

# Organising a Youth Exchange

## Why a Youth Exchange?

You are thinking about organising an exchange with another youth council in your country. We think it can be very valuable for young farmers to explore agricultural opportunities in your country. So far, a big part of the exchange participants never had the chance to even go beyond their district, so you will always have an impact there. Not even to mention that if you empower these youth and show them successful cooperatives and/or businesses in other parts of the country, they can form their vision on the future of their farms and cooperative. Next to this reason it also is a great promoter of cultural exchange within the country.

It can be interesting to organise an exchange because:

- You make the youth ready to lead*
- You and some of your youth members will explore agricultural opportunities in your country*
- You increase your organisation skills*
- You make new friends*
- You learn more about farming, youth councils and different cooperatives*
- You will inspire and get inspired*



## Who is going to organise it?

We believe it's up to you (the youth councils/groups) to organise the exchange. It will help you to further develop your organisational and communication skills. It will benefit them in bonding as a team, create tangible results and add value to your youth members.

## Where to start?

1. Find another (quite similar) Youth Council or group to hold an exchange with. Agriterra can connect you to interesting and suitable youth groups of their clients.
2. Brainstorm together about a possible programme, which topics matter, inspiring farmers, nice companies to visit, workshops to follow (and who is able to give these for free), etc.
3. Plan a final date, decide a minimum and maximum number of participants, participant fee, participant profile and make an invitation (it might be a good idea to invite someone from the board or parents if the topic also concerns them).
4. Organise transportation, food, drinks, accommodation and finalise the programme.
5. Create a schedule, with a tentative timetable for the exchange days and be clear about who is responsible for what.

DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
Day 1		Travel to destination	
		Acquaintances and exchange	
		Supper and distribution to buddy homes	
Day 2		Discussion	
		Farm visits	
		Fun activity	
Day 3		Workshop	
		Reflection	
		Departure	

## About the programme

Keep it simple, be creative and start thinking from your perspective; what interests you when you go to another part of the country to meet colleagues and learn from them? Then think about what do you want to gain, what do you want the group to experience? Next to an informative part, make sure there is enough time to get to know each other. Ask an experienced person to oversee the main objectives, plans and budget.

"Make sure it is as well fun as inspiring."

## Some ideas for activities

We are convinced you don't need inspiration for the FUN activities, so we focused on the agricultural ones:

- ❖ find out how the other organisation processes and markets its products
- ❖ build sustainable partnership amongst youth
- ❖ improve own farming practices
- ❖ learn about how cooperatives work in general
- ❖ find solutions for making farming a business
- ❖ share experiences and hear about lessons learnt by other young farmers
- ❖ visit an inspiring (young) farmer
- ❖ exchange youth council projects
- ❖ help each other with challenges
- ❖ discuss the place of youth within the cooperative
- ❖ develop a workshop about networking and lobby
- ❖ discuss how to work with family succession
- ❖ find and give examples of innovative solutions (invite a key-note speaker)
- ❖ make a workshop on how to control finances
- ❖ discuss how to improve youth participation
- ❖ think about different income generating activities

## Budget

Try to organise a youth exchange with as little cost as possible to ensure you can continue with this kind of exchanges long after Agriterra has gone. You have to budget accommodation, food, drinks and the topics of the programme. In some cases, Agriterra can pay for the bus and fuel, they will be critical towards these actual costs, so make sure your budget is correct.

Example:

Item	Number of days/units	Costs	Total Costs	Possible ways to finance
Bus/Car rental/ Gas	3 – 4 days	150 euro/ day	450 euro	Cooperative, Participant Fee, Agriterra
Meals and drinks				Ask the host cooperative/families if they can take care of this and arrange a meal
Overnight				Home stay (let participants receive thank-you presents)
Activities				Doesn't have to cost much
Materials				
Etc.				

## Exchanges in Uganda

Uganda, for example, organised different local exchanges between their clients to share models of leadership and operations, to build sustainable partnership amongst youth, to improve their farming practices, to learn about how cooperatives work in general, to find solutions for making farming a business and to share experiences and hear about lessons learnt by other young farmers. Besides the tangible results below we always hear that these exchanges are eye-opening.

- A young farmer from Kibinge started farming sunflower seeds in the area of PKWI after an exchange visit.
- The farm management system of Kibinge has now cross-pollinated to PKWI.
- During our visit to Bududa, we talked to this young farmer that paid an excessive amount for a small piece of land in the hills. Would he still do that if he knew that there is a vast amount of fertile and flat land just 1,5 hours away in Bukedea? We want to give them this bigger perspective so that they can make wise investment decisions.

**For the rest just let it run its course.  
Just go and exchange.  
Invite each other and explore the country.  
It's that simple!**



*Agriterra is founded by the Dutch agricultural sector. We provide expert advice and training to cooperatives and farmer organisations in emerging economies. We strengthen farmer ownership and stimulate economic growth for ambitious farmers worldwide. This contributes to socio-economically strong and lively rural areas.*