

## Innovative approaches to enhancing the attractiveness of agricultural work in rural Africa

### Convenors:

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### Topic:

In many regions of Africa, agriculture faces a dearth of skilled and unskilled workers, due to a nexus of socio-economic, political and geopolitical factors including the ageing population, migration to urban areas, limited job security, poor working conditions and the unattractiveness of agricultural employment compared to other sectors. Against this background, this working group will examine the root causes of labor scarcity and explore strategies to improve the attractiveness of agricultural jobs, focusing on wage trends, working conditions, and job satisfaction for vulnerable groups including women and youth. It will also explore systemic approaches to agricultural workforce development, focusing on collaborative strategies that can be implemented at local and regional levels.

### Aims:

This working group will explore the following aspects:

- (I) Identify and characterize structural, economic, and social factors driving agricultural labor shortages in North, Eastern and Southern Africa, and analyze gaps and opportunities to strengthen the agri-food sector workforce;
- (II) Determine how technological, organizational, and social innovations can improve labor quality in agri-food systems;
- (III) Share innovative research findings and best practices in agricultural workforce development, emphasizing farmers' self-organization in response to labor shortages and their strategies for retaining workers, especially youth;
- (IV) Develop systems to anticipate labor demand across worker categories, and create observatories to monitor wage dynamics by regions, production system, and season under the most challenging conditions;
- (V) Explore policy interventions to improve working conditions, compensation, education and training, while promoting networking and collaboration to strengthen workforce capacity and support sustainable labor management, including pathways such as agroecological transition.

### Format:

The Working Group will be organized into three 1.5-hour sessions, structured as follows:

- **Session 1: Presentations and case studies from North, Eastern and Southern Africa.**

This session will feature expert presentations (15–20 minutes each), followed by a Q&A segment. It will highlight case studies, empirical or statistical data analyses, as well as methodological and theoretical contributions that explore the topic's objectives from diverse disciplinary perspectives.

- **Session 2: Interactive roundtable discussions from the three regions.**  
Participants will engage in facilitated roundtable discussions to share their experiences and insights, focusing on challenges faced in workforce development and potential solutions.
- **Session 3: Collaborative Action planning and identification of best practices.**  
In this final session, participants will work in groups to develop actionable strategies and policy recommendations aimed at enhancing labor management and workforce attractiveness in the agricultural sector.

For Sessions 2 and 3, a short presentation or poster session may be organized before the beginning of each session to address additional themes not previously covered.