

African Agricultural Leadership Institute NEWSLETTER

July 2023

Issue 01



Advancing Leadership in African Agriculture

Agriculture in Africa is acclaimed to be a fertile area for economic prosperity on the continent; it is however bedeviled by many setbacks, such as knowledge gap, lack of adequate funding, untapped potential in Sub-Saharan Africa. At the same time, Africa must confront three intractable challenges of food import, aging farmer community and poor leadership.

During the last decade, there was a unique African perspective to African agriculture in a manner that was previously beyond the scope of international agricultural organizations. This includes: the development of a 'Youth Agripreneurs' movement for graduate youth; reaching out to younger youth

in secondary schools; mobilizing meaningful economic participation among marginalized people as skilled workers and agribusiness owners; and, the innovative design of the "Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation Program (TAAT), funded by the African Development Bank (AfDB) with the aim to deploy productivity enhancing agricultural solutions through national programs.

According to Dr Nteranya Sanginga, President of AALI and forerunner of the above named initiatives, this progress stands in contrast to a business-as-usual approach employed in the past, where international consultancy firms headquartered outside of Africa design, monitor and evaluate agricultural development projects in African countries.

Thus, AALI aims to influence political will in Africa in favor of African agricultural transformation agenda. This it does through three key objectives:

AALI outlines its innovative vision for Africa at a strategic retreat at its Kalambo headquarters

1) to provide political advisory services, 2) to foster youth empowerment on all levels, and 3) to lead agricultural transformation processes. The organization has a strong linkage with African governments, development banks, and works closely with the private sector.

AALI now operates as an independent, international and non-governmental organization that provides a distinct African voice to the diverse services required to guarantee and accelerate Africa's needed agricultural transformation, particularly among its poorest households, women and youth.

AALI recognizes the need to boost the intellectual capacity related to strategic agricultural planning, thus it partners with country ministries of Agriculture, international and national organizations, and the private sector to (i) promote scientific and technological innovation and, (ii) to improve upon human resource and infrastructure capacities across initiatives related to agriculture, health and nutrition, primary and secondary education and natural resources management in sub-Saharan Africa.

From April 4 to 6, 2023, the African Agricultural Leadership Institute (AALI) held a strategic workshop at its headquarters in Kalambo, in the South Kivu region of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The purpose of the event was to formalize the launch of activities and a discussion of strategies to realize AALI's ambitious vision of promoting leadership in agricultural transformation in Africa.

At the heart of the discussions, AALI focused on urgent challenges such as the increased food crises and the increasing dependence on imported food resources. This reality captured AALI's full attention. Participants actively debated a number of key strategic issues, including: How can we rethink agriculture as an economic activity rather than a mere means of subsistence? How important is it to support agricultural transformation in Africa to create wealth and jobs, particularly for young people and women? How can we improve the image of agriculture to attract young people and create job opportunities? How can we make agriculture the engine of economic growth in Africa? How can we encourage the commitment of government officials to agriculture? How can we reduce over-dependence on imported products?



Building a team of formidable professionals.

AALI has created four directorates for effective administration of activities:

- 1) Country Advisory Services led by Dr David Bugeme,
- 2) Youth Empowerment Directorate led by Ms Dolapo Ogunsola,
- 3) Agricultural Transformation Agenda led by Dr Chris Okafor, and
- 4) Administration and Finance Directorate leading the daily operation of the institute, under the leadership of Mr Shalewa Sholola.

As part of its mandate, AALI is committed to encouraging current and future political leaders to invest in this job-creating activity. It hopes to feed the nation over the next five years, while transforming the image of agriculture in our communities



President Nteranya Sanginga speaking at the Inception Workshop at the Kalambo Headquarters.



Inception Workshop led by President Nteranya Sanginga at the Kalambo Headquarters.



Cross-section of the AALI team and Dr. Nteranya Sanginga during the Inception Workshop at the Kalambo Headquarters.

La Brigade des Jeunes Agrobusiness Park: A model enterprise for sustainable job creation in the DRC

For several decades now, agriculture has been perceived, particularly by young people, as a poor

profession, reserved for the vulnerable stratum of society. While agriculture offers thousands of job opportunities in the value chain, over 80% of the population is unemployed in a country with almost 80 million hectares of arable land. The African Agricultural Leadership Institute (AALI) sees this paradox as the result of the lack of interest and misperception of Congolese leaders and young people in the agro-pastoral sector.

In its vision of promoting leadership in African agriculture and its proven expertise in the field, AALI is focusing on young people, equipping them as influencers and vectors of change in the new agricultural paradigm. This change of mentality on the apprehension of agriculture as a “business”, is a process requiring sustainable actions towards the Congolese population, particularly the Youth.

This is how AALI, through its Youth Brigade, is setting up the Agribusiness Park based on the circular economy model. This park is the pragmatic approach chosen by the Youth Brigade to serve as an example of effective advocacy of this new understanding of agriculture as a business, promoted by AALI.

For its implementation, the Nyangezi cluster was identified as the first site, thanks to the opportunities it presents. It is located 25 km from the commercial city of Bukavu in South Kivu province, where there are no agro-industrial sites. In addition to imported inputs, the region’s inhabitants even import cassava leaves, which can be produced locally. The Park will therefore be the first agro-industrial center to be set up by AALI, and will serve as a pilot framework for training over 1,500 young people in agribusiness, transferring high-performance agricultural

technologies and maximizing local food production in the area.

This enterprise will generate at least 1,000 direct and indirect jobs for young people in South Kivu province.

This agribusiness park will cover 47 hectares, land made available by Marcelin CISHAMBO, former governor of South Kivu province, under AALI’s advocacy of agribusiness development for young Congolese. This is the first local example of agricultural leadership promoted by AALI.

Today, the major challenge for young people and smallholders in the DRC remains access to land. AALI, through its Youth Brigade, is bringing its expertise to bear on the challenges of transforming the agricultural sector in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The aim is not only to contribute to the reduction of imports, but also to influence a change in the mentality of leaders and young people towards agriculture. AALI intends to set up this park in several provinces of the DRC, in order to accelerate the country’s agricultural transformation.



Technique for emptying fish ponds in Nyangezi agriparc.



10 fish ponds being refurbished by the Youth Brigade.

Chief Obasanjo described the council as a platform that will enable Africans to come together for greater economic prospects of the continent, across various sectors. Former President Obasanjo made this recommendation in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo in November 2022, when he led two Nigerian Governors, four industrialists, security and energy experts among others on an investment drive to the DRC.

AALI is using this platform to advocate a vibrant and bold African leadership, supported by experienced African agricultural and business professionals, to catalyze public and private investments, thereby accelerating and sustaining Africa's needed agricultural transformation, particularly among its poorest households, women and youth.

Dr Nteranya Sanginga, President of AALI and the business council, emphasized that we operate with the business mindset open up discussions on the areas of business interest in the DRC and Nigeria. He emphasized that the Council itself must operate with the business mindset, because both countries have a big market, the political environment, economic potentials, especially in the agriculture sector.

AALI's position is that agriculture be viewed as a business that attracts the private sector and investment from governments and development banks to stimulate and modernize its advancement.

Meanwhile, the DRC-Nigeria Business Council has also noted that an important area of interest that can stimulate its quick impact is Agricultural Transformation in Africa.

AALI's international presence and role in the DRC-Nigeria Business Council

AALI's key objective is to influence political leadership to prioritize agricultural transformation in country agendas, and to present investment opportunities in agribusiness to international investors. One way by which AALI is realizing that is through its participation in the DRC-Nigeria Business Council.

The business council was birthed upon the recommendation of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, former President of Nigeria and Patron of AALI, with the support of President Felix Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo, President of DRC, in November 2022.

This stems from the conclusion of “Feed Africa Summit: Food Sovereignty and Resilience” held under the Chairmanship of H.E. President Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal and H.E President A. Adesina of the African Development Bank, in Dakar, Senegal, January 25-27, 2023. Thirty-four Presidents and Heads of States participated in this meeting and agreed to prioritize agribusiness and stimulate the private sector investment in this area.

Relaunching feed milling and fish farming at the President Obasanjo Research Campus, Kalambo

Having identified a growing need for animal feed, particularly for fish, pigs and poultry, as well as a lack of fry rearing in the area, the AALI Youth Brigade has this year relaunched the production of feed for these animals, as well as the hatchery for fry production. This market is aimed at fishermen and fish breeders in floating cages on Lake Kivu, as well as young entrepreneurs, 80% of whom import almost all of their raw materials from neighboring countries.

These activity was initiated two years ago by the Young Agripreneurs of the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA). In view of this opportunity and the expertise available in AALI's new fisheries & animal production unit, the Youth Brigade believes it would be useful to meet these needs by producing at least 320,000 fry, as well as 310 tonnes of feed for fish, pigs and poultry. Per year, these activities will generate employment for at least 50 young people in the city of Bukavu.

Since relaunching activities in the facility, it has been a point of call for agribusiness enthusiasts in Bukavu town and all around the South Kivu province. These include Jean Bosco RUTEYE, Provincial Minister of South Kivu, who visited AALI and IITA facilities from June 06 to 07 and June 15, 2023, to find out about the progress made in implementing the Agenda de Transformation Agricole de la République Démocratique du Congo (ATA RDC), a Congolese government program initiated by President Felix Antoine Tshisekedi.



Dr. Nteranya Sanginga, President of AALI and the DRC Nigeria Business Council; Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, former President of Nigeria; Mr Pacifique Kahasha, Co-President AALI, during the council meeting in April 2023.



DRC President Felix Tshisekedi and AALI President Sanginga share a warm moment

During this visit, the Minister said “Personally, I’m very happy, because the young people are learning to farm and are getting a taste for agriculture. Involving them enables them to generate income and create jobs. In the years to come, agriculture will be a major engine of development for the DRC in general, and South Kivu in particular, and everyone will have enough to eat.”

During another event, the Administrator of Walungu Territory, Mr. Vincent CIREGA, also praised the achievements of the Youth Brigade: “What the Youth Brigade is doing meets the main needs of the Walungu population. This project, which will continue to provide employment for young people, will contribute to reducing insecurity in our territory”.

Since its launch in October 2022, this component of the Agricultural Youth Brigade has achieved the following: A rabbit breeding program, with an average of 64 head; A 20-head pigsty; 4 students agricultural clubs in two schools; 12 fish farms

with 3,000 fry; Training of 90 farmers from local associations in new breeding technologies; Development of 2 business plans for the creation of fish farms; Farming of 61 ha of cassava fields, 6 ha of maize, 1 ha of rice and 2 ha of beans for seed multiplication; and a pilot center for the promotion of small-scale mechanization, with 14 agricultural machines.



South Kivu’s Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Livestock, Mr. Jean Bosco Ruteye, with the IITA and AALI team at Headquarters in Kalambo.



Catfish broodstock on display at the hatchery re-launched by Brigade des Jeunes in Kalambo.



The IITA Kalambo feed mill, re-launched by the AALI Youth Brigade.

Promoting small scale mechanization among youth

One hundred and forty-five people (145), including 40 small producers, 50 secondary school pupils, 20 teachers and 35 other young people from all trades, were made aware by the Youth Brigade of the use and benefits of small-scale mechanization. This awareness campaign took place over 3 days, from February 20 to 21, 2023, in Walungu.

At the end of the awareness-raising session, participants expressed their interest in small-scale mechanization to reduce the drudgery of using rudimentary tools and manual labor, maximize working time and increase productivity. Indeed, this awareness-raising event is just the beginning of the long and hard work of the Youth Brigade's mission, which aims to reach all 145 territories in the DRC.

As part of the promotion of small-scale mechanization, Ir Pascal KYALONDAWA FATAKI, one of the Brigadiers working in the territories of Walungu and Mwenga, in the province of South Kivu, has also been trained in the assembly and use of various tools and machines. The equipment includes a motorized tiller, a motorized weeder, a motorized sprayer, a motorized auger, an irrigation system and a multicrop thresher.

The training was provided by Ir Ruphin MUNGWAKONKWA MUKARANI, in charge of

mechanization within the core team of the Youth Brigade, based in Kalambo, South Kivu province.

This activity will cover the entire national territory of the DRC, in line with the Local Development Program for 145 Territories (PDL - 145T).



The Youth Brigade with teachers and small farmers sensitized to small-scale mechanization in Walungu.



Youth Brigade demonstrates irrigation system to Walungu farmers.