The Near East and North Africa
Regional Fact Sheet

Mission and Vision
The World Food Forum has been investing in the Near East and North Africa since 2019 to foster youth inclusion and empowerment in agriculture systems. With the aid of its bifurcated WFF is fighting to find meaningful solutions to diverse agricultural systems are more resilient, sustainable and equitable - with young people at heart. A total of 39 ideas were submitted and subsequently voted on by young delegates across the region to identify the top 40 and long-term priority actions for youth in the Near East and North Africa region.

Significant issues
Youth unemployment is higher in the NENA region than in any other region in the world. Agribusiness can be an essential source of decent employment provided youth is empowered and able to shape the sector's future.

What's being done
In the NENA region, WFF is hosted by FAO’s Regional Office and UNICEF. Several initiatives have been launched to empower youth and foster youth inclusion in agricultural systems, at regional and country levels.

In the region:
- A partnership with Enactus established to support university students with innovative projects contributing to local and agricultural system transformation in the region.
- The AgriNation Start-up Cup was launched in partnership with Future Agro Challenge and Beyt切尔西 to help innovative youth-led agro-food solutions to reach market and investment readiness.
- An online agricultural network "Youth in Agri Agribusiness Systems" was created to bring together and support youth organisations as well as young students, professionals, entrepreneurs and activists interested in agribusiness.
- There are several initiatives with a country-specific focus including:
  - Green jobs for youth in Pakistan
  - Researching the livelihoods of young farmers and agribusinesses in Sudan
  - "Nahda" youth entrepreneurship and employment initiative in Syria

Youth agribusiness initiatives in Morocco
- Launching the FAO/World Youth Agribusiness Competition (WYAC) to promote innovation in agriculture and agribusiness development in the country.
- Enactus FAO Special Agribusiness Competition hosted by National University of Science, Technology and Agriculture (NUST) in Pakistan.

Enactus-FAO Special Agribusiness Competition

Objectives: Young people develop their entrepreneurial skills.

Objectives:
- Promote the importance of learning in the agribusiness sector.
- Provide a platform for young agribusiness entrepreneurs in Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco.
- Connect young entrepreneurs to other NENA countries.
- Provide a platform for young agribusiness entrepreneurs in the region.

Metrics:
- 240 agricultural start-ups (22 advanced-stage projects and 22 concept-stage projects)
- 10 projects were selected to receive technical and financial support (9 advanced stages and 1 concept stage)
- 20,000 USD in grants
- 10 graduates were invited to present their innovative projects at the Dubai Expo - Future for Food Summit

Agrinatlon Start-up Cup

Objectives: Promote agribusiness awareness and skills among students.

Objectives:
- Empower young men and women with innovative and relevant business models.
- Strengthen national agribusiness ecosystems.
- Build a network of agribusiness incubators.
- Launch 10 game-changing enterprises.

Metrics:
- 19 impact makers selected as best agribusiness startups.
- 20 startups to join regional agribusiness bootcamps.
- 10 winning startups will receive technical incubation

Timeline:
- April 2021: Request for Proposals launched.
- April 2021: Finalists of implementing partners identified.
- November 2021: Contract awarded to OCG and Beyt切尔西
- February 2022: Announcement of Start-up Cup at Dubai Expo 2020
- May 2022: 10 agribusiness incubators were selected to host impact makers.
- June 2022: Launch of Agribusiness website and start-up applications.
- August 2022: Agribusiness Bootcamp for selected applicants.
- September 2022: Pitching event and selection of winning-entrepreneurs.
- October 2022: Incubator assessment and selection of winning enterprises.
- November 2022 - March 2023: Technical incubation and technical support programme.

Youth in Arab Agribusiness Systems (YAABS)

A regional action plan to accelerate youth involvement in agribusiness ecosystems.

Objectives:
- Foster direct engagement with the regional stakeholders of the World Food Forum and the UN Food Systems Summit.
- Foster meaningful collaboration and synergies with youth groups and individuals from the region.
- Exchange relevant and updated information and resources on food systems.
- Share and learn about new opportunities/events/vacancies/training/competitions, etc.

Metrics:
- 240 members representing 19 countries in the NENA
- 30 actionable ideas to transform agro-food systems
- 100 partners created and exchanged 4 regional youth events organized

Timeline:
- March 2022: 1st regional youth consultation in partnership with Food Systems Summit.
- April 2022: Submission of ideas for youth agribusiness action agenda 2nd regional youth consultation.
- May 2022: Launch of YAABS platform.
- August 2022: Announcement of top three winners.
- September 2022, WFF global flagship initiative and youth consultation on action agenda follow up.
- December 2022: More than 120 members included.
- January 2023: YAABS roadmap and insights published.
- March 2023: 2nd regional youth event organized to showcase good practices in youth involvement.