

iiAgAP

Train, Mentor & Inspire



2nd Cohort REPORT

The Agribusiness Apprenticeship Program (AgAP) is organized by Michigan Fellows Agribusiness Initiative (MFAI) with support from the US Department of State Bureau of Education and Cultural Exchanges.

Date: 6th-11th December 2020

Abbreviations and Acronyms



A2N-U	African 2000 Network Uganda
AAP	Alliance for African Partnership
ACC	American Cultural Center
AEF	Alumni Engagement Funding
AgAP	Agribusiness Apprenticeship Program
CBO	Community Based-Organization
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
DoS	Department of State
EIWYU	Empowerment Initiative for Women and Youth Uganda
KyU	Kyambogo University
MFAI	Michigan Fellows Agribusiness Initiative
MSU	Michigan State University
MUF	Miss Uganda Foundation
MUK	Makerere University
NGO	Non-Government Organization
PFP	Professional Fellows Program
SLAU	St Lawrence University
YALI	Young Africans Leaders Initiative



Ms Leticia Mugerwa the CEO of Empowerment Initiative for Women and Youth Uganda (EIWYU) has a light moment with Gyezaho Ronald- one of the 2nd Cohort AgAP apprentices during the Commencement ceremony.

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2nd Cohort apprentices arrive at Avail fruits of Faith farm for the field day experience.



**AGRIBUSINESS
APPRENTICESHIP
PROGRAM**

Imede Santa Mary, One of the 2nd Cohort apprentices pitching her project during the commencement ceremony.

AgAP prologue

Under normal instances, the US Mission Kampala would have loved to host a program such as the Agribusiness Apprenticeship Program (AgAP) at the American centre. However, in the recent weeks there was a spike of COVID 19 cases at the US embassy. For the most part, Uganda has been very fortunate to have mild cases compared to the United States. The COVID 19 pandemic containment restrictions have had a toll on our work at the US embassy and caused the closure of our offices even with the few cases. It is for this reason that I was unable to attend the AgAP physically as I had also been at the embassy myself a few days earlier. I was glad to virtually share a keynote address and equally pleased to learn that St Lawrence University (SLAU) provided space for the AgAP training.

Where I come from in South Eastern Virginia, people have steadily moved away from agriculture. So is the case in many parts of the United States, unlike in Uganda. As a child, we had a family garden in the backyard. We would grow some tomatoes and pepper for salads, but I didn't grow up in what I would consider an agricultural society. Uganda is different. I know that agriculture is the backbone of Uganda's economy. I feel so fascinated by the work the US Department of State Professional Fellowship Program (PFP) alumni from Michigan State University under the Michigan Fellows Agribusiness Initiative (MFAI) and the apprentices are doing. Agricultural innovation is making all the difference in the success of an industry that is confronted with enormous challenges like climate changes, locust invasion, and post-harvest losses. I am sure that this work by MFAI and the AgAP apprentices is making a difference in creating positive change to tackle some of these challenges in many communities across the country.



The US Mission has a program where the apprentices can access additional study resources and online curriculum- the Young Africans Leaders Initiative (YALI). YALI constitutes three facets that are; the YALI Mandela Washington fellows, the YALI network and the YALI Regional Leadership Center. I encourage the apprentices to sign-up for the YALI Mandela Washington fellows' program. It is an incredibly competitive process where Agri-entrepreneurs from Uganda are well represented. I also recommend that apprentices join the YALI Network to access information and attend classes on leadership, social entrepreneurship and professional development.

I Congratulate the apprentices for completing the AgAP program and commend MFAI for investing the time in growing the network. It is making a difference in people's lives.

The US Mission in Kampala is happy to connect with each one of you in days to come. I wish all the apprentices success in their innovative ideas.

Congratulations!

Carly Van Oman

US Mission Kampala Cultural Affairs Officer





Message from The Program Coordinator

The successful completion of the 2nd Agribusiness Apprenticeship Program (AgAP) Cohort training attests to how far our passion and commitment as US Department of State (DoS) Professional Fellows Program (PFP) alumni of Michigan State University (MSU) to sharing our US experience with fellow youth can go. On behalf of Michigan Fellows Agribusiness Initiative as formed by the DoS-PFP congratulate the apprentices on this milestone in their professional and careers. I also congratulate Dorothy Ngalombi and St Lawrence University upon winning the AgAP Distinguished personality of the year and the AgAP 2020 prestigious awards respectively.

The 2nd Cohort was a great experience not just for the apprentices but also for all the PFP alumni, trainers and mentors. We have been able to build on the achievements of the inaugural cohort held at the American Centre in January, and introduced a number of novel activities like cultural sites visits, Ice cream evenings, photoshoots, sports including basketball, and swimming all intended to make agribusiness more youth friendly, interesting-beyond the conventional classroom and field experiences. The feedback obtained from the apprentices in the post evaluation survey only proves how timely and impactful these activities were in positively influencing attitudes, behaviours and perceptions toward agriculture.

The vision of the AgAP is to train, mentor and inspire youth into agribusiness. This vision is successfully being realized through the AgAP training, mentorship and its ability to create early exposures to innovation, networking

opportunities and a wide-range of multi-disciplinary information shared by diverse group of experts including virtual sessions from colleagues at MSU. The AgAP allows the apprentices to become investment-ready agri-preneurs with the skills to champion agribusiness in Uganda and beyond.

I want to thank all our partners, the MSU-Alliance for African Partnership (AAP), US Missions Kampala, St Lawrence University (SLAU), Miss Uganda Foundation, Empowerment Initiative for Youth and Women Uganda, Africa 2000 Network for your support and commitment to the AgAP. The 2nd AgAP Cohort couldn't have been any better without the virtual presentations from Clarena Amatha (Spring 2019 PFP alumna from Kenya), Dr Choti Damarius, Dr Wynne Wright, Peter Lemmer, and Derek H Tobias from MSU. Many thanks to Carly Van Oman and Dorothy Ngalombi from the US Mission Kampala for your continued faith and commitment to the AgAP.

Last but not least, all this work couldn't have been possible without the financial support of the US DoS Alumni Engagement Funding (AEF) under the auspice of the MSU-AAP. The AgAP success is equally an American success and continues to reflect the goodwill of the US people and the nation's foreign policy commitment to Africa through cultural and education exchange programs. We salute you. Happy new year! Look forward to coming cohorts in the new year.

For God and My Country.

Raymond Musiima
Spring 2019 PFP Alumnus



Executive summary

The completion of the 2nd AgAP cohort marked yet another Michigan Fellows Agribusiness Initiative (MFAI) milestone in 2020. The training which commenced on 6th to 11th December at St Lawrence university featured 10 selected youth from 7 districts representing all the regions in Uganda. The apprentices were from different academic, ethnicity backgrounds engaged in agribusiness in Uganda. During the training, the apprentices were engaged in in-class sessions, field day activities and graduation on the final day.

This year's 2nd cohort was unique not just because of the COVID 19 pandemic and its subsequent containment measures but also due to the adoption of virtual sessions that were conducted by our partners at Michigan State University (MSU), and fellow Professional Fellows Program alumni from Kenya. In addition, unlike the inaugural cohort, the 2nd cohort also featured co-curriculum and out-door activities that added fun and collegiality into the program. Apprentices had the opportunity to tour cultural sites, do fun activities, and get entertained by cultural dance troupe at Ndere cultural center.

The AgAP stands out as our flagship program that is creating positive change among youth through inspiration, attitudes, perception and behaviours changes towards agriculture and promoting innovation, leadership and entrepreneurship in agribusiness. The overall goal is to reach about 5000 youth by 2030 which would have a substantial contribution towards the realization of the National Development plan III 2024/25 vision which is to transform the Ugandan Society from a Peasant to a Modern and Prosperous Country within 30

years and fast tracking the Sustainable Development Goals 1-5 in Uganda.

Through the AgAP training and mentorship program, MFAI has successfully built meaningful collaborations and partnerships with Universities and Non-Government organizations in Uganda- most notably is that MFAI and St Lawrence University signed a two Memorandum of Understanding to jointly conduct the AgAP at the university and engage into research, advocacy and resources mobilization. A new entrant into the AgAP is Miss Uganda Foundation (MUF), a household brand in the fashion and beauty pageant industry in Uganda. MUF joined in the AgAP as result of mutual benefit and collaborative capacity building needs in the areas of agribusiness development between the two organizations. The continuous collaborations with old partners like the US Missions Kampala, Africa 2000 Network Uganda and the Empowerment Initiative for Women and Youth Uganda is an indication to a shared cause and mutual understanding that the AgAP has been able to build and sustain.

The AgAP success has been strengthened through the Alumni Engagement Funding from the US Department of State under the auspice of the Michigan State University, Alliance for African Partnerships. With this funding, MFAI is expected to a sustained impact. The AgAP upcoming cohorts are expected to expand in outreach to provide and accommodate for youth across East Africa and also include persons with Disabilities.



Background and future of the Agribusiness Apprenticeship Program (AgAP)

The AgAP is a cohort-based education program conducted by Michigan Fellows Agribusiness Initiative (MFAI). AgAP is our flagship residential training intended to train, mentor and inspire young women and men in agribusiness, leadership and innovation. Each cohort comprises of in-class sessions, field visits and 1 month of mentorship.

The inaugural AgAP cohort took place in January 2020 at the American Cultural Center in Kampala. The 2nd cohort was held at St Lawrence University (SLAU). Each cohort has an intake of 10 (Ten) youth from all the regions in Uganda. During the AgAP, the apprentices are trained through in-class sessions by the PFP alumni and external experts, engage in field visits, tour cultural sites, attend virtual sessions which are intended to inspire early exposure to agribusiness entrepreneurship and innovation, stir the uptake of agricultural courses at university, prompt innovation and leadership. At the end of the AgAP, apprentices are awarded certificates of apprenticeship and enrolled in the mentorship program to further develop and implement their agribusiness ideas.

The AgAP is supported by the US Department of State Bureau of Education and Cultural exchanges under the auspice of the AAP through the Alumni Engagement Funding

(AEF) in collaboration with partners; the US Mission Kampala, Alliance for African Partnerships (AAP), St Lawrence University, Miss Uganda Foundation, Africa 2000 Network Uganda and The Empowerment Initiative for Women and Youth Uganda among others.

During the AgAP, apprentices are required to create Agri-innovative solutions with the support and guidance from their mentors. The intention is to inspire early exposure, life skills to problem-solving and encourage investment ready youth in agribusiness. In future, MFAI intends to introduce the Laureate of the year investment award that will make funds available for the apprentice and mentor with the most innovative ideas to transform them into social enterprises and agribusiness ventures.

Upcoming AgAP Cohorts will prioritize the inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and youth from all East African Countries provided that at the time of the training, they are residing in Uganda. The objective of inclusivity is to give the apprentices a holistic view of society and inspire Agri-innovative solutions that are cognizant of the real world and provide a platform for PWDs and youth from all East African countries to engage in Agri-Innovative enterprises.



Objectives

A group of 2nd Cohort apprentices with their mentor Samuel Kiggundu during a break-out session discussing their innovative projects.

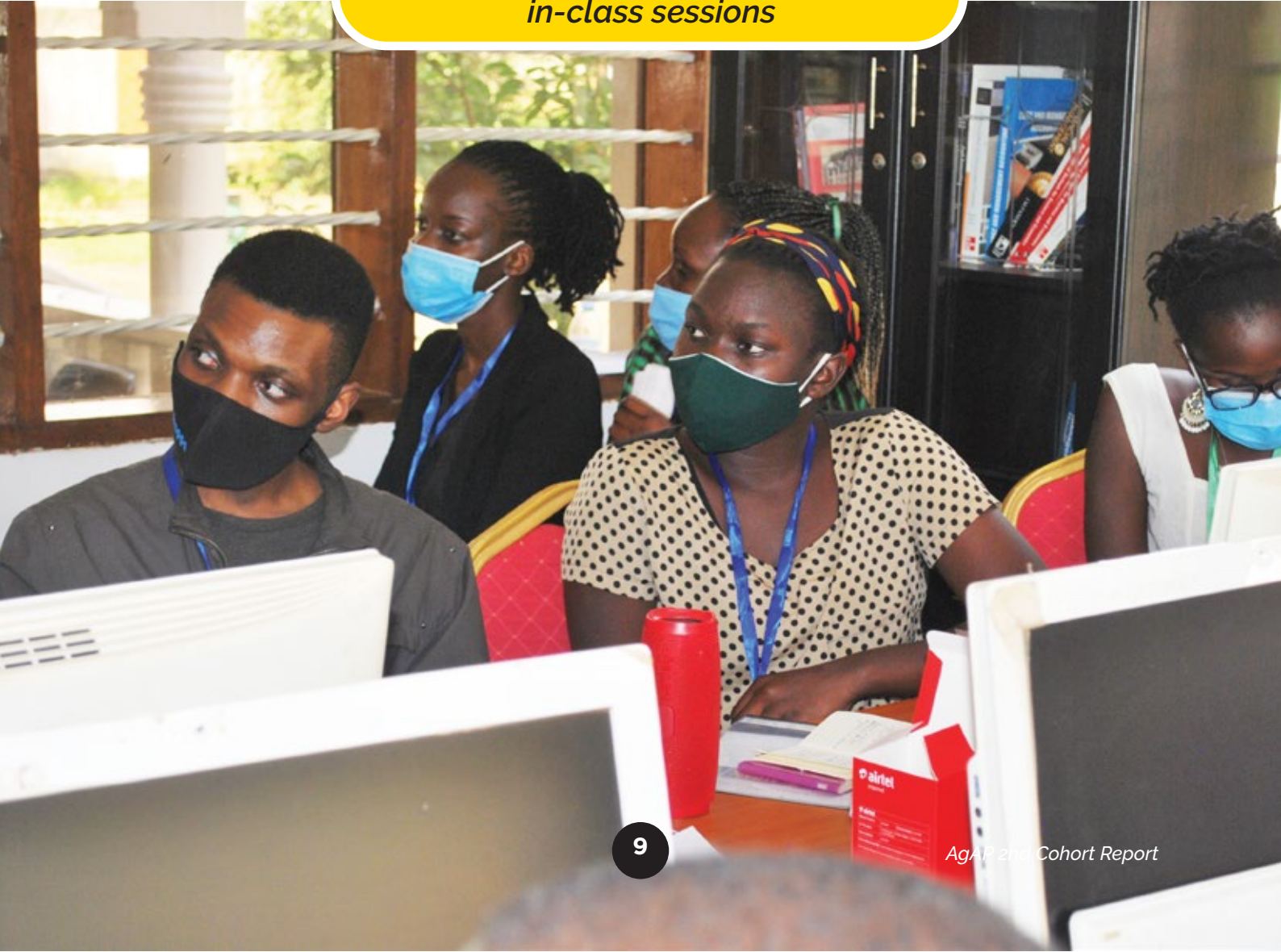
MFAI through the AgAP seeks to train, mentor and inspire youth in agribusiness in Uganda and beyond. The training encompasses in-class sessions, field exposures, and virtual session in multi-disciplines including agribusiness, gender, business, financing, human rights, women empowerment, innovation among others. The apprentices are exposed to a wide-range of experiences from the United States to spark imagination and best agribusiness practices. Upcoming cohorts are set to include youth from all East African countries provided that at the time of the training they are residing in Uganda. In these cohorts, people with disabilities with interest in agriculture will also be prioritized. In the mentorship, the apprentices continue to engage with their mentors through virtual interactions, as means of integrations their acquired knowledge and skills in their work. Mentors conduct follow-up visits, direct call interactions to offer guidance, technical support, share career and professional opportunities with the mentees. The overall objective is to inspire through positive attitudes, perception, behaviours change towards agriculture. The AgAP activities inspire youth to realize the potential of agribusiness and see it as a very interesting, enjoyable, competitive and income generating and a life transformative sector.



- Agri-business entrepreneurs
- Agri-financing
- Youth from all East Africa Countries
- Agri-innovation start-ups
- Professional and career growth
- Young leaders
- Persons With Disabilities
- Young Agri-innovators



2nd Cohort apprentices during the in-class sessions



AgAP program outlook

The 2nd AgAP cohort was launched with a Nation-wide open call for applications in October 2020. MFAI used its communication channels and network to publish the call. A total of 102 applications were received by the AgAP mentors who were confronted with the tedious task of selecting 17 semifinalists. The semi finalists were invited for virtual interviews in November 2020. The interviews were conducted by the mentors, trainers and Derek H Tobias who joined as a representative of the MSU-Alliance for African Partnerships. During the interviews applicants were asked about their innovation and the agricultural problem they sought to address. Ultimately 10 applicants made it as finalists.

The 10 finalists were engaged in a virtual orientation meeting and informed that MFAI was monitoring the COVID 19 situation and that the option of conducting the training virtually was also probable. After due diligence on the COVID 19 prevalence rates within the districts where the finalist were from, and interactions with the finalists' next of kins, MFAI steering committee approved the AgAP to be conducted physically at St Lawrence University (SLAU) with strict adherence to all Standard operating procedures and guidelines from the Ministry of Health on COVID 19 pandemic.

The AgAP commenced on the 6th of December with the arrival of the apprentices from all regions across Uganda. The apprentices were received at SLAU and engaged in an orientation session, visited the kabaka's (King's) lake and palace in Rubaga and checked in at Tal Cottages Hotel where they resided throughout the entire AgAP. In class sessions commenced on 7th -9th December. PFP alumni, external trainers, MSU partners conducted sessions including virtual sessions. At the end of each day the apprentices were engaged in co-curriculum activities including ice cream evening at Acacia mall, a visit to Ndere Cultural center, and sports including swimming and basketball. On 10th December, the apprentices were engaged in a field day

experience where they visited Avil fruits of Faith farm and an urban fish farm. The graduation day was held on 11th December at SLAU. Each apprentice presented their innovation ideas, and was awarded a certificate of apprenticeship. During the event, St Lawrence University and Dorothy Ngalombi won the AgAP prestigious award and the Distinguished Personality of the year award 2020 respectively. Later the apprentices, guests and the media were hosted to a luncheon at Pope Paul Memorial Hotel in Rubaga. Lastly, each apprentice received their transport refund and departed.

The apprentices have since enrolled into the AgAP mentorship program. Through the AgAP, MFAI continues to offer career, technical and profession guidance to young agri-prenuers in Uganda. The mentorship is intended to support the mentees apply the lessons learnt into their work within their communities. It is also intended to create pathways in which the mentee's innovation ideas can be transformed into operational social enterprises and agribusiness ventures. The 2nd Cohort mentorship is limited to virtual interactions and intense social media sharing of opportunities and knowledge due to the COVID 19 pandemic upsurge to stage IV in Uganda.

The 2nd AgAP cohort marks the closure of 2020 MFAI programs. MFAI has been able to work with 20 youth 13 young women and 7 men from across the country. We have been able to support these apprentices to write, pitch and promote their agribusiness ventures, among them are; the use of vegetable waste and by-products from the farming chain to extend the shelf-life of fresh produce, production of lemon aftershaves and mosquito repellent cleaning liquid detergents, value addition to mushrooms to produce different product varieties, poultry education programing for women, Earthworm farming, shea trees conversation, automated rice transplant machine among others.

Highlights of the 2nd AgAP cohort



Graduation day highlights



Field Trip

The field day was conducted on 10th December 2020. Two field sites were visited that is Avail fruits of faith farm and an urban aquaculture farm. During the field visit the apprentices were able to have a practical view of what they had learnt during the in-class sessions. Apprentices were able to ask questions from a wide range of agriculture activities including how to set up their own demonstration farms, how markets have been affected by the COVID 19 pandemic, among others. The field day is meant to further enable apprentices attain practical experiences and knowledge in agribusiness.



Avail fruits of faith experts practical showcase the different farming technics to the 2nd AgAP cohort team





An urban fish-farmer Mr James Muhairwe explains aquiculture best practice to the 2nd AgAP cohort .





Mentors

The year of the COVID 19 pandemic has been hard for everyone, families, communities, countries, civilizations alike. However, it is my delight to observe that despite all the hardships, MFAI has set the record through the efforts of a resilient and equally responsible team of MSU alumni to conduct the AgAP 2nd cohort.

I congratulate all the 2nd cohort apprentices, mentors, trainers, partners and stakeholders upon completing a very successful AgAP training at St Lawrence University (SLAU). It was a pleasure working with all of you. I trust that the innovative ideas you set out to do are potential game-changers in the agricultural sector across the entire value chain. Above all, I know that if we make the best of the AgAP mentorship, time and commit to applying what you learnt during the training, we will make the best of every opportunity including getting the much-needed funding, spaces, partnerships and expertise and see the ideas transform into real social enterprises, and business ventures.

The AgAP has in so many ways made me a better influencer and mentor. I have and continue to learn so much about myself and all the apprentices especially those assigned to me as a mentor. I am always enchanted with the opportunity to work as a mentor. The journey with my 2nd cohort meets is just getting started. I am very enthusiastic and optimistic that our engagements during this mentorship will be very meaningful and profitable.

My duty as a mentor is to work with the mentees and offer technical, moral support for professional and career growth. While the journey seems so blurred as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic and election tensions early 2021, The mentors are confident and determined to use all the tools at our disposal to ensure that all set mentorship programs and goals are met within the stipulated time.

I wish all of our mentees good fortune in all your future endeavors.

Raymond Musiima
MSU Alumnus spring 2019



It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that I have been participating and mentoring the participants in the AgAP 2nd Cohort training. During the program, I had the opportunity to see and learn from the other trainers and obtain brilliant ideas from the youthful and visionary apprentices noticing their transformative innovations and plans in Agri-business and community development.

Michigan State University through the Alliance for African Partnership provided us tremendous opportunity including the birth of MFAI that linked us all like-minded fellows and equipped us with skills that we are currently using to transform the Agribusiness sector in Uganda. MFAI members represent the entire agricultural value chain in East Africa including private and public sector actors, Education institutions, Non-Governmental Organizations.

I am pleased to learn that AgAP program is being opened up to all other youths in East Africa and people with disability thus leaving no one behind.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the

MFAI team and all the partner institutions. Our team continues to work hard on our Mentorship program as well as developing new and important projects to continue our important work with people and communities in Agri-business.

The year 2021 is another productive one and we are extremely excited about our great works and continuing our work with both new and ongoing collaborators. We also seek new affiliates to develop new strategies and solutions to ever changing problems affecting youth and women in Agri-business.

Sincerely,
Samuel Kiggundu
Co- Director Business Development



Most of us can point to important events/programs that have played a part in shaping who we are today. Had we not been part, the paths we would take could have been different. It is the knowledge, skills and lessons we have gained from participating in those programs/events, that continuous learning and sharing that has given us that push towards the better version of ourselves and of what we do.

The AgAP besides presenting to me an opportunity of give back, make an impact on the lives of youth in agribusiness in a positive way and being connected as a mentor, it has provided me the ability to continuously develop my leadership and entrepreneurial skills, gain perspective, and pushed me to strive higher. During the December 2020 AgAP training, it was mentioned by most facilitators that knowing and willing is not enough we must apply, do and stand out. Having this at the back of my mind while Listening to the different experts from various fields prompted me to dream and dream bigger again but with a sense of urgency and commitment to applying the lessons learnt. Connecting with the apprentices,

their work and aspirations challenged me to step back and gain perspective on my own aspirations and vision. And, as an entrepreneur, leader and mentor, I believe this is what I need. To keep abreast of happenings in this rapidly changing world, to keep dreaming and continuously reskilling and upskilling.

I believe just like stated by the Cultural Affairs Specialist Dorothy Ngalombi during the December 2020 AgAP graduation, that, I believe programs like the AgAP is what Uganda needs. Training, inspiring and mentorship that will facilitate the realization of goals and aspirations of the youth, shape who the youths ought to be and enable them set the paths they ought to follow.

Marion Namukose
Co-Director Finance
PFP Alumnus Fall 2018



Agriculture being the backbone of Uganda's economy means that the future lies in the hands of farmers and yet these farmers are ageing and lack the necessary skills needed for venturing in innovative agriculture hence the need for young people to rise and take up activities across all agricultural value chains.

As a mentor, training and interacting with the young apprentices during the AgAP 2020 both first and second cohorts and seeing their energy and agility, I realized that young people when given the opportunities, enough skills and exposure can bring a great deal of change in their communities through agricultural innovative ideas.

Therefore, increasing active participation and partnership with young people in agriculture will help them develop more skills and experience plus discovering their leadership potentials within their communities and also through their different agricultural ventures, they will be able to create employment opportunities for themselves and their fellow youth.

HARRIET APILI

Co-Director ICT

PFP Alumnus Fall 2018



Jean Paul Nageri one of the 2nd Cohort AgAP apprentices rehearses how to pitch his idea during the in-class sessions



Game Changers

In Uganda, youth unemployment is growing: Each year, 400,000 youth enter the labour market to compete for only 80,000 formal jobs. 75 percent of the workforce and 55 percent of youth in Uganda are engaged in the agriculture sector, which is an opportunity to address youth unemployment, in part, by extending more opportunities through strengthening pathways that promote youth agribusiness, entrepreneurship and innovation.

Like Michigan Fellows Agribusiness Initiative (MFAI), Miss Uganda Foundation has set out to promote youth and women engagement in agribusiness in Uganda. Collaboratively, the two institutions commit to realizing that youth and women can directly benefit from their labor in the agricultural sector. It is important that other players and stakeholders join such initiatives like the Agribusiness Apprenticeship Program (AgAP) and the Miss Uganda national pageant to increase the number of youth and women engaged in agribusiness, invest in possibilities that increase opportunities for young agriprenuers, and innovators.

The Covid 19 pandemic has been an eye-opener in so many ways and we have seen how innovations in all aspects of life have been very crucial. The adoption of ICT and data-driven innovations are eye-openers set to revolutionise the agriculture and food chains in developing economies like Uganda. The new digital technologies and innovation are creating enormous opportunities and there is potential to increase productivity and wealth, generate new activities, products and services, and improve livelihoods.

The gruesome challenge economies face in the post COVID 19 pandemic era is that youth around the world are turning from agriculture which requires tough manual labour and low wages, negative perceptions that agriculture is for low-status people and opt for cities and petty jobs. Such opportunities like the AgAP are indeed game-changers and a reflection of the enormous opportunities and potential that agriculture offers.

Brenda Nanyonjo
CEO Miss Uganda Foundation.



Peter Lemmer with some of the PFP alumni in the United States.

Linking for Success: Connecting – Community – Cooperation – Capitalism

Key to success in business is being conscious of numerous multiple variables that affect your goals and aspirations and avoiding distractions as you commit to your adventurous journey. To begin it is best to have a well-defined goal with a mapped-out path, and plenty of tools in your bag to deal with the unexpected events along the way. Commitment and willingness to adjust are prominent attributes to drive your mission, but equally important will be having a positive attitude. Once this is all synched up with your mission statement, understanding the importance and truth behind connecting, community, cooperation and capitalism should fuel your endurance to sustain and succeed.

Connecting those people, places and provisions of talent and likely contributory

resources to be part of your journey starts early in life and requires constant evaluation. Associate not only with like minded people, but with people that add value to your mission. Respect those connections and what they can contribute to your mission. Be honest about these connections and their contributions. Find nice ways to eliminate the people, places and provisions that are not helpful, as they may become valuable later. Remember that it is likely that everybody has their own unique mission, and they should be free to go in the direction they chose for themselves. It may or may not be with your journey, but it should bring value or be eliminated as they could either elevate success or derail it.

Community defines who your operation intends to serve with your mission. The community need should be clearly identified,



and something that your business can meet. Your business consciousness should align in a manner that the value to the community is recognized and elevates the community in some manner. This will move people forward, create loyalty for the journey, and support the mission with purchases if you are selling something that they need. If you are serving the community with your business, there will be mutual respect.

As your business develops, there will be some mutual interdependence. You need their cooperation and they need your cooperation. There is no room in successful business to be stubborn in opposition to a customer. Acting together with different roles will produce a successful result. It may feel a bit

different to describe the role of a customer to be cooperative as a customer, but that is what a good business develops to gain loyal customers.

Most importantly, you need to develop a keen understanding of the requirements of sustainability within your plan. Well capitalized operations with a valuable product or service fairly priced in a manner that produces a profit will support growth and capacity. Capitalism is a system that allows for the fair production and distribution of goods and services that meet a community need. It is the core ingredient for sustainability and will be eroded if there is not truth in the mission of service and production for the benefit of the targeted community.

Find all these ingredients in your business journey and you will find success.

Peter Lemmer

Chief Legal Counsel

GreenStone Farm Credit Services



Building Sustainable Social and Professional Networks

The concept of networking is often associated with the corporate world. However, more recently, networking has gained prominence in other domains including academia (Streeter, 2014). Networking can occur in-person or through online spaces. With advancement in technology, today personal interactions happen more on the internet than face-to-face.

This article seeks to respond to three basic questions: What is networking? Is networking necessary? How do you build and nurture profitable networks for your social and professional development? Responses to these questions are based primarily on skills gained through my personal networking experience.

What is networking?

I define networking as the art of creating and nurturing relationships that matter in your social, academic, and professional trajectory. These relationships may involve colleagues at work or business, your former schoolmates, your professors, and people you have met in places, such as, conferences and workshops.

The approach to networking differs from person to person. Extroverts, for example, find it easier to network because they are inclined to exploring the world outside their comfort zone. On the contrary networking does not come easily for introverts. This does not mean that introverts cannot network. The implication here is that personality influences one's networking journey, but it should not be a hindrance to creating meaningful connections.

Is networking a necessary skill?

I argue that, yes, networking is an important skill to work towards, whether you are an introvert or extrovert. We all need the help of others to grow. Networking exposes you to people and opportunities that meet your goals and interests. In today's society, social media has become an inevitable space for creating and expanding essential networks. Platforms such as, Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, LinkedIn have become vehicles through which you can meet mentors, prospective partners and other resources that will foster career development. You do not have to engage in all social media spaces. You should aim at identifying and participating in platforms that you think you can gain from and contribute to most.

How do you build and sustain networks?

Three things matter in building and sustaining networks. The first and most essential one is having a positive self-image. Always remind yourself that everyone has something to offer, including you. With a positive self-image you will have a sense of belonging in any space that you want to be a part of, and you will have the confidence to contribute in that space.

Secondly, you need to bear in mind that networking is not about using others to achieve your goals. It entails developing

reciprocal (give and take) relationships and nurturing them. Third, networking is more about the quality not quantity of connections made. There is nothing wrong with having a wide set of contacts, but you should focus more on deep connections than many superficial ones.

Dr Choti Damaris

Reference

Streeter J. (2014). Networking in academia. *EMBO reports*, 15(11), 1109–1112.

<https://doi.org/10.15252/embr.201439626>



A virtual session facilitated by Derek H Tobais during the 2nd Cohort Commencement day.



Apprentices during the cultural and festive tours in the company of their mentors.



AgAP Awards 2020



Above: Dorothy Ngalombi the US Mission Kampala Cultural Affairs Specialist receives the AgAP 2020 Most Distinguished Personality Award.

Below: Ssemakula Peter Resident Director St Lawrence University (SLAU) receives the AgAP 2020 Prestigious Award on behalf of SLAU.



Participants

Name	Occupation	sex
PFP Alumni		
Musiima Raymond	Excellence Associates CEO	Male
Samuel Kiggundu	Director of Operations, Bagonvu Elderly Women's Foundation	Male
Harriet Apili Penrod	Founder Hartoma AgriFarm Ventures.	Female
Piloya Innocent	Founder and CEO, Dero She Capital.	Female
Eudine Awuzu	Accountant	Female
Apio LillianMercy	Team Leader, Women Of Uganda Network	Female
Kayongo Enoch	Lecturer, Bukalasa Agricultural College	Male
Marion Namukose	Founder, Director Eika Farm	Female
Amatha Clerena	CEO and Founder, Transfarm	Female
AgAP Alumni		
Okilan Grace	Social entrepreneur	Female
Cyprian Ssekubulwa	CEO Cypriano Enterprises	Male
Guest Facilitators		
Dr Christopher Kyeswa	CEO Africa 2000 Network (A2N) Uganda	Male
Brenda Nanyonjo	CEO Miss Uganda Foundation	Female
Leticia Mugerwa (phd)	CEO Empowerment initiative for women and youth Uganda	Female
Dr Matthew Nviiri	Chairman Board of Directors Community Consortium Uganda (CCU)	Male
Dr Wynne Wright	Dept of Community Sustainability and Dept Sociology.	Female
Peter Lemmer	Chief Legal Counsel, Greenstone Credit, Lansing Michigan.	Male
Dr Choti Damaris	Assistant to the Director, African Studies Center, Michigan State University.	Female
Derek Tobias	Program Manager Alliance for African Partnership, Michigan State University.	Male

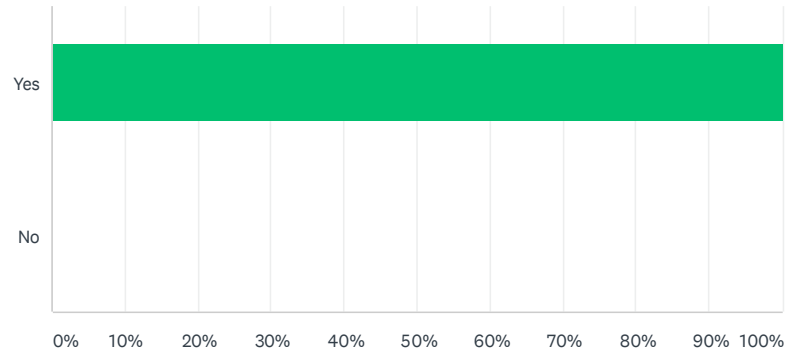
AgAP 2nd cohort Apprenticeses

Name	Occupation	Sex	Home district
Gyezaho Ronald	Teaching Assistant Busitema University	Male	Tororo
Nahurira Hillary	Founder Active Living Uganda Limited	Male	Kisoro
Jean Paul Nageri	CEO, Sio Valley Foods.	Male	Kisaasi
Mukembo Joshua	Agro Input Advisory Officer	Male	Kamuli
Acio Winny Nancy	Poultry Farmer	Female	Lira
Makoba Winfrey	Student Agro processing Engineer	Female	Kampala
Imede Santa Mary	Mushroom Farmer	Female	Jinja
Kiguli collins	Agro processing Engineer	Male	Busunju
Mutumba Paul	Maggot and Earthworm Farmer	Male	Wakiso
Akweru Hilda	Entrepreneur	Female	Gulu

AgAP 2nd Cohort post training evaluation

Q1 Where the objectives of the AgAP clearly defined? Were the trainers articulate in their presentations?

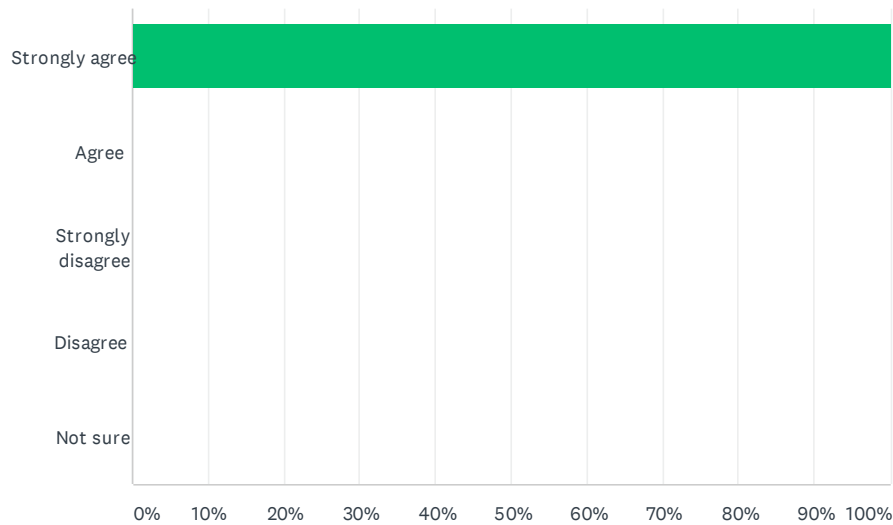
Answered: 10 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	100.00% 10
No	0.00% 0
Total Respondents: 10	

Q2 Were participation and interaction encouraged?

Answered: 10 Skipped: 0

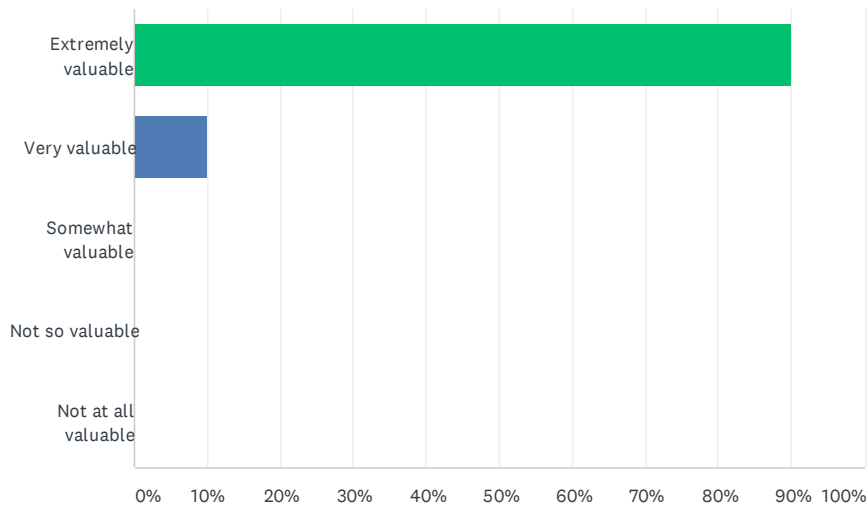


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Strongly agree	100.00% 10
Agree	0.00% 0
Strongly disagree	0.00% 0
Disagree	0.00% 0
Not sure	0.00% 0
TOTAL	10

AgAP 2nd Cohort post training evaluation

Q3 Where the topics covered relevant to my profession?

Answered: 10 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely valuable	90.00%	9
Very valuable	10.00%	1
Somewhat valuable	0.00%	0
Not so valuable	0.00%	0
Not at all valuable	0.00%	0
TOTAL		10

Q4 If not all valuable, which topics were irrelevant? Skip if otherwise.

Answered: 2 Skipped: 8

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	*	12/17/2020 5:37 AM
2	None	12/15/2020 12:10 AM

AgAP 2nd Cohort post training evaluation

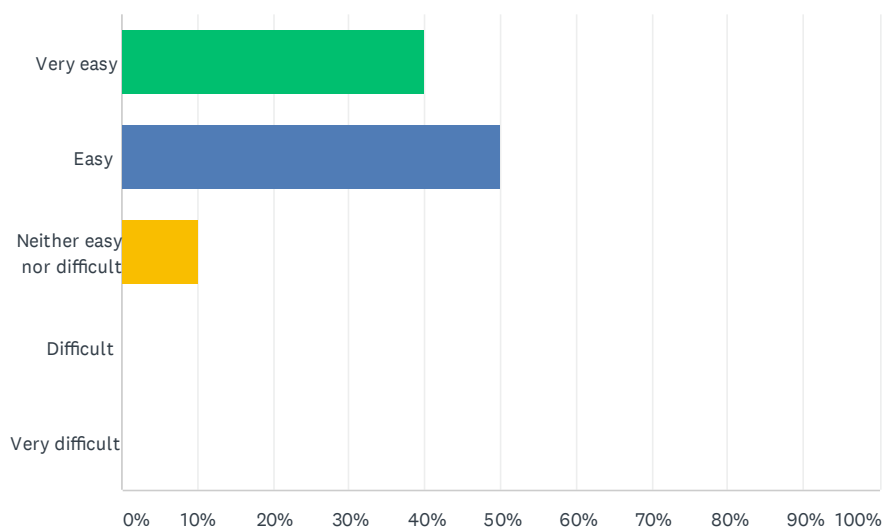
Q5 Which specific topics did you find very meaningful?

Answered: 10 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Pitching	12/17/2020 5:37 AM
2	Resource mobilisation and networking.	12/15/2020 10:34 AM
3	AGRI- FINANCING AND PITCHING, why and how to build sustainable social and professional net work, Agribusiness innovation opportunities, knowing your market	12/15/2020 12:10 AM
4	Pitching and Marketing	12/14/2020 11:23 PM
5	Networking and Finance management	12/14/2020 11:47 AM
6	Opportunities for the youth during and after the covid pandemic, financial management, pitching	12/14/2020 2:25 AM
7	Business pitching	12/14/2020 1:17 AM
8	project management, networking, financial management, pitching and agrifiance	12/13/2020 11:10 PM
9	Financial management, Networking, Agri-financing	12/13/2020 9:35 PM
10	Pitching and financial management	12/13/2020 5:50 PM

Q6 Where contents well arranged and easy to follow?

Answered: 10 Skipped: 0

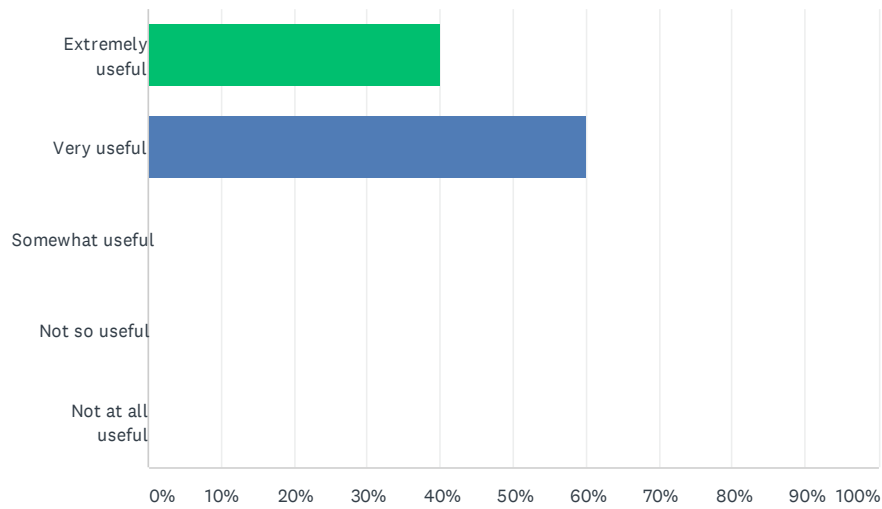


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very easy	40.00%	4
Easy	50.00%	5
Neither easy nor difficult	10.00%	1
Difficult	0.00%	0
Very difficult	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 10		

AgAP 2nd Cohort post training evaluation

Q7 Where the materials distributed during the AgAP useful?

Answered: 10 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely useful	40.00%	4
Very useful	60.00%	6
Somewhat useful	0.00%	0
Not so useful	0.00%	0
Not at all useful	0.00%	0
TOTAL		10

Q8 If not at all useful, which materials did you require? Skip the question if otherwise.

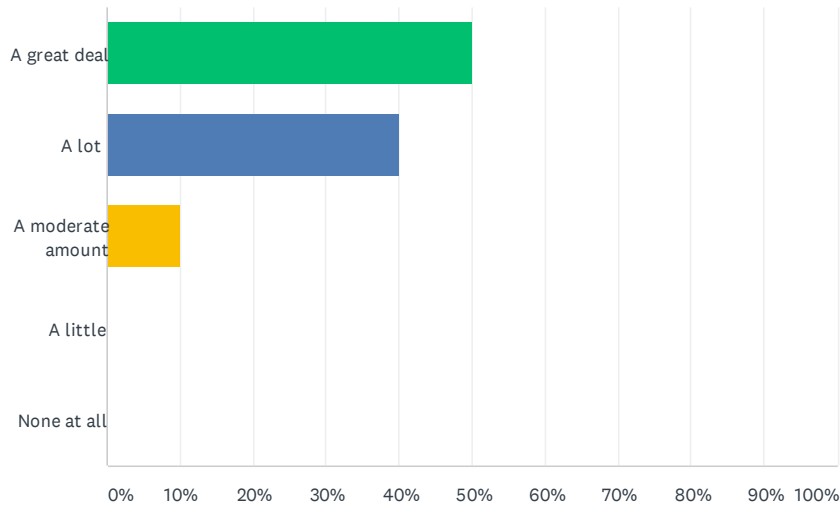
Answered: 3 Skipped: 7

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	*	12/17/2020 5:37 AM
2	None	12/15/2020 12:10 AM
3	Computers because some of our devices couldn't connect to zoom	12/14/2020 11:23 PM

AgAP 2nd Cohort post training evaluation

Q9 Where your expectations for the AgAP met?

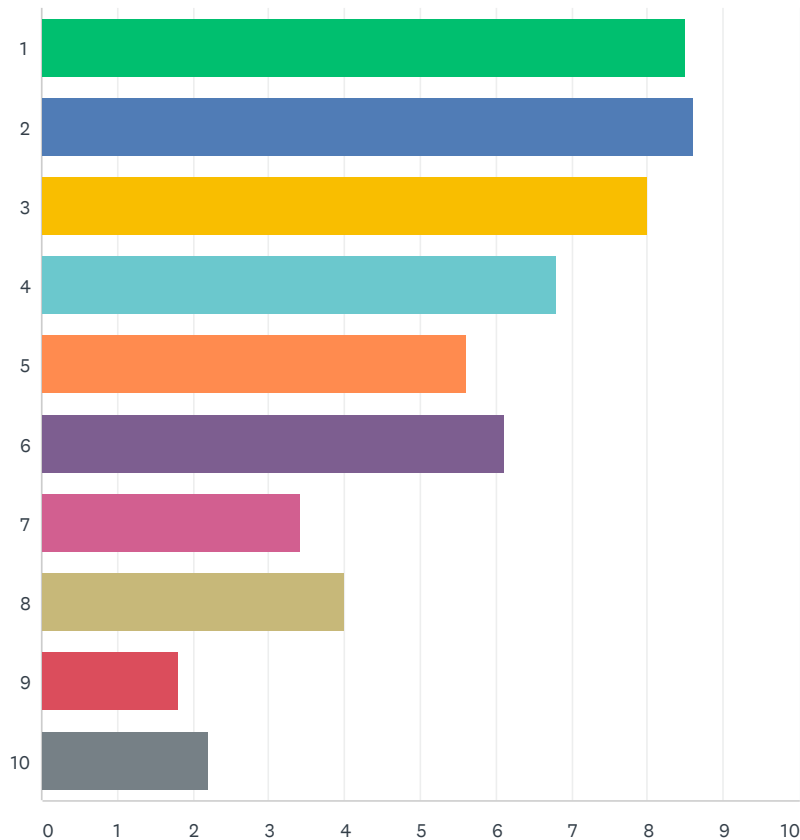
Answered: 10 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	Count
A great deal	50.00%	5
A lot	40.00%	4

Q10 What is the rank of the accommodation hotel according to your opinion? Rank out of 10 as the highest rank.

Answered: 10 Skipped: 0



AgAP 2nd Cohort post training evaluation

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	TOTAL	SCORE
1	60.00% 6	20.00% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	10.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	10.00% 1	0.00% 0	10	8.50
2	20.00% 2	50.00% 5	20.00% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	10.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	10	8.60
3	0.00% 0	20.00% 2	60.00% 6	20.00% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	10	8.00
4	0.00% 0	10.00% 1	10.00% 1	60.00% 6	10.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	10.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	10	6.80
5	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	20.00% 2	40.00% 4	30.00% 3	0.00% 0	10.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	10	5.60
6	10.00% 1	0.00% 0	10.00% 1	0.00% 0	40.00% 4	30.00% 3	10.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	10	6.10
7	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	10.00% 1	50.00% 5	20.00% 2	10.00% 1	10.00% 1	10	3.40
8	10.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	10.00% 1	30.00% 3	40.00% 4	0.00% 0	10.00% 1	10	4.00
9	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	10.00% 1	60.00% 6	30.00% 3	10	1.80
10	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	10.00% 1	0.00% 0	10.00% 1	10.00% 1	20.00% 2	50.00% 5	10	2.20

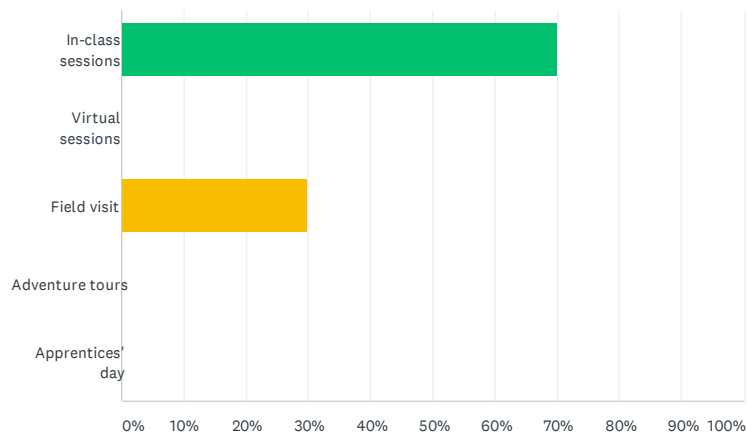
Q11 If your rank is below 5, explain why

Answered: 3 Skipped: 7

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Water problems	12/17/2020 5:37 AM
2	Water issues,	12/15/2020 12:10 AM
3	Availability of water, electricity and the room cleaning was not up on the chart	12/14/2020 11:23 PM

Q12 Which part of the AgAP did you find helpful?

Answered: 10 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
In-class sessions	70.00% 7
Virtual sessions	0.00% 0
Field visit	30.00% 3
Adventure tours	0.00% 0
Apprentices' day	0.00% 0
TOTAL	10

AgAP 2nd Cohort post training evaluation

Q13 Which part of the AgAP do you think needs improvement? and Why? Why improvements do you envision?

Answered: 10 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Pitching. Start practicing from the first day of the program.	12/17/2020 5:37 AM
2	To me I was contented with the whole arrangement. However, you could invite potential funders to attend the presentation by the apprentices. You never some could get their ideas considered for funding.	12/15/2020 10:34 AM
3	Games slot, cos different people have different preferences. Each one should engage in the game of their desire.	12/15/2020 12:10 AM
4	The accommodation facilities otherwise everything else was okay	12/14/2020 11:23 PM
5	internet connectivity...it will improve virtual sessions	12/14/2020 11:47 AM
6	May be making the in class and virtual sessions more participatory than they were taking an example of Mr Musima Raymond's session, everyone was more active than ever and learning was made easier. Otherwise, everything was great	12/14/2020 2:25 AM
7	They well all organized and meaningful	12/14/2020 1:17 AM
8	I think AgAp needs to add something like inviting NGO's to fund the innovation ideas of the apprentice because they lack funds to fully fund they ideas practically	12/13/2020 11:10 PM
9	To me, everything was perfect	12/13/2020 9:35 PM

Q14 What are your overall thoughts about the AgAP program? What do you suggest is changed? What do you suggest should be maintained? why?

Answered: 10 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Great. We need to practice how to develop our ideas further.	12/17/2020 5:37 AM
2	I think the programs are OK, or if not for expenses, let the apprentices visit farms with matching ideas.	12/15/2020 10:34 AM
3	This is a great program, cos if one comes and his mind is narrowed on one thing, this program opens ones mind to think big and identify agribusiness opportunities. To me everything is ok cos it all gives and makes all thoughts practical. I request that we should always be followed up to see if our projects are in right sets..	12/15/2020 12:10 AM
4	I think it's a wonderful program that made me transform tremendously agribusiness wise. I think the sharing of experience by alumni should be highly appreciated because it provides a picture of the expectations.	12/14/2020 11:23 PM
5	The programming is great, but should have more field visits	12/14/2020 11:47 AM
6	Everything was great, more than what I had expected. Keep the spirit our mentors. And thank you all for your endless efforts to make us better people. I look forward to volunteering with you in organizing the next cohort's training	12/14/2020 2:25 AM
7	Maintain all the programs like they are because they were all important and motivating	12/14/2020 1:17 AM
8	AgAP program is good and it supports youth to start small, encouraging and grows agripreneurs, so provide networking, encouraging confidence through mentoring youth to present themselves, and I suggest that something shud be changed like gud innovations shud be funded ,also paying the apprentice because apprenticeship means training while getting paid what should be maintained ? the program schedule of running one week field visits and tours more pitching class studies nd presentations from professionals	12/13/2020 11:10 PM
9	The program was really educative and fun. I think the field visits should be increased	12/13/2020 9:35 PM
10	The AgAP is a life changing program. The only challenge is that it occurs for a really short time. It would be better if the time is increased. All other programs are good enough for the benefit of the mentees.	12/13/2020 5:50 PM



Designed by:



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CONCEPTS
LIMITED**
WE DO IT RIGHT

Contact: +256 781 778 690
Email: oliconceptsltd@gmail.com