentage to 2019 – 34.2 percentage) sectors appreciate. The production and export sector of Ghana’s agriculture sector is relatively developed when compared with other sectors such as processing and marketing. However, the crop production sector is mainly flooded with small holder farmers mostly residing in rural Ghana.

The sector employs 38 percent of the population and still holds enormous opportunities for employment creation for youth. Evidence suggests that the sector remains a main gateway to work, and that, for many, it will become the sector of lifetime employment. Thus, if productivity and earnings in agriculture do not improve, the wider economy will remain depressed in rural areas, where the majority of the population lives, and options for youth will shrink (Filmer and Fox 2014).

b. The private sector and SME’s role in the food system

Globally, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) dominate the business environment. They also account for over 50% of all private output, nearly 70% of employment and 90% of businesses. Consequently, the importance of the MSMEs and the critical role they play in all national growth and economic transformation cannot be underestimated. Agricultural related businesses are part of this 90% which has been recorded by the Registrar General with various businesses ranging from food vending to processing industries. Agriculture is a major economic activity which contributes to 20% of the country’s gross domestic product (GDP).
MSMEs constitute an overwhelming share of the operating enterprises, generate more than 50% of turnover and provide two out of every three jobs in the private sector within the European Union (EU). In the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, more than 99% of companies are SMEs and generate about two-thirds of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on average. In developing and transition economies, SMEs represent more than 90% of private businesses, contribute to more than 50% of employment and GDP, and employs about 22% of the adult population. Essentially, MSMEs serve as the engine for growth in the developing countries, principally in the area of job creation, local entrepreneurship and income generation towards poverty reduction.

Specifically in Ghana, the importance of the MSMEs sector is even more magnified; employing more than 80% of the workforce and generating 70% of the national output. MSMEs dominate the industrial landscape of the country and exhibit abundant potential in accelerating economic development necessary for wealth creation and poverty reduction. They constitute about 92% of businesses in Ghana, account for about 85% of manufacturing employment and contribute about 70% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). MSMEs are an integral part of the Ghanaian economy, and they promote the development of the different structures of the society through the generation of employment to vulnerable groups, including women, youth and low-skilled workers.

In Ghana, youth-led MSMEs have also seen a significant increase in recent years due largely to the inability of the public sector to employ the increasing number of educated young people who are willing to work but lack job avenues. They however face dire constraints due to the lack of required skills to manage and sustain their business growth.

c. The entrepreneurial ecosystem
In Ghana, entrepreneurs still struggle with basics of operating and growing their businesses because the attention and resources devoted to entrepreneurship promotion by the government is mostly rigidly distributed. The support systems (i.e infrastructure and finance) are not adequate to motivate entrepreneurs. Any ecosystem involves a number of interconnected relevant elements that incessantly interact and mutually reinforce. Entrepreneurial ecosystem consists of six moving components that come together to facilitate innovation and growth: a conducive culture, enabling policies and leadership, availability of appropriate finance, quality human capital, venture-friendly markets for products, and a range of institutional and infrastructural supports.

i. Conducive culture
Culture is generally defined as the way of life of a group of people. In a community with dynamic culture, entrepreneurs feel comfortable to invest because they know the culture of the people will not have a great negative impact on their kind of business. This is why most entrepreneurs prefer to start their firms in the cities.
ii. Enabling policies and leadership
The motive of any entrepreneur is to make profit. Good policies lead to profits; as such, entrepreneurs are more drawn to countries or cities with policies that support business growth and profit-making. There should be dynamic ways of entrepreneurial policy implementation in the country which will allow entrepreneurs to start their businesses without the fear of being intimidated leading to losses being occurred which might lead to their shut down.

iii. Availability of appropriate finance
Only a hand-full of entrepreneurs are able to start their businesses using their own capital. Others are dependent on external sources of capital to start their businesses. In developing countries like Ghana, gaining access to the loans from the major banking sectors is sometimes impossible and when and where possible, the high interest rates deter them from going for these loans. If policies are put in place to enable these loans become attractive, entrepreneurs will be motivated to start businesses which will earn them enough to be able to pay the loans back and also gain enough as profits.

iv. Quality human capital
Human capital, also being a vital component of the ecosystem, cannot be excluded or underrated. The quality of human capital domain includes skilled and unskilled labour, serial entrepreneurs, and educational institutions. In Ghana there is enough, if not excess, human capital, but the lack of the qualities needed for the kind of work becomes the problem which entrepreneurs face. They tend to incur extra costs in trying to train workers to fit the job that they are to do. This is a problem mostly caused by a lack of hands-on experience brought on by a system of education that focuses heavily on theoretical, rather than experiential, learning. Without these qualities, entrepreneurs find it difficult to employ because after employment, they will have to train them which will lead to extra cost being incurred.

v. Venture-friendly markets for products
Growing the business is always the main motive of every entrepreneur. To achieve this, they need to have access to a ready market which is ready to consume what they produce or the services rendered. Availability of a ready market opens the door for investments in entrepreneurship ventures such as fintechs proving services to SMEs in money deposits and cash collection; delivering of loans to small holder farmers, delivery services and building online ecommerce business platform.

vi. Range of institutional and infrastructural supports
Building a vibrant and sustainable entrepreneurial ecosystem requires a solid infrastructure of connected networks-entrepreneurs that are informed, resources that are visible, programs that are relevant, and collisions that are timely and impactful. The growth of the entrepreneurial ecosystem depends critically on infrastructure like, transport, telecommunications (particularly broadband access), and utilities (e.g. electricity, gas, water, sewerage). If all these are available, entrepreneurs are motivated to invest in such communities and countries.
d. Opportunities of the agribusiness sector for youth
This section provides an analysis of opportunities in the agribusiness sector and other factors influencing the selection of proposed value chains for youth engagement. Factors such as alignment with government priorities, commercial potential of the value chain, ability to thrive in a particular agro-ecological zone, prominence in intervention area, gender and other cross cutting issues, innovative and digitization are discussed.

i. Alignment with government priorities
The government of Ghana, realizing the preference of the youth for investment in value chains that has the potential to produce results in the short to medium term, has been promoting the green-house cultivation of vegetable crops (tomatoes, lettuce, cabbage, carrot, cucumber, green pepper, etc). These crops, referred to as income generating or “cash crops”, have the ability to generate quick returns. Other crops with potential to contribute towards food security like maize, rice, cassava, yam, plantain, cocoyam etc., are also promoted by government.

ii. Commercial Potential
Youth usually prefer varieties of value chains in agriculture that have the potential of generating income in the shortest possible time. Most youth therefore, will be interested in cash crops and other crops with high potential for export. Value chains that meet this category of youth are export oriented vegetables like chilies, sweet potatoes, carrot, onions, tomatoes and other crops such as groundnut, soy, cashew, shea, cocoa, coconut, cassava, fruits (mangoes, pineapples, pawpaw etc). Another non-crop value chain that has the potential to create opportunities for the youth are livestock (goats, sheep, cattle, pigs etc) grass cutter, poultry, snail, bee keeping, and mushroom production and aquaculture.

iii. Agro-ecological Zones
The location of youth often influences their choice and participation in a particular value chain. Each of Ghana’s six agro-ecological zones have their own value chains that is predominant and were factored into proposing value chains for youth intervention. Value chains such as cereals and livestock production are usually preferred by youth in the Northern regions i.e. Savannah agro-ecological zones, whilst youth in the forest and coastal zones are often interested in vegetables, fruit processing and aquaculture value chains. Recent development in technology and preference for healthy foods, however has increased youth affinity for niche values chains such as green house vegetable production, grass cutter, snail, bee keeping, and cut fruits etc.

iv. Gender and Cross cutting
Differences in preferences, capacity and interest level may affect strongly the choice of value chains for young men and women. Generally, women are more inclined towards income generating crops such as shea nut processing, groundnut, cowpea, soy, vegetables, mushroom, snail and plantain. Young men are typically attracted towards both food security and income generating crops. Production in value chains like cashew, mango, pineapple, oil
palm, cocoa, maize, cassava, sorghum, millet, yam are normally labour intensive and may attract young men.

In addition to the above factors, the demand for convenience fruits offers opportunities for farmers, vendors and processors. Currently, processing facilities in Ghana are plagued with expensive supply of raw materials and interrupted electricity supply. This provides enormous opportunity for young women to be engaged in fresh cut convenient fruit market in Ghana. This market is however plagued with challenges such as inadequate techniques for sterilization, poor packaging to prolong the shelf life of fruits, public health and food safety concerns, lack of cooled chilling storage facilities leading to high post-harvest losses and subsequent decline in revenues.

This opportunity has the potential to provide a host of economic benefits through the exploration of different domestic markets and job creation opportunities, and health benefits by providing more convenient healthy food options for consumers. This is as a result of the changing consumer preference and demands towards healthier products. The OYA programme could explore activities that seek to improve this existing opportunity by providing tailor made skills training to young women and supporting them with tangible assets to reduce high post-harvest losses through small grants.

v. Potential for Innovation/Processing

Young men and women are creative and therefore attracted to innovative products that incorporate technology. Therefore, it is recommended that crops with the potential for processing into high value products like chocolate, roasted cashew nuts, high value cassava starch, and soy milk production can be supported under the project. Value chains such as vegetables (green pepper, tomatoes, carrot, lettuce, cabbage, okro etc) can be promoted under green house cultivation, an area that has seen enormous patronage by the youth. Fruits with high commercial potential for processing such as pineapple, papaya, mango and coconut are also recommended for consideration under the project.

vi. Digitalization and job creation

The advent of COVID-19 has exposed the deep digital divide between traditional businesses, who are mostly classified under the informal sector, and electronic innovation- inclined businesses. The informal nature of these businesses especially that of rural dwellers meant a total lock down of their livelihoods. This was further aggravated by lack of financial services, lack of information on early warnings on weather patterns; climate-induced hazards such as dry spell, flood, and pest infestations.

Key stakeholders in the agriculture sector such as the government, development partners, NGOs, and CSOs have increasingly promoted digital platforms with the ultimate goal of addressing some of the problems faced by the agriculture sector. The significant achievements chalked in the use of ICT in aid of the agricultural extension dissemination, provides the motivational background to holistically coordinate and transit to a viable and robust E-agriculture ecosystem.
In Ghana, ICT for agricultural led organizations such as Trotro Tractor, Farmerline, Esoko, Sesi Technologies cereal moisture texting kit, AgroCenta financial platform for lending to smallholder farmers, Jumo retail lending platform, Beit Farms –Duapa App are all examples of digital technologies currently being promoted to help find innovative solutions to the numerous challenges of the agriculture sector in Ghana. Young Ghanaians lead all these tech platforms which provides opportunities for investment.

The OYA programme will explore the possibilities of working with selected ICT4Agriculture organizations to offer financial services and online trainings to key stakeholders such as smallholder farmers and SMEs.

e. Identified agricultural value chains presenting economic potential for the youth

Selection of value chains were based on prioritizing agricultural value chains that have high potential for employment and self-employment creation and that are potentially more attractive for youth. The intervention follows the rationale that only a competitive agriculture and agribusiness sector can develop attractive opportunities for youth employment and self-employment. Relevance on the economic growth in prioritized countries and at sub-regional/continental levels as well as potential for intra-regional and international trade of the agricultural commodities will be a key determinant on the prioritization of the value chains. In this regard, four value chains were selected for support under this project in Ghana. These value chains are:

- Cocoa (i.e. value addition products)
- Fruits (i.e. freshly cut, dried, processed and frozen products)
- Maize (i.e. promotion of high yielding varieties, post harvest technology, marketing activities)
- Aquaculture

This preliminary selection has been conducted in alignment with the African Union’s priorities in terms of regional value chains in Africa, which are also at the core of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA), and with country priorities.

f. Analysis of selected value chains

i. Cocoa

Cocoa is the most important agricultural commodity Ghana produces and the mainstay of Ghana’s agricultural sector. Cocoa is Ghana's second leading foreign exchange earner, worth about 30 percent of all revenue from export and responsible for about 57 percent of overall agricultural export. The sector directly and indirectly employs about 2 million people, and constitutes a large chunk of Ghana’s GDP (7.3 percent in 2019). Cocoa holds a lot of significance because it serves as a source of food, helps in income generation and industrial raw materials. The majority of cocoa beans collected over the country comes from various
regions where rainfall is between 1,000 to 1,500mm per year: Ashanti, Ahafo, Central, Eastern, Western and Volta. Ghana exported 1.61 billion dollars of cocoa beans in 2019 and it was in the same year that cocoa beans was ranked the third most exported product in the country. The countries that imported this commodity are Netherlands (321M dollars), United States (175M dollars), Malaysia (152M dollars), Japan (122M dollars) and France (107M dollars). The cocoa industry contributes significantly to the country’s economy as it helps in job creation leading to the employment of approximately 800,000 farm families and generates 2 billion dollars yearly through exports and foreign exchange.

The cocoa and chocolate industry is constantly undergoing dynamic change depending on the nature of the demand for chocolate. The trends towards niche or premium chocolate products have engendered new challenges and opportunities for all participants in this sector. Until recently, the general perception was that consumption of chocolate in Europe and the United States would stagnate, as these major chocolate markets were on the verge of saturation. However, consumption behaviour across these mature markets has recently experienced a major change, with the increasing appeal of premium chocolate, including organic, Fairtrade, single-origin, reduced sugar and dark and high cocoa content chocolate. The confectionery market has increasingly been characterized by consumer demand for taste, convenience and health; and products addressing ethical and environmental concerns.

**ii. Fruits (fresh Cut, dried, processed)**

Ghana’s fruit sector is estimated to be worth 56.8 million dollars and accounts for about 7% of the revenue of the agriculture sector. Mango and pineapple are the major fruits produced with citrus fruits and bananas being the other key components. The annual production of mango and pineapple is approximately 98,477 metric tons and 677,000 metric tons respectively with a yield of 15 metric per hectare and 62.5 metric per hectare averagely. Fruits have a high potential for creating jobs along the value chain. Input suppliers, producers, post-harvest handlers, processors, exporters, extension service providers, researchers and logistics providers are all avenues with potential to create jobs. The major producers of mangoes are found in regions such as Greater Accra, Eastern and Volta, Ashanti, Bono and Bono East, Northern, Upper West and Upper East regions while pineapple producers are found in Greater Accra, Central, Eastern and Volta regions of Ghana. In Ghana’s fruit sector, activities such as production, processing and exports is mostly identified as the major activities taking place. The farmers are the producers responsible for the production of the fruits who in turn sell to processors who add value to the fruits through processing and then the processed products are exported countries in need of it. Ghana exports to UK, Germany, Italy, Switzerland and France. Companies like HPW Fresh and Dry and Blue Skies provides market opportunities for young ones willing to invest in fruits cultivation. Currently Blue Skies has recruited over 2000 permanent staff and outsourced from 150 farmers while HPW has employed over 1000 workers mostly youth.

**iii. Maize**
Maize accounts for over 50% of cereal production in Ghana with a quantity of 250,147 Kg being exported to various parts of the world and generated approximately 23.20 thousand dollars in the year 2019. Recent strategic intervention by the government in the maize value chain has contributed to the 40% increase in crop output. The initiative deals in the supplying of inputs such as improved seeds and subsidized fertilizers. Maize production is normally from three agricultural ecological zones such as the Guinea Savannah, Forest Savannah and Transitional Zones. The Northern, BonoBono East, Ahafo, Ashanti, Central and Eastern regions are the five major maize growing areas in Ghana. Aside from serving as food, it is part of the ingredients necessary for the production of animal feed. The numerous usage of maize provides lots of domestic market opportunities for the youth anticipating to enter into cultivation.

iv. Aquaculture

There is a huge potential for employment opportunities and entrepreneurship development in fisheries and aquaculture value chains in West Africa. Characterized as agents of change, young people face an array of challenges in the agriculture sector. These range from limited access to land, financial credit, and improved technologies, to a lack of practical skills and basic literacy, to social norms that largely exclude youth from participation in decision-making. Increasing investments in modernizing fisheries and aquaculture in West Africa has the potential to open up new employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for youth along the fish value chain.

g. Geographic target

In terms of geographic coverage, the project will focus its intervention in the regions with high potential of reaching out to more beneficiaries operating in the areas of the selected value chains. In light of this, Western North, Ashanti, Ahafo and Central regions will be selected for cocoa value chain. The Ahafo, Bono East, Upper West, and North East regions will be selected for the maize value chains. For the fruits value chain the Greater Accra, Eastern and Volta Regions will be the focus of the project.

Table: Selected value chains and geographic location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value Chain</th>
<th>Region (coverage area)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cocoa</td>
<td>Western North, Ashanti, Ahafo and Central</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits (Mango and Pineapple)</td>
<td>Greater Accra, Eastern, Volta,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
III. Recommendations

Based on the above analysis the following recommendations are proposed for consideration under the OYA programme. The recommended intervention areas are grouped under the 4 Outcomes (Results Area) under the OYA programme.

OUTCOME 1: Employability (on- and off-farm) and self-employment capabilities of youths in agriculture and agribusiness are enhanced

- Provide tailored-made virtual and physical capacity building opportunities for Ghanaian youth in partnership with TVET institutions.
- Enhance the technical (farm management, farm implement operation, tractor operation, factory related technical skills), entrepreneurial behaviour change management skills, business operational and management, digital skills (e-commerce), as well as transversal competencies of youth to improve their growth trajectory.
- Conduct needs assessment studies to identify the skills gap within private enterprises and provide support to capacitate individuals to increase competitiveness and value chain outcomes.

Collaborate with youth focused institutions and other key stakeholders to review and revise agricultural and rural development/value chain policies to be more youth-inclusive and ensure sustainable investments and job creation through agriculture.

OUTCOME 2: Existing and emerging youth-led agribusinesses and SMEs in agriculture have increased access to finance and are better integrated into local, regional and international markets

- Identify and select potential youth-led fintechs and agribusiness SMEs to be engaged to provide services such as weather information, market access, financial (loan acquisition, bookkeeping, access to agricultural inputs and logistics (transportation, storage, processing, harvesting etc) to small holder farmers.
- Establish grant fund or portfolio to promote innovative ideas in ICT for agriculture and support emerging SMEs and fintechs, which are women/youth-led to expand operations and coverage to employ more youth.
- Support youth-led businesses and SMEs to foster self-employment and promote innovation in targeted agricultural value chains and agri-food systems.
• Collaborate with business incubation service providers such as Kosmos Innovation Centre, Impact Hub, Esoko, Ghana Tech Lab, Ghana Climate Innovation Center etc. to train youth and link them to industries.

OUTCOME 3: Agricultural value chains and agri-food systems that create decent employment and self-employment opportunities for youth are strengthened

• Encourage youth to go into innovative food production ventures that target high end markets (niche)
• Provide technical and financial support to women and youth-led SMEs to encourage value addition or reduce post-harvest losses.
• Support value chain activities such as inputs financing, equipment for land preparation, planting materials, pest and weed control, harvesting, storage, processing equipment, and linkage to markets.
• Partner with youth-led organizations to establish a sustainable national youth network for promoting the interest of women and youth in the agriculture sector in Ghana.
• Provide support (technical assistance, grants etc) for existing coordination structures in the agriculture sector such as youth –led agribusiness groups, national & localized farmer organizations, private business associations and business development service providers to strengthen their governance processes, capacity to interact through sustainable networking platforms.

OUTCOME 4: Policy, institutional and programmatic frameworks are strengthened at national level to support decent youth employment creation and entrepreneurship development in agriculture and agribusiness.

• Provide support (technical assistance, grants etc) for existing coordination structures in the agriculture sector such as youth –led agribusiness groups, national & localized farmer organizations, private business associations and business development service providers to strengthen their governance processes, capacity to interact through sustainable networking platforms.
PART 2: OYA’s Country Action Plan

I. The Joint Programme

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) developed a joint programme in response to a dedicated call for accelerating efforts in the area of job creation for African youth, especially through agribusiness and entrepreneurship development. The call was made during the 2018 Conference on Youth Employment in Agriculture co-organized by the African Union, the Government of Rwanda and FAO, which took place on 20-21 August 2018 in Kigali, Rwanda, with the theme: “Youth Employment in Agriculture as a Solid Solution to Ending Hunger and Poverty in Africa: Engaging through Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and Entrepreneurship”.

This programme proposed an integrated approach for the creation of quality on- and off-farm employment and self-employment opportunities for African youth in agriculture and agribusiness. It highlighted the central role of agriculture for Africa’s development, while emphasizing the need for continuous empowerment of African youth to be the engine of this growth. The multi-level approach (continental, sub-regional, national) reflected the need for a concerted effort between public institutions and the private sector on capacity development, access to resources, improved coordination and linkages, and knowledge generation and dissemination.

This programme provides an opportunity to strengthen the collaboration between FAO and UNIDO, and to position both agencies jointly on decent rural employment creation, agribusiness and value chain development, and support to small- and medium-enterprises (SMEs) in agriculture. By coming together, FAO and UNIDO will leverage on their strengths as knowledge organizations as well as technical agencies with extensive experience on decent employment creation and entrepreneurship development.

Following a specific request for joint action, the OYA project will integrate core functions of UNIDO and FAO towards youth employment creation and entrepreneurship development, sustainable value chains and agribusiness, and social protection.

Each Agency will lead specific outcomes / outputs (see below), with a Project Steering Committee (PSC) as the strategical body that overlooks and decide on implementation of activities. At output level, the project will leverage on both FAO’s and UNIDO’s expertise for technical inputs.

At country level, the NSCs will coordinate implementation of activities. All activities will follow a common blueprint, with a degree of adaptability according to each country’s context, which will be further detailed in each Country Action Plan.
## II. Overall Goal and Outcomes of the programme

**Development Objective**: Increased decent employment and self-employment opportunities in agriculture (on- and off-farm) and agribusiness for young women and men in rural, peri-urban, and urban areas

**Outcome 1**: Employability (on-and off-farm) and self-employment capabilities of youths in agriculture and agribusiness are enhanced. *(Lead Agency: UNIDO)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Output 1.1 – Work skills and transversal competencies (soft skills) developed to support personal growth, improve access to resources, and facilitate labour market transition for youths. <em>(Responsible: UNIDO).</em></th>
<th>Output 1.2 – Specialized competencies and professional skills developed to enhance employability (on- and off-farm) of youths in agriculture and agribusiness. <em>(Responsible: FAO).</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Output 1.3 – Entrepreneurial mind-set and business skills developed to promote the growth of youth-led agribusinesses and SMEs in agriculture <em>(Responsible: UNIDO).</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Outcome 2**: Existing and emerging youth-led agribusinesses and SMEs in youth-led agribusiness and SMEs’ access to finance and are better integrated into local, regional and international markets. *(Lead Agency: UNIDO)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Output 2.1 – Business development services improved to foster competitiveness (innovation) and to ensure viability and efficiency of youth-led agribusinesses and SMEs <em>(Responsible: UNIDO).</em></th>
<th>Output 2.2 – Capacity of youth-led agribusinesses and SMEs strengthened to identify and access market opportunities (physical and virtual) and to integrate into national, regional and international markets <em>(Responsible: UNIDO).</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Output 2.3 – Business opportunities promoted to facilitate youth-oriented development partnerships and technology transfer across regional and global value chains <em>(Responsible: UNIDO).</em></td>
<td>Output 2.4 – Access to financial products and services enhanced for youth-led agribusinesses and SMEs in agriculture <em>(Responsible: FAO).</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Outcome 3**: Agricultural value chains and agri-food systems that create decent employment opportunities for youths are strengthened *(Lead Agency: FAO)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Output 3.1 – Linkages between value chain actors strengthened to increase demand-oriented support services (inputs, logistics, marketing, etc.) and access to</th>
<th>Output 3.2 – Capacity of national Government institutions strengthened to identify and address structural causes of systemic underperformance, to produce evidence-based</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and productive resources (Responsible: FAO)</td>
<td>Youth responsive policies, and to achieve active coordination with businesses and non-state actors (Responsible: FAO).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Output 3.3</strong> – National multi-stakeholder platforms on youth in agriculture and agribusiness established / strengthened to enhance public-private collaboration and synergies between businesses, value chains, agri-food systems and sectors (Responsible: FAO).</td>
<td><strong>Output 3.4</strong> – Improved robustness, efficiency and competitiveness of targeted agricultural value chains and agri-food systems (Responsible: UNIDO).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcome 4</strong>: Policy, institutional and programmatic frameworks are strengthened at national, regional and district levels to support decent youth employment creation and entrepreneurship development in agriculture and agribusiness. <em>(Lead Agency: FAO)</em></td>
<td><strong>Output 4.1</strong> - In-depth baseline studies on the potential for decent youth employment creation and entrepreneurship development in agri-food systems conducted to prepare Country Action Plans (Responsible: UNIDO).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Output 4.2</strong> - Capacity of national institutions strengthened on systematic collection and analysis of data to measure the performances and assess opportunities and constraints for youths in agri-food systems (Responsible: FAO).</td>
<td><strong>Output 4.3</strong> - National, regional and continental youth networks (and young entrepreneurs’ associations) strengthened to streamline youth priorities into policy and programmatic frameworks around agri-food systems (Responsible: UNIDO).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Output 4.4</strong> – Capacity of selected sub-regional and continental institutions strengthened to design and analyse youth-centred policies, strategies and investment programs and to promote cooperation and policy alignment around agri-food systems (Responsible: FAO).</td>
<td><strong>Output 4.5</strong> – Opportunities generated for dialogue, knowledge-building and sharing of good practices between stakeholders and across agri-food systems at sub-regional and continental levels. (Responsible: FAO).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcome 5</strong>: Programme Management and Monitoring &amp; Evaluation (including mid-term and terminal evaluations). Lead Agency:FAO/UNIDO</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Programme Management

Establish the Programme Management Unit, leveraging on existing FAO and UNIDO structures and comparative advantages.

Monitoring & Evaluation

Ensure monitoring of activities, outputs and outcomes and self-evaluation at national, regional and district levels throughout the project.

Carry-out independent mid-term and terminal evaluations and share results with key stakeholders (i.e. AUC and RECs) for scaling-up the programme’s approach.

NOTE: Responsibility refers to the Agency that carries PRIMARY technical responsibility for implementing the Output.

III. Intervention Strategy

a. Acting on Offer and Demand

The project will adopt the offer and demand approach to engage key beneficiaries. Where necessary the project will design innovative products such as online courses with special focus on employable skills for the youth. Other products such as matching grants will also be implemented as a demand driven approach.

b. COVID-19 recovery and resilience

According to a recent document by the Ghana government on implications of COVID-19 pandemic on the agricultural sector and its subsequent mitigation strategies, COVID-19 continues to significantly affect household incomes especially wage earners from the informal sector and rural households who are already living below the poverty lines (MOFA, 2020). Ghana Living Standards Survey 7 (GLSS 7) indicates about 2.2 million people living in rural communities are unable to meet the basic 2,900 calories per day even if they spend all their income on food (GSS 2019). It was also evident that rural households lost income due to the effects of COVID-19 as a result of restrictions in economic activities such as lack of inputs for crop production, limited produce marketing due to restrictions in markets as result of social distancing.

With regard to COVID-19, a recent survey conducted by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA) in March 2021 to assess the impact of the pandemic on household food and nutrition security, indicated that a relatively low impact on house food and nutrition security. For instance, seven out of 10 households (70%) had not experienced any form of fever in the previous 30 days prior to the assessment. Meanwhile, one out of ten (10%) of households assessed had difficulty accessing health services. Difficulty accessing health services was mainly attributed to the lack of money (cited by 58% of respondents), the long distances to the nearest health facility (cited by 24%) and the fear of contracting a disease due to the COVID-19 pandemic (cited by 10%).
In addition, household food consumption patterns remained largely acceptable. Nearly all the households surveyed (93.5%) were food secure, while fewer than one in 10 were moderately food insecure (borderline; 6.45%) and severely food insecure (poor; 0.40%). The severely food insecure households were mostly from the Northern, Ashanti, and Greater Accra regions, indicating concern about urban food insecurity.

Food security conditions in general are currently showing signs of significant improvement as the widespread harvest of staple grains have aided the recovery of households from constrained access to food, which characterized the greater part of the lean season between June and August. Preliminary assessment of the production of major staples such as maize, rice, sorghum and millet during the 2020/2021 cropping season showed a general increase compared to 2019 and the five-year averages (MoFA, 2021).

c. Participative and Integrated approach

The implementation of the OYA programme will involve a broad range of stakeholders at different levels, each having their respective role and responsibility.

At national level, collaborations will be set-up with training institutes (including TVET, advanced entrepreneurial and business institutions, etc.) for enhancement of technical, entrepreneurial and digital skills. Also, the programme will establish contacts with value chain supporting actors (physical inputs and non-financial service providers) and with facilities (e.g. IFAD’s Agri-Business Capital Fund, etc.) and financial institutions to enhance access to capital and productive resources for youth. Meso-level organizations (e.g. business associations, labour unions, trade offices, etc.) will be involved as well in the programme activities to provide platforms for collaboration or engaging members. Relevant government institutions will provide indications on targeting of beneficiaries and communities as well as strategic directions for implementation of activities.

The following institutions have been identified as key partners for collaboration under the project:

- Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MoFA).
- Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MELR).
- Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS).
- Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD).
- Ministry of Trade and Industry (MoTI)
- Ministry of Business Development (MoBD).
- Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection (MoGCSP).
- Youth Employment Agency (YEA)
- National Youth Authority (NYA)
- National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI)
- Council for Vocational Educaiona and Training (COVET)
- Nation Builders Corp (NABCO)
• Others include the Ghana Tech Lab, Kosmos Innovation Center (KIC), Trotro Tractor, Farmerline, some selected fintechs etc

At the continental / sub-regional levels, the Ghana OYA project will rely on partnerships and collaborations with key institutions, such as the African Union Commission and regional economic communities (RECs), as well as with apex organizations (including youth groups). The Ghana OYA project will also explore opportunities of working together with other countries for sharing lessons and learning from each others experience. It is anticipated that the different components of the intervention will provide space for other development partners to join in the implementation of one or more activities, through direct contribution or by creating synergies with existing programs / projects. For example, IFAD, Mastercard Foundation, SNV, USAID-FinGAP, GIZ and others are actively engaged in several projects and activities helping young people access resources, assets and services needed to be productive and have a positive impact on their communities. The Ghana OYA project will leverage on these projects to draw lessons for successful achievement of project outcomes.

d. Innovative tools of the programme
The programme will continue to explore innovative approaches to ensure broader stakeholder participation and alignment of the youth. Innovative concepts such as virtual and online learning platforms will be introduced to project beneficiaries. Other innovations to be introduced to this project will include promoting youth network platforms to give the youth a voice to advocate for more investment in the agric sector.

Additionally, youth will be engaged in rural enterprises that focuses on value chain activities including agro-dealerships that source inputs in advance of seasons; mechanization services for land preparation; spraying and harvesting; post-harvest handling; aggregation; agro-processing; and marketing of produce. With the fast-changing nature of work due to technology and artificial intelligence, Ghana needs to develop an education and training system (TVET), which is versatile and helps young people to adapt and thrive in the twenty-first century world of work.

The report also identified a number of initiatives currently ongoing that can be replicated or up-scaled to create sustainable jobs for the youth. Some of these initiatives include Kosmos Innovation Center (KIC) which natured initiatives such as Trotro Tractor and Kwidex. Others include Farmerline, and PULA insurance, ESOKO, and Sesi Technology etc.

e. Gender promotion
The project will mainstream gender throughout all activities. Therefore, this programme is expected to contribute to FAO’s and UNIDO’s gender mainstreaming objective of ensuring equal opportunities for women and men. Finally, it will promote inclusion of gender-sensitive markers with the collection of sex-disaggregated data in all relevant regulatory frameworks at country level. A gender-sensitive analysis have been conducted during the country level baseline studies. This included the collection of sex-disaggregated data at the value chain level, the definition of baselines and of targets.
The Ghana OYA project will ensure the representation of youth, persons with disability, men and women among the stakeholders and beneficiaries, for meeting events and training, to support the advancement of women’s equal participation with men as decision makers. Trainings and other programme activities will be developed in a gender-responsive manner, including consideration of location and safety, training of female trainers, gender-sensitive facilitators, etc. to promote female participation. To this end, recruitment of the programme staff/team will target gender balance and staff will be sensitized on gender equality and women economic empowerment.

Half of the targeted beneficiaries at country level will be female to the greatest extent possible. In addition, the programme will aim to achieve at least 50 percent female participation in trainings, workshops and dialogue platforms and will aim to support to at least 30 percent female-led businesses in targeted agricultural value chains and food systems.

f. Environmental sustainability

The programme has a strong socioeconomic dimension and it will place strong emphasis on the promotion of sustainable social, environmental, and economic practices. With respect to the environmental issues, Ghana is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, which threatens the sustainability of agricultural production and potentially affects the livelihoods of farmers and other actors involved in the development of the value chains, especially in the Northern sector. Deforestation, soil erosion, illegal mining, and pollution are also issues affecting agriculture production in Ghana. Industrialisation can also have a negative environmental footprint. The programme will promote, for example, climate-smart interventions and good agricultural and agribusiness practices on environmental resource management. Also, it will promote green jobs and the introduction of good practices on circular economy (circularity) across the agro-food sector.

This programme lies within the “Category C” within the UNIDO framework on environmental and social policies and procedures as well as within the “Low category” within FAO framework for environmental and social screening. Therefore, no further environmental and social impact assessment is required.

g. South-South cooperation and regional economic partnerships

As a key component of this project, Ghana will continue to engage other countries at the regional and sub-regional level to share experiences and learn from each other. This will serve as a platform to facilitate exchanges between countries leading to knowledge sharing, policy dialogue and recommendations to enhance regional cooperation.

At national level, collaborations will be set-up with training institutes (including TVET, advanced entrepreneurial and business institutions, etc.) for enhancement of technical, entrepreneurial and digital skills. Also, the programme will establish contacts with value chain supporting actors (physical inputs and non-financial service providers) and with facilities (e.g. IFAD’s Agri-Business Capital Fund, etc.) and financial institutions to enhance access to capital and productive resources for youth. Meso-level organizations (e.g. business
associations, labour unions, trade offices, etc.) will be involved as well in the programme activities. Relevant government institutions will provide indications on targeting of beneficiaries and communities as well as strategic directions for implementation of activities.

**h. Sustainability**

The programme is fully in line with the existing national, sub-regional, and continental strategies on youth employment creation and entrepreneurship development, and will rely on the following operational principles:

- Ensuring national and regional leadership and ownership: guaranteeing through close collaboration with the government and coordinating agencies that initiatives, lessons learned, and best practices easily become focal areas for government to build on in their plans and programmes;
- Ensuring multi-stakeholder participation and consultation: fostering a high degree of participation and engagement of both public and private sector stakeholders to secure high-level support and strong ownership;
- Avoiding duplication and maximizing on past investments and programmes: building on the existing capacities and networks;
- Adopting a long-term approach: supporting the promotion of policy frameworks for long-term policy change and develop/upscale critical capacities at all levels; also, utilize the positive results/best practices of the intervention as references and/or benchmarking tool for replication.
- Governance mechanism: facilitating functionality and effectiveness of governance structures; and
- Avoiding duplication: working towards the replication of the programme beyond the six prioritized countries in other parts of the Continent (demonstrative effect).

The programme has a strong capacity development focus. The long-term sustainability of the programme will be guaranteed through the strong involvement of stakeholders at all levels, building the support from a strong coalition of stakeholders, including local, national and regional partners. Stakeholder engagement will be done at multiple levels (local, national and regional), including the highest institutional level in Africa with the African Union Commission. Government, youth groups, producer organizations, private sector, academia and educational/training institutions, etc. will be included to ensure participatory and sustainable mechanisms aimed at unlocking further growth opportunities for agriculture, agribusiness and rural development. In addition, capacity development activities will specifically address gender-based constraints.

At country level, FAO, UNIDO and Line Ministries’ staff will be trained on how to develop and manage youth employment initiatives, whereas other stakeholders will be trained on how to integrate youth employment and entrepreneurship in policy and programmatic frameworks and interventions. The nature of most of these activities will be procurement of services and other intangibles, with possible small-scale goods or equipment which are not anticipated to
have any major irreversible environmental impacts. Finally, in the framework of the proposed intervention, indigenous communities will not be targeted specifically, thus it is not foreseen that they will be affected.

i. **Direct Beneficiaries**

- Young women and men in rural, peri-urban and urban areas - notably producers, micro-small entrepreneurs, vulnerable and low-skilled youth, unemployed or under-employed, youth already engaged or potentially interested in engaging in agribusiness;
- Value chain stakeholders in meso-level institutions (financial and non-financial) and business development service providers with focus on the agriculture sector and on agribusiness in rural, peri-urban, and urban areas;
- Policy and decision makers at national level in relevant government and other public institutions, and at continental / sub-regional levels in apex and inter-governmental organizations.

j. **Stakeholders consultations and alignment**

The programme through a national country consultant engaged major stakeholders in the employment and enterpreneurial ecosystem at an initial validation workshop. Stakeholder engagements were done at the national, regional and district level. The programme will continue to engage these key stakeholders at all levels of the project including validation of final report and budget. Government ministries such as the ministry of employment, agriculture, youth and sports and gender and social protection were consulted for their buy-in and alignment.

k. **Programme Governance**

l. **Governance principles**

The proposed programme is developed by FAO and UNIDO, under the overall strategic guidance of the African Union Commission (AUC)'s Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Development (AUC-DARBE). It will be implemented in close coordination by the two agencies, following a joint results-oriented framework.

FAO and UNIDO will contribute to the proposed development objective and to specific Outcomes / Outputs based on their distinct comparative advantages. In line with UNDG’s Guidelines on UN joint programming, both FAO and UNIDO will have programmatic, financial, and reporting responsibilities for their part of the proposed programme.

Within UNIDO, the implementation of the programme will be led by the Department of Agri-Business Development (PTC/AGR) and directly coordinated by the Rural Entrepreneurship, Job Creation and Human Security Division (RJH) in Vienna, in line with its mandate to support rural entrepreneurship and job creation, including of youth. Technical inputs and
support will be sought from the Agro-Industries Technology Division (AIT) and the Food Systems and Nutrition Division (FSN) to ensure a concerted effort towards the optimal implementation of proposed activities. The proposed programme will provide an opportunity to fast-track and operationalize the recently-formulated Youth Strategy, which seeks to scale up UNIDO’s efforts in integrating youth into inclusive and sustainable industrial development. Other UNIDO Departments in Vienna may be involved in the proposed intervention, depending on the needs identified in each prioritized country. The Regional Offices in Egypt, Ethiopia, Nigeria, South Africa might play a backstopping and liaison role with country offices and RECs. With technical support from FAO’s Regional Office for Africa, Sub-regional Office for Eastern Africa, and the Inclusive Rural Transformation and Gender Equality Division, the FAO Country Office will work closely with stakeholders to promote employment opportunities for the youth and enhancing the selected value chains in modernizing agriculture and enabling environment for agribusiness.

m. Governance Organs
The implementation of the programme will involve a broad range of stakeholders at different levels, each having their respective role and responsibility.

At national level, collaborations will be set-up with training institutes (including TVET, advanced entrepreneurial and business institutions, etc.) for enhancement of technical, entrepreneurial and digital skills. Also, the programme will establish contacts with value chain supporting actors (physical inputs and non-financial service providers) and with facilities (e.g. IFAD’s Agri-Business Capital Fund, etc.) and financial institutions to enhance access to capital and productive resources for youth. Meso-level organizations (e.g. business associations, labour unions, trade offices, etc.) will be involved as well in the programme activities. Relevant government institutions will provide indications on targeting of beneficiaries and communities as well as strategic directions for implementation of activities.

The Inception Phase has allowed for further fine-tuning of the operational modalities with each stakeholder during the preparation of the Country Action Plan. Implementing partners have been mobilized at regional and district levels to facilitate effective implementation of the programme.

The different components of the intervention provide opportunities for other development partners to participate in the implementation of one or more activities, through direct contribution or by creating synergies with existing programs / projects. For example, IFAD is actively engaged in several projects and activities helping young people access resources, assets and services needed to be productive and have a positive impact on their communities. Leveraging on its Rural Youth Action Plan 2019-2021, IFAD could play a central role with long-term country engagements.
n. Action Plan

OUTCOME 1

Outcome 1: targets the need to foster different skill-sets and competencies for youth (unemployed, employed, and self-employed alike) to increase their employability and self-employment capabilities: i) Technical skills, which refer to the sector specific skills needed to produce and deliver agriculture and agribusiness (including processing technologies and food safety) relevant products or services; ii) Entrepreneurial skills, which refer to knowledge, attitude, skills and habits to overcome strategic and operational challenges of starting a company; iii) Business skills are the set of skills required to manage and lead a business. As such, it encompasses all areas related to basic business administration (e.g. strategy, marketing, accounting, financial management, operations, etc.) as well as leadership skills; and iv) Digital skills, related to technologies that are drastically speeding up innovation cycles across all sectors, allowing efficiency gains and cost reductions, increases in quality and explorations of new products or business models.

Digital inclusion should be considered as a cross-cutting subject to the other above-mentioned areas. Transversal competencies are those typically considered as not specifically related to a job, task, academic discipline or area of knowledge but as skills that can be used in a wide variety of situations and work settings.

The teaching and transfer of these skills and competencies is envisaged to happen through demand-oriented courses delivered by national training institutions. These courses shall be designed in close collaboration with the private sector (i.e. employers), to ensure their suitability for the labour market. The transfer of these skills is envisaged to be organized by interdisciplinary platforms (i.e. entrepreneurship centres) managed in close collaboration by higher education institutions and business schools.

Ultimately, the development of technical, entrepreneurial, business, digital skills will result in greater employability and self-employment opportunities for youths. Digital inclusion, circularity, and innovation (i.e. new products and partnership mechanisms) will be cross-cutting subjects and integral parts of the learning process.

- Output 1.1 – Work skills and transversal competencies (soft skills) developed to support personal growth, improve access to resources, and facilitate labour market transition for youth.

Targeted youth will be provided with transversal competencies (i.e. those skills not specifically related to a particular job that can be used in a wide variety of situations and work settings) and digital skills that will enable them to successfully manage labour market transition and to access productive resources to lead productive lives, and (for some) to establish agribusinesses and SMEs. Teachers’ / trainers’ capacity will be developed as well.
Activity 1.1.1 – Integrate demand-based core employability skills and soft skills in short- and long-term training courses by providing tailored-made virtual and physical capacity building opportunities for Ghanaian youth in partnership with TVET institutions.

Activity 1.1.2 – Develop curricula for short-term trainings on ICT, digital skills and competencies for youths.

Activity 1.1.3 – Build teachers’ / trainers’ capacity and methods to deliver knowledge on relevant work skills (including digital skills) and transversal competencies

Output 1.2 – Specialized competencies and professional skills developed to enhance employability (on- and off-farm) of youths in agriculture and agribusiness (Responsible: FAO).

In close collaboration with education and academic institutions (including TVET) as well as the private sector, this Output will support capacity development for targeted youth through demand-driven technical and vocational trainings, work-based learning and skill-enhancement courses that will address key issues related to employment and employability in agriculture and agribusiness faced by youth in each country.

Activity 1.2.1 – Develop demand-oriented short- and long-term trainings on technical skills and specialized competencies for identified on- and off-farm job opportunities.

Activity 1.2.2 – Review / strengthen work-based learning mechanisms of training institutes in collaboration with prospective employers.

Activity 1.2.3 – Build teachers’ / trainers’ capacity and methods to deliver practical knowledge on relevant specialized competencies and professional skills.

Activity 1.2.4 – Facilitate partnerships between training providers and employers to offer on- and off-farm work-based learning (traineeships / internships).

Activity 1.2.5 – Set-up mentoring and apprenticeship programs for acquiring specialized competencies and professional skills.

Activity 1.2.6 – Generate knowledge on approaches, methodologies and models for up-scaling and replicability.

Activity 1.2.7 - Enhance the technical (farm management, farm implement operation, tractor operation, factory related technical skills), entrepreneurial behaviour change management skills, business operational and management, digital skills (e-commerce), as well as transversal competencies of youth to improve their growth trajectory.
- **Output 1.3** – Entrepreneurial mind-set and business skills developed to promote the growth of youth-led agribusinesses and SMEs in agriculture.

Through this Output, targeted youth will improve their entrepreneurial and business skills and competencies. The support to advanced learning institutions to design, test and disseminate demand-oriented skills development trainings will be coupled with agribusiness incubation services for prospect youth-led businesses and SMEs and acceleration services for existing agribusinesses.

  - **Activity 1.3.1** – Support training institutes delivering short-term training courses on entrepreneurship and business development.
  - **Activity 1.3.2** – Setup peer-to-peer learning and coaching programs in collaboration with training institutes and business development services.

Examples of UNIDO’s Entrepreneurship Curriculum Program (ECP) and Learning and Knowledge Development Facility (LKDF).

  - **Activity 1.3.3** – Identify and promote “champion entrepreneurs” for coaching / mentoring programs and for dissemination of best practices.
  - **Activity 1.3.4** – Generate knowledge on approaches, methodologies and models for up-scaling and replicability by conducting needs assessment studies to identify the skills gap within private enterprises and provide support to capacitate individuals to increase competitiveness and value chain outcomes.
  - **Activity 1.3.5** - Collaborate with youth focused institutions and other key stakeholders to review and revise agricultural and rural development/value chain policies to be more youth-inclusive and ensure sustainable investments and job creation through agriculture.

**OUTCOME 2**

**Outcome 2**: Intends to increase linkages among stakeholders to facilitate youth-led agribusiness and SMEs’ access to local, regional and international markets, while strengthening the role of dedicated institutions / organisations at country level. Hence, this Outcome will enhance the capacity of youth-led businesses and SMEs to access market opportunities; and improve business support services to match the changing and growing needs of youth-led businesses and SMEs in agriculture.

Also, the intervention will enhance young entrepreneurs’ Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) capacities to overcome market isolation and improve their competitiveness on physical and virtual markets. Increased ICT literacy will be sought through the provision of trainings / courses on internet marketing and language in advertising, online sales including acquaintance of payment methods, ability to store and update data and information etc.
A combination of services will be proposed according to the development stage of the agribusinesses and SMEs, and to the experience and skills of entrepreneurs (e.g. start-ups, experienced micro-entrepreneurs, established small- and medium-sized enterprises). Also, technical assistance will strengthen service providers’ capacity to support young entrepreneurs on how to identify market opportunities (i.e. market intelligence) and how to seize them (e.g. product development, compliance with standards, quality, information on sale channels, including ecommerce platforms and referencing, etc.) as well as promoting innovation and key technologies.

**Output 2.1** – Business development services improved to foster competitiveness (innovation) and to ensure viability and efficiency of youth-led agribusinesses and SMEs.

This Output will enhance the ability of business service providers, including business associations (e.g. chambers of commerce and industry), trade offices, business incubators and accelerators, co-workings, and interdisciplinary platforms (possibly attached to advanced learning institutions) to support youth-led agribusinesses and SMEs within the targeted agricultural value chains and agri-food systems.

- **Activity 2.1.1** – Strengthen business development service providers to incentivize youth entrepreneurship and adoption of innovation (new technologies, products, partnerships) in agriculture and agribusiness.
- **Activity 2.1.2** – Increase access for youth-led agribusinesses and SMEs in agriculture to demand-oriented enterprise development services (business incubation and acceleration services).
- **Activity 2.1.3** - Collaborate with business incubation service providers such as Kosmos Innovation Centre, Impact Hub, Esoko, Ghana Tech Lab, Ghana Climate Innovation Center etc. to train youth and link them to industries.
- **Activity 2.1.4** - Identify and select potential youth-led fintechs and agribusiness SMEs to be engaged to provide services such as weather information, market access, financial (loan acquisition, bookkeeping, access to agricultural inputs and logistics (transportation, storage, processing, harvesting etc) to small holder farmers.
- **Activity 2.1.5** - Establish grant fund to promote innovative ideas in ICT for agriculture and support emerging SMEs and fintechs, which are women/youth-led to expand operations and coverage to employ more youth.
- **Activity 2.1.6** – Facilitate counselling and coaching / mentoring programs for young entrepreneurs.

**Output 2.2** – Capacity of youth-led agribusinesses and SMEs strengthened to identify and access market opportunities (physical and virtual) and to integrate into national, regional and international markets.

This Output will focus on innovative approaches (i.e. new products, technologies, partnerships) to strengthen the capacity of youth-led businesses and SMEs on product
development, marketing, customer-orientation, and access to new markets (including virtual markets). Also, links with meso-level institution (service providers) will be facilitated through this Output, with specific attention to youth’s economic empowerment targets.

- **Activity 2.2.1** – Establish learning hubs and develop training courses and tools on identification of market opportunities and how to seize them (e.g. export consortia, etc.).

Examples of UNIDO’s Global Cleantech Innovation Program (GCIP) and Private Financing Advisory Network (PFAN).

- **Activity 2.2.2** – Support youth-led agribusinesses and SMEs on product development and access to new markets through innovative (digital) means and partnership mechanisms.
- **Activity 2.2.3** – Improve the adoption and use of ICTs and innovative digital means for business management and entrepreneurship development.
- **Activity 2.2.4** – Support youth-led agribusinesses and SMEs establishing links with buyers on existing physical and virtual markets (including creation of digital platforms and blockchain applications).

- **Output 2.3** – Business opportunities promoted to facilitate youth-oriented development partnerships and technology transfer across regional and global value chains.

This Output will support youth-led businesses to access information on existing and new markets and opportunities for enterprise development and growth. Youth case-specific examples on public-private development partnerships and on university-industry collaboration will be collected and disseminated as well.

- **Activity 2.3.1** – Identify promising business opportunities for youth-led agribusinesses and SMEs, in collaboration with non-financial and financial service providers.
- **Activity 2.3.2** – Organize workshops and seminars on innovative technologies and techniques specific to targeted agricultural value chains.
- **Activity 2.3.3** – Promote and disseminate youth case-specific examples on public-private development partnerships and on university-industry collaboration.
- **Activity 2.3.4** – Identify and select potential youth-led fintechs and agribusiness SMEs to provide services such as weather information, market access, financial (loan acquisition, bookkeeping, access to agricultural inputs and logistics (transportation, storage, processing, harvesting etc) to small holder farmers.
Output 2.4 – Access to financial products and services enhanced for youth-led agribusinesses and SMEs in agriculture (Responsible: FAO)

This Output will build upon the experience of the AgrInvest initiative, which attracts and de-risks private-sector investment in value chains and agri-food systems. Commercial banks, MFIs, financial cooperatives, digital financial service providers (e.g. mobile money, if existing) and other non-bank finance service providers will be involved to provide youth-oriented solutions to overcome financial barriers, developed at local and systemic levels.

- Activity 2.4.1 – Establish partnerships with financial service providers for designing youth-oriented financial products and services adapted to agriculture and agribusiness needs.
- Activity 2.4.2 – Identify gaps and conduct trainings on financial literacy and financial management for youth-led businesses and for service providers alike.
- Activity 2.4.3 – Support business service providers on counselling and coaching to entrepreneurs for preparing bankable business plans.
- Activity 2.4.4 – Sensitise financial service providers and other key institutions on youth responsive financial products and services.
- Activity 2.4.5 - Establish grant fund or portfolio to promote innovative ideas in ICT for agriculture and support emerging SMEs and fintechs, which are women/youth-led to expand operations and coverage to employ more youth.

Outcome 3

Outcome 3 puts emphasis on agricultural value chains and agri-food systems with high potential for creation of decent on- and off-farm jobs and self-employment opportunities, including agribusinesses and SMEs in agriculture. Agri-food systems (i.e. business ecosystems) are defined by the physical or virtual coexistence and interaction of stakeholders, like: a) Agricultural suppliers - backward chain of providers of services/equipment - and buyers, b) Support service providers; c) Research and training institutions, and d) Associations and platforms that facilitate advocacy and learning amongst system actors. These stakeholders compete, but more importantly, cooperate towards a common goal: economic development.

Much of the success of a business is defined by the stakeholder environment and respective relationships rather than by the capacities within the organization. This is because businesses in such systems benefit from the concentration of stakeholders with buyer knowledge and relationships, the juxtaposition of companies in related industries, the concentration of specialized information-generating entities, and buyer sophistication.

In particular, the programme will foster systemic capacity to support formalization and agri-food systems’ growth. Through formalization, it will support integration of youth-led agribusiness and SMEs in agriculture with service providers and meso-level organizations.
(e.g. business associations and platforms). Also, it will strengthen match-making platforms between supply and demand support services, enhancing capacities of businesses, research and training institutions, and other value chain actors. Ultimately, it will take into consideration the key role of the Diaspora in the prioritized countries, to mobilize capacities and resources towards agriculture and agribusiness development.

**Output 3.1** – Linkages between value chain actors strengthened to increase demand-oriented support services (inputs, logistics, marketing, etc.) and access to knowledge and productive resources.

This Output will support the creation of business linkages and synergies between service providers (i.e. physical inputs, non-financial and financial services) and agribusinesses to improve the accessibility to demand-oriented services, and the related infrastructure (physical and digital), for youth-led businesses and SMEs. Access to non-financial resources (e.g. titles, deeds, licenses, etc.) through demand-oriented advisory services will be promoted, building on the 3ADI+ approach to value chain analysis and development, which was jointly developed by FAO and UNIDO and has been piloted in Bangladesh, Suriname and Tanzania so far. Activities under this Output are:

- **Activity 3.1.1** – Promote business linkages, partnerships and synergies between value chain actors for better demand-oriented services delivery.
- **Activity 3.1.2** – Establish match-making mechanisms between value chain actors and physical inputs and non-financial service providers.
- **Activity 3.1.3** – Promote suitable products and services for youth and youth-led agribusinesses and facilitate linkages with support service providers.
- **Activity 3.1.4** – Generate knowledge on approaches, methodologies and models for up-scaling and replicability.
- **Activity 3.1.5** – Encourage youth to go into innovative food production ventures that target high end markets (niche)
- **Activity 3.1.6** – Work with government to promote export of value added cocoa products to regional and sub-regional economies taking advantage of AfCFTA

**Output 3.2** – Capacity of national Government institutions strengthened to identify and address structural causes of systemic underperformance, to produce evidence-based youth responsive policies, and to achieve active coordination with businesses and non-state actors.

This Output will strengthen national capacity to identify bottlenecks, design and harmonize evidence-based policies and strategies and tackle structural causes of food systems underperformance. Also, it will improve public institutions' ability to coordinate with the private sector and other non-state actors, building on the 3ADI+ approach, jointly developed and piloted by FAO and UNIDO.
Activity 3.2.1 – Support relevant national institutions to identify and address structural causes (legal and regulatory obstacles) of agri-food systems’ underperformance.

Activity 3.2.2 – Review and improve evidence-based coherent policies and programmes favouring value chain and agri-food systems development and promoting formalization.

Activity 3.2.3 – Promote dialogue and coordination between public actors and other stakeholders (particularly the private sector and non-state actors).

Activity 3.2.4 – Foster the use of ICTs and digital solutions for capacity development, and improved efficiency of supporting national institutions.

Activity 3.2.5 – Improve adoption and implementation of labour standards to reduce decent work deficits facing youth in agriculture and agribusiness.

Output 3.3 – National multi-stakeholder platforms on youth in agriculture and agribusiness established / strengthened to enhance public-private collaboration and synergies between businesses, value chains, agri-food systems and sectors.

Public-private development partnerships, and dialogue among public and private stakeholders at local, regional and national levels will be facilitated through this Output. Also, activities will support the identification, exchange and dissemination of best practices across businesses, value chains, food systems and sectors.

Activity 3.3.1 – Map existing policy dialogues and fora, and monitor systems development for knowledge generation on approaches, methodologies and models for agribusiness, value chains, food systems and sectors.

Activity 3.3.2 – Facilitate partnerships between government institutions, private sector, research and academia on youth employment creation and entrepreneurship development.

Activity 3.3.3 – Establish / strengthen local and national processes and multi-stakeholder coordination mechanisms.

Activity 3.3.4 – Support policy dialogue at national level focusing on youth employment creation and entrepreneurship development in agriculture and agribusiness.

Activity 3.3.5 – Generate knowledge on approaches, methodologies and models for up-scaling and replicability.

Activity 3.3.6 - Partner youth-led organizations to establish a sustainable national youth network for promoting the interest of women and youth in the agriculture sector in Ghana.

Output 3.4 – Improved robustness, efficiency and competitiveness of targeted agricultural value chains and agri-food systems.
This Output will support the establishment of partnerships between Government institutions, research centres and universities (including community colleges), start-ups and agribusinesses and SMEs, in order to improve robustness, efficiency and competitiveness (basic requirements and infrastructure improvements) of targeted value chains and agri-food systems and regional value chains. Furthermore, national policies, strategies, and investment programs will be supported to foster the competitiveness of the value chains and agri-food systems, building on the 3ADI+ approach jointly developed and piloted by FAO and UNIDO.

- **Activity 3.4.1** – Develop systemic capacities of national institutions strengthening competitiveness (basic requirements), with specific attention to targeted value chains and agri-food systems.
- **Activity 3.4.2** – Support investment programs for infrastructure improvements (storage, transportation, communication) to enhance market integration.
- **Activity 3.4.3** – Review and improve evidence-based policies and strategies favouring national macro-economic stability.
- **Activity 3.4.4** – Support technological innovation and business sophistication towards higher value-added agribusiness activities.

**OUTCOME 4**

Because of its national dimension, Outcome 4 will focus on strengthening policy, institutional and programmatic frameworks that support decent youth employment creation and entrepreneurship development in agriculture and agribusiness. For businesses to prosper and access new markets, the role of national, regional and district institutions is to provide an economic framework, improve the microeconomic capacity of the economy and develop and implement economic action programs.

Hence, this Outcome will focus on: i) Improving the capacity of national and decentralized institutions to identify and address bottlenecks and to design policies and programs in response; and ii) Enhancing dialogue, knowledge generation and dissemination and sharing of best practices among countries and targeted organizations.

It will look at the collaboration among the African Union Commission, Regional Economic Communities, Governments, inter-Governmental and regional organizations, development banks, youth organizations, the private sector and other stakeholders, with the aim of: a) Attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into agriculture and agribusiness; b) Supporting business / research collaboration; c) Fostering unique competitive advantages of the targeted value chains and agri-food systems; d) Sharing of market information; e) Promoting exports; and f) Facilitating regulatory reforms. Establishing linkages to applications of the FAO’s AgrInvest program on innovative financing models.

This requires the existence of processes and structures that allow a demand-oriented analysis of bottlenecks, identification of needs for action, policy development and policy execution in these areas.
Output 4.1 - In-depth baseline studies on the potential for decent youth employment creation and entrepreneurship development in agri-food systems has been conducted to prepare this Country Action Plan.

Activities that have been refined and integrated into the joint result-based framework. This included a more in-depth baseline analysis of Ghana (e.g. their needs, socio-economic background and context, potential for youth employment creation and entrepreneurship development, mapping of relevant national and international actors, etc.) and a detailed work plan and budget.

- **Activity 4.1.1** – Collect and analyse disaggregated data on youth employment, entrepreneurship, prioritized value chains and agri-food systems, and relevant policy and programmatic frameworks.
- **Activity 4.1.2** – Prepare country action plans (refine activities, specific work plans and budgets for Ghana).
- **Activity 4.1.3** – Ensure linkages between the Country Action Plan and the monitoring of activities, outputs and outcomes at district, regional and national levels.

Output 4.2 - Capacity of national institutions strengthened on systematic collection and analysis of data to measure the performances and assess opportunities and constraints for youths in agri-food systems.

Through this Output, the programme will put data within reach to support the development of targeted agricultural value chains and sustainable food systems. Systematic collection and analysis of data that covers various areas of the entire food system will enable institutions assessing the performance food systems, and to inform decision-making at national, regional and district levels; building on the 3ADI+ approach jointly developed and piloted by FAO and UNIDO. Data collection and analysis will ensure gender and age disaggregation and be particularly attentive to the specific needs, challenges and aspirations of youth and their engagement in value chains and food systems.

- **Activity 4.2.1** – Collect and analyse data on targeted value chains and agri-food systems to assess performances of actors and to build knowledge on the specific needs, challenges and aspirations of youth.
- **Activity 4.2.2** – Strengthen the capacity of relevant public institution to collect and analyse data for informed evidence-based decision-making on youth employment and entrepreneurship development.
- **Activity 4.2.3** – Review and improve evidence-based national policies favouring decent youth employment and self-employment creation and promote youth responsive action-oriented programmes.
Output 4.3 - National, regional and decentralised youth networks (and young entrepreneurs’ associations) strengthened to streamline youth priorities into policy and programmatic frameworks around agri-food systems.

This Output will provide a platform to empower youth networks, to share knowledge and good practices, and to streamline youth employment creation and entrepreneurship development in agriculture and agribusiness. National and regional youth networks will be supported and linked to other international networks to boost dialogue, knowledge transfer and entrepreneurship development at national, sub-regional and continental levels.

- Activity 4.3.1 – Identify youth networks and associations, and “youth champions” to lead the dialogue with national, sub-regional and continental stakeholders.
- Activity 4.3.2 – Strengthen advocacy and dialogue within youth networks and associations to address main issues around decent youth employment creation and entrepreneurship development.
- Activity 4.3.3 – Promote sharing of experiences and up-scaling of best practices from youths across prioritized national, regional and district levels.
- Activity 4.3.4 – Provide support (technical assistance, grants etc) for existing coordination structures in the agriculture sector such as youth-led agribusiness groups, national & localized farmer organizations, private business associations and business development service providers to strengthen their governance processes, capacity to interact through sustainable networking platforms.

Output 4.4 – Capacity of selected national and decentralized institutions strengthened to design and analyse youth-centred policies, strategies and investment programs and to promote cooperation and policy alignment around agri-food systems.

This Output will strengthen the institutional capacities at national and decentralized levels needed to identify policies, strategies and investment programs that ensure cooperation and policy alignment towards youth employment and entrepreneurship development in agribusiness.

- Activity 4.4.1 – Map existing frameworks, studies and initiatives on youth employment and entrepreneurship in agriculture and agribusiness at national, regional and district levels.
- Activity 4.4.2 – Strengthen institutional capacity for mainstreaming youth employment and entrepreneurship development into national and decentralized continental policy and programmatic frameworks.
- Activity 4.4.3 – Facilitate actions that contributes to South-South cooperation and experience sharing across the country and with other sub-regional countries.
Output 4.5 – Opportunities generated for dialogue, knowledge-building and sharing of good practices between stakeholders and across agri-food systems at sub-regional and continental levels.

This Output will promote policy dialogue and cross-sectorial consultations between public and private actors and with key stakeholder groups. It will take stock of policies, approaches, methodologies and models that have been successful in creating youth employment and will promote these through in-country and inter-regional dialogues.

- **Activity 4.5.1** – Establish / strengthen existing national and regional platforms and hubs for knowledge-sharing between public and private actors and other key stakeholder groups
- **Activity 4.5.2** – Support relevant cross-country dialogues (i.e. on movement of goods, people, capital, data) to identify bottlenecks, design and harmonize policies and strategies at national and sub-regional level.
- **Activity 4.5.3** – Promote sharing of evidence-based policies and strategic programs development between prioritized countries and at district, regional and national levels.

OUTCOME 5

Outcome 5 refers to the establishment of a Programme Management Unit (PMU) ensuring implementation of activities, coordination, and liaison with stakeholders and resource partners. Also, it covers Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) of activities, outputs and outcomes and self-evaluation at national, sub-regional, and continental levels conducted. Finally, it includes the foreseen independent mid-term and terminal evaluations.

Programme Management

- **Activity 5.1.1** – Establish the Programme Management Unit, leveraging on existing FAO and UNIDO structures and comparative advantages.

Monitoring & Evaluation

- **Activity 5.1.2** – Ensure monitoring of activities, outputs and outcomes and self-evaluation at national, regional and levels throughout the project.
- **Activity 5.1.3** – Establish joint project steering committee including partner institutions to govern and oversee project implementation, evaluating progress periodically.
- **Activity 5.1.4** – Carry-out independent mid-term and terminal evaluations and share results with key stakeholders (i.e. AUC and RECs) for scaling-up the programme’s approach beyond the six prioritized countries.
### IV. Risk Assessment and Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Assumptions</th>
<th>Risks and Likelihood</th>
<th>Mitigation measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcome 1:</strong> Employability (on- and off-farm) and self-employment capabilities of youths in agriculture and agribusiness are enhanced</td>
<td>Training institutions and other actors are actively engaged</td>
<td>Lack of commitment and ownership of enough critical actors at country level</td>
<td>Dialogue, participatory approach and involvement of the different public and private stakeholders will be ensured from inception phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcome 2:</strong> Existing and emerging youth-led agribusinesses and SMEs in agriculture have increased access to finance and are better integrated into local, regional and international markets</td>
<td>Service providers and financial institutions are ready to cooperate and invest in youth and youth-led businesses and SMEs</td>
<td>Youth have inadequate access to productive inputs and financial resources</td>
<td>The programme will establish win-win partnerships with key institutions at country level from design phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enough women and women-led businesses can be identified</td>
<td>An insufficient number of women and women-led businesses is identified to meet targets</td>
<td>FAO and UNIDO will mobilize their networks to ensure the greatest number of female beneficiaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcome 3:</strong> Agricultural value chains and agri-food systems that create decent employment and self-employment opportunities for youths are strengthened</td>
<td>The food systems are favourable fostering competitiveness</td>
<td>An unfavourable economic situation hampering the achievement of the expected outputs</td>
<td>Regularly watch for overall sector risks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actors are interested and committed to participate in the programme</td>
<td>Lack of commitment and ownership of enough critical actors at country level</td>
<td>Dialogue, participatory approach and involvement of the different public and private stakeholders will be ensured from inception phase</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outcome 4: Policy, institutional and programmatic frameworks are strengthened at national, sub-regional and continental levels to support decent youth employment creation and entrepreneurship development in agriculture and agribusiness.

Data are available to conduct policy dialogue.

Sectoral and youth disaggregated data are not available.

Baseline and multi-sectorial studies are conducted at inception phase.

National, sub-regional and continental counterparts and policy makers are committed to translate key recommendations into policy strategies and programmes.

Wavering institutions' determination to open dialogue and eventually introduce changes.

Likelihood: medium

Likelihood: medium

Raising awareness among stakeholders supported by evidence-based data and analysis. As a result, institutions will have expressed a high commitment to streamline youth employment.

V. Monitoring and Evaluation

Regular reporting will be an integral part of M&E for systematic and timely provision of information. FAO and UNIDO will be regularly reporting on progress on implementation and financial management. A schedule for narrative and financial reporting to development partners will be developed.

A comprehensive Monitoring Framework will be developed by FAO and UNIDO as an integral part of the programme, highlighting the performance indicators, data sources, collection methods and frequency, responsible actors and baselines and targets for each result (objective, outcomes and outputs), including age- and sex-disaggregated data. It will be developed in collaboration with partners and with technical support from the monitoring and evaluation sections of the three entities. Monitoring activities will involve both the outcome and output levels: monitoring at output level is to be conducted at least quarterly, while it will take place semi-annually at outcome level. Financial monitoring will be conducted on a regular basis for effective financial managements and monitoring of delivery targets.

A mid-term evaluation and a final evaluation of the programme are planned: the mid-term evaluation will take place during the third year of implementation, while the final external evaluation will be conducted at the end of the programme. Results of these evaluations will be shared with key stakeholders (i.e. AUC and RECs) for scaling-up the program. Their compliance with the norms of evaluation in the UN System will be ensured with support from the Evaluation Units of FAO and UNIDO. The M&E information will be shared broadly with all stakeholders involved in the programme.
### VI. Budget (Indicative)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME</th>
<th>AMOUNT ($)</th>
<th>LEAD AGENCY RESPONSIBLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>YEAR 1</td>
<td>YEAR 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OUTCOME 1</td>
<td>782,160</td>
<td>771,600</td>
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<tr>
<td>Output 1.1</td>
<td>220,320</td>
<td>217,345</td>
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<tr>
<td>Output 1.2</td>
<td>295,920</td>
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<td>Output 1.3</td>
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<td>OUTCOME 2</td>
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<td>Output 2.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Output 2.2</td>
<td>132,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Output 2.3</td>
<td>98,400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Output 2.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Output 3.1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Output 3.2</td>
<td>138,000</td>
<td>144,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Output 3.3</td>
<td>124,800</td>
<td>120,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Output 3.4</td>
<td>114,000</td>
<td>109,200</td>
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<tr>
<td>OUTCOME 4</td>
<td>409,149</td>
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<tr>
<td>Output 4.1</td>
<td>137,949</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Output 4.2</td>
<td>90,000</td>
<td>90,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Output 4.3</td>
<td>76,800</td>
<td>102,960</td>
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<tr>
<td>Output 4.4</td>
<td>69,600</td>
<td>93,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Output 4.5</td>
<td>34,800</td>
<td>66,480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OUTCOME 5</td>
<td>93,600</td>
<td>98,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Management</td>
<td>93,600</td>
<td>81,600</td>
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<td>---------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16800</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SUB-TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>2,211,789</td>
<td>2,201,760</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PSC (13%)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GRAND TOTAL</strong></td>
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