

**KENYA'S WOMEN AND YOUTHS ACCESS TO AGRICULTURAL  
SKILL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH OPEN  
LEARNING**

**Fida International**

# Introduction

- Improving agricultural sector is a central leverage point for addressing the development challenges facing Kenya.
- Agricultural sector has the capacity to create enough jobs for the many unemployed Kenyans youths by promoting entrepreneurial innovativeness along agricultural value chain.
- This would lead to increased agricultural output, improved economy, increased community livelihoods and a vibrant country economy.
- This can only be achieved if out of school women and youth already actively involved in farming activities have training opportunities in agriculture.
- Out of school women and youth should have access to credential certificates in agriculture required for higher-level training in accredited training institutions.
- Non Governmental Organizations plays a critical role in provide training in agriculture to women and youths and in some instances awarding certificate of completion or participation.
- However these certificates are not recognized by accredited education institutions training in agriculture.

# Introduction

- This implies out of school and non schooled women and youths involved in farming have no opportunity for upgrading their skills in agricultural entrepreneurship training opportunities.
- Despite the knowledge and skills acquired through these trainings and the value attached to the certificate by the trainees, the certificates are not credentials and not recognized for higher training levels for women and youths.
- One of the ways of increasing access to training and access to credential certificates in agriculture for women and youths is adopting Open University.

This aligns with the FIDA International objective on reducing knowledge gaps in training among marginalized communities through open learning.

Open University Practices are credited for offering equal opportunity for skill development to all learners.

# Introduction

- This experiment sought to understand the regulatory framework governing training in agriculture.
- The beneficiaries are 5370 women and youths supported by three NGO (FMK, Dandelion and KENAFF)
- Among them 25 are People Living with Disability

# Collaborations/partnerships

The following collaborations/ partnerships were established:

- FMk
- Dendaleon
- KENAFF
- Three Universities
- 19 TVET Institutions
- This partners were sampled for the purposes of the experiment but there possibility of extend this collaboration beyond experimentation.

# Results and successes

On characteristics of potential Open University learners (women, youths and People Living with Disability) for certificate programmes in agriculture.

- The age bracket for women and youths actively involved in farming activities ranged between 15 and 41.
- Both genders were involved among them People Living with Disability (PLWD).
- Type of disability was found to be a determinant participation in some farming activities by women and youths.
- The survey also found out women and youths participating in agricultural activities had family responsibilities and were also involved in other economic activities.
- Some of the women and youths involved in agricultural activities did not have formal education though some had basic education and others tertiary education (undergraduate degrees).
- Primary and secondary education was the level where majority of the women and youths had their first encountered topics in agriculture.

# Results

On capacities of Universities and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions to implement agricultural certificate training programmes through Open University learning.

- The survey found out that Universities and TVET institutions had experiences in training in certificate course in agriculture.
- Universities and TVET institutions also considered their certificate courses in agriculture to be implementable through open learning.
- Training institutions also had the capacity and willingness to design agricultural skill development courses deliverable through open learning.

# Results

On capacities of NGOs to implement agricultural certificate training courses through Open learning,

- The survey found out that NGOs targeted marginalized communities in semi-arid areas and their project beneficiaries were women and youth aged between 18-40 years and among them PLWD.
- The survey also found out that NGOs had comprehensive agricultural training programmes for skills development in agribusiness/entrepreneurship skills.
- They also had curriculum/training manuals, which were activity based and aligned to the beneficiaries' skill gaps in agriculture.
- NGOs also had the capacity to support trainees with ICT literacy skills necessary for open learning.

- The survey also found out that desire to acquire agribusiness skill was a motivation for women and youths seeking for training courses in agriculture



# Results

On the regulatory frameworks governing implementation of agricultural training courses

- The survey found out that Universities and TVET institutions had different enrollment qualification for credential certificate of achievement in agriculture.
- Qualification range from D- (minus), to C- (minus).
- The survey also found out that Universities and TVET institutions had bridging (upgrading) opportunities
- The survey further found out that Universities and TVET institutions awarded certificate of completion and Merit to their trainees.

# Challenges and modifications during implementation

- Accessing respondents in remote areas- Attempt to ensure samples were as representative as possible was made.
- Getting adequate samples of TVET and Universities
- Communication barrier with totally illiterate respondents- Interviewers were local people
- Suspicion on how they were to benefit from the information given \_ assurance was given

# Principles for Digital Development

- *Opening access to learning through mobile devices and technologies.*
- *Collaboration between between NGOs and training institutions to take advantage of existing technologies.*

## Feasibility for scaling

- *There is need to pilot the open learning experiment with youth and women already practicing agriculture.*
- *NGOs should collaborate with TVET Institutions and Universities in designing open learning courses that would lead to youths and women and PLWD acquiring credential certificates in agricultural entrepreneurship.*