

WOMEN AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT IN AGRICULTURE IN AFRICA IN THE CONTEXT OF AFCFTA



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Date: 18th November – 20th December 2024

Application Deadline: 15th November 2024

Language: Bilingual (French / English)



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CALL FOR APPLICATIONS AND NOMINATIONS

ANNOUNCEMENT IN BRIEF

Course Type: Online Course

Programme Area: Agricultural Policy

Date: 18th November – 20th December 2024

Duration: 5 Weeks

Language: Bilingual (French / English)

Application Deadline: 15th November 2024

Kindly note that an in-person session will be scheduled in 2025 upon availability of corresponding budget. Participants will be selected upon many criteria, including best performance during this course.



IDEP strongly encourage and supports the participation of suitably qualified female officials in its capacity development and training programme.

Dates for in-person session might change.

INTRODUCTION

Women make up more than 50% of Africa's population and 80% of them reside in rural areas. Over 60% are employment in rural areas in the agriculture sector¹. The trend is not much different for youth. They are ill-equipped and lack the required skills to spot economic or business opportunities or start up a business enterprise especially in Agriculture, hence, the urgent need to create viable economic opportunities to engage this category.

A 2017 International Labour Organization report² points out that given "the limited capacity of other sectors to absorb the growing labour force, agriculture will remain important for employment and livelihoods in the near future" for young people in both farming and related activities.

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) offers a huge scope of action that goes from enhancing agricultural trade and food security to boosting industrialization and strengthening agro-industry in Africa. This is a job-creation driver and entrepreneurship opportunities for local populations especially for youth and women.

The capacity development training aims to empower women and youth engaged in agriculture to seize the opportunities presented by the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

Recognizing the crucial role of agriculture in Africa's economic growth and the potential of AfCFTA to foster regional integration and trade, this training program seeks to equip women and youth with the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources to thrive in the agricultural sector and access regional and international markets.

By addressing gender disparities, providing entrepreneurial training, and enhancing agricultural practices, the program aims to promote inclusive and sustainable agricultural development for the benefit of individuals and the continent at large.

It is against this background that the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) in partnership with the ECA Regional Integration and Trade Division (RITD), the Songhai Regional Centre, and the associations of women entrepreneurs in Africa, and with the financial support of Denmark, organizes this capacity development training for Women and Youth Empowerment in Agriculture in the context of the AfCFTA.

OBJECTIVE

The overall objective of the training is to increase the productive capacity of youth and women in agriculture for a transformative impact that leads to inclusive and sustainable agricultural development and supports Africa's economic progress in the era of AfCFTA.

Specifically, the course objectives are:

- To strengthen the entrepreneurial and agricultural skills of women and youth in the agriculture sector, thereby enhancing productivity and income generation.
- To promote gender equality and inclusivity in agriculture by addressing the specific challenges faced by women and youth in accessing resources, markets, and services.
- To facilitate the integration of women and youth-led agricultural enterprises into regional and international markets, leveraging the opportunities offered by AfCFTA.

To advocate for policies and reforms that support women and youth empowerment in agriculture and enable their active participation in the trade under AfCFTA.

CONTENT

The capacity development training will encompass the following key components:

- **Entrepreneurship / Business Skills and Access to Finance:** Providing training in business planning, financial management, market analysis, and value chain development to enable participants to run successful agricultural enterprises. It will include clues for facilitating access to finance and provide financial literacy training to enable women and youth to invest in agricultural enterprises and value-added activities.
- **Sustainable Farming Practices:** Promoting the adoption of climate-smart and sustainable agricultural practices to enhance productivity while preserving natural resources.
- **Gender and Social Inclusion:** Addressing gender disparities and social barriers by promoting equitable access to resources, knowledge, and decision-making in the agricultural sector.
- **Market Access and Trade Facilitation:** Offering insights into trade regulations, market opportunities, and value chain integration within the AfCFTA framework.
- **Networking and Collaboration:** Encouraging networking and collaboration among participants to foster knowledge sharing, peer support, and the formation of strategic partnerships.

SKILLS TO BE IMPARTED

At the end of the training, participants will be expected to:

- (a) Be knowledgeable of essential entrepreneurial skills, including business planning, financial management, marketing strategies, and value chain analysis and opportunities.

The training will empower participants to establish and run successful agricultural enterprises, understand market demands, and identify profitable opportunities.

- (b) Be knowledgeable of climate-smart and sustainable farming techniques, resource management, and conservation practices. These will include soil health, water conservation, and integrated pest management to improve agricultural productivity while preserving the environment.
- (c) Be equipped with the knowledge to manage finances, keep records, and understand financial instruments and have insights into accessing financial resources, including loans and grants, to invest in agricultural ventures.
- (d) Gain knowledge of trade regulations, market trends, and export opportunities within the AfCFTA framework. They will understand how to navigate trade barriers and take advantage of regional and international markets.
- (e) Build networks and collaborations with other stakeholders in the agriculture sector, including farmers' cooperatives, input suppliers, and buyers. This will create opportunities for knowledge exchange, shared resources, and collective bargaining power.
- (f) Be introduced to digital tools and technologies that can streamline agricultural processes, improve productivity, and facilitate market access. This may include using mobile apps for agricultural information, precision agriculture technologies and digital marketing platforms.
- (g) Value Addition and Processing Techniques: The training will cover value addition and processing methods to enhance the quality and marketability of agricultural products. Participants will learn about food processing, packaging, and adding value to raw materials.

PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH & MODE OF DELIVERY

The training programme will comprise an online component and an in-person session. It will adopt a participatory and interactive approach, combining group discussions, practical exercises, field visits, and case studies. The training will be delivered by experienced facilitators, industry experts, and successful agripreneurs, ensuring a holistic learning experience.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The training program will primarily target African women and youth involved in diverse agricultural activities, including small-scale farmers, agri-entrepreneurs, processors, and traders across African countries.

ACCEPTANCE TO THE COURSE

Until the registration deadline, participants are accepted to the course on a rolling basis and subject to availability of slots. Please refer to the paragraph below to see priority target group. Applications must be completed exclusively on IDEP online application platform at <https://forms.gle/XPwQasvd8wyqvhYp8>

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Access to internet is an essential condition for participation. The following specifications, as a minimum in terms of hardware and software, are required to take this e-Learning course, please consult your Network Administrator or Systems person to ensure that you have the following:

- Platform: Windows 95, 98, 2000, NT, ME, XP or superior; Mac OS 9 or Mac OS X; Linux
- Hardware: 64 MB of RAM, 1 GB of free disk space
- Software:
 - Adobe Acrobat Reader
 - Adobe Flash Player
 - Microsoft Office (Windows or Mac) or Open Office
 - Browser: Internet Explorer 7 or higher or Firefox 36 or higher
- Modem: 56 K
- Note that JavaScript, Cookies and Pop-ups must be enabled

IMPORTANT DATES

- Deadline for Applications and Nominations: **15th November 2024**
- Course Period: **18th November – 20th December 2024**

CONTACT INFORMATION

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**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF DENMARK**

N.B.: IDEP strongly encourages and supports the participation of suitably qualified female officials in its capacity development and training programme.