



The Agricultural Knowledge and Training Centre.

Involvement of the youth in Agriculture.

Agriculture in Africa has untapped potential to create jobs, both directly and indirectly. In order to attract young people, agriculture will need to be more dynamic and appealing than it is now, and young people will need to view the sector more positively than they do now (Institute of Development Studies 2012).

Empowering young people with the skills they will need to thrive in agriculture requires investment in educational institutions at all levels. Institutional infrastructure for agricultural higher education and training has been in place in Sub Saharan Africa since the 1960s and has strengthened over time, but not sufficiently to meet the enormous demands evident now.

Youth and Agriculture.

To foster youth participation in the agricultural sector, the following could be a viable means of addressing some of the faced challenges:

- i) Promotion of the participation of the youth in modern agriculture as a viable career opportunity for the youth and as an economic and business option.
- ii) The provision of resources for the participation of the youth in modern agriculture.

As employment and job creation remain front-page issues around the world. Policy makers and citizens in Zambia struggle with persistent unemployment associated with economic recession and recurrent financial crises, agriculture remains as a viable yet untouched answer to the current problems.

Agriculture remains fundamental to poverty reduction and economic growth in the 21st century (World Bank, 2008).

The Zambian – German Agricultural Knowledge and Training Centre (AKTC) has taken an aggressive role in training and equipping Zambia’s young people, this it has done by conducting different trainings that help various students appreciate the agricultural sector.

On the 17th of November, 2016 a combined team of 112 agricultural students, 40 from the National Resources Development College (NRDC) in Lusaka and 72 from the Zambia College

of Agriculture in Mpika (Some 640 km from Lusaka) attended a one day training at The
Zambian – Germany Agricultural Knowledge and Training Centre (AKTC) in Chisamba.



Trainer, Martin Sikanyika (front) introduces a tractor and a boom sprayer to the students

The training was an intensive introduction to agricultural machinery, starting from the very basics of farm equipment, the team was first given a lecture (held in the GART Hall) on the various machines they must expect once sent into industry, from one machine to another, AKTC's Machinery expert Martin Sikanyika elaborately taught the students.

With the theory part completed, the students were now taken in the field at GART's Chaloshi farm for the practical part of the training. The practical training ensured that the students appreciated the actual feel of seeing the machines as taught from the lecture, the expert emphasised the importance of each implement for enhanced crop production. Further still, he demonstrated the various operations and uses of equipment such as the boom sprayer, ploughs and planters, to mention but a few.

After the day's training was done, the students' representative gave a vote of thanks to the Training Centre for the active role it has taken in training Zambia's future farmers and policy makers, a bright future indeed.



Figure showing the youth undergoing a practical training on the various agricultural equipment.

AKTC as by its mandate has continued to focus its activities to the empowering of farm managers, technical staff of farms, service providers as well as other stakeholder in the industry like educational institutions (student and the youth in general), these training have added more value and technical knowhow to the various attendees, thus securing Zambia's agricultural future.

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