

62. SCHOOL-BASED AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION

ACTION AREA	UNIVERSAL FOOD ACCESS TO BUILD RESILIENCE
SOLUTION CLUSTER	PANDEMIC-RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS
THEMATIC AREA	PANDEMIC-RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS
SUBMITTED BY	TRENT MCKNIGHT

WHAT PROBLEM IS THE SOLUTION TRYING TO ADDRESS?

- Youth-centered agriculture: Academic, vocational and life skills development of rural youth.
- Diffusion of agricultural innovations: Diffuse and increase farmer adoption rates of better agricultural skills and technologies in order to build long-term resilience within communities.

WHAT, IN BRIEF, IS THE SOLUTION?

School-based agricultural education (SBAE) is a 100-year-old, cost-effective system of delivering agricultural innovations to rural communities, guided by an experiential learning model in non-dormitory, post-primary schools. By reaching youth where they live and learn, SBAE achieves two core objectives:

- Contribute to the academic, vocational and life skills development of rural youth through experiential learning methods.
- Improve rural livelihoods by transferring skills and agricultural innovations into the home and community through schools.

WHAT WAS/ WERE THE SOURCE(S) FROM WHICH THIS SOLUTION EMERGED?

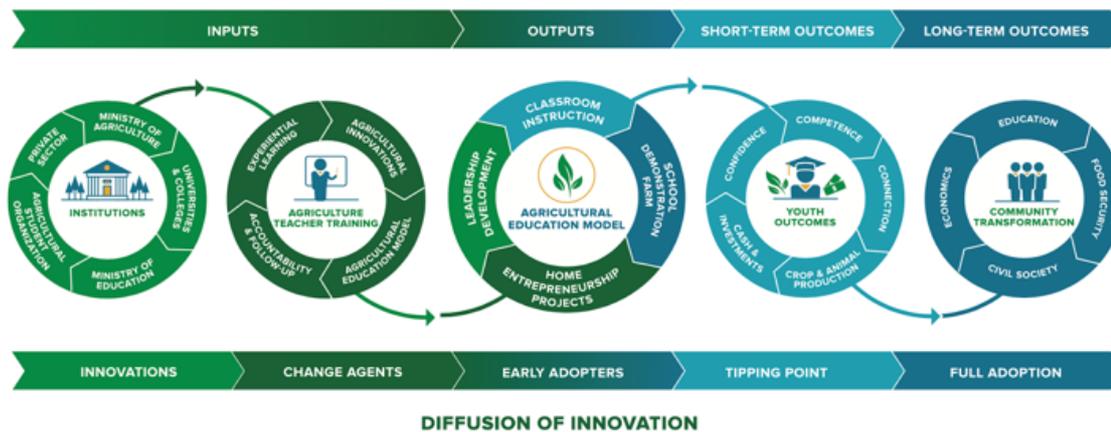
Trent McKnight, on behalf of working group Action Track 5.

WHY IS ADDRESSING THAT PROBLEM IMPORTANT FOR ACHIEVING THE GOAL OF YOUR WORKING GROUP?

Youth-centered agriculture policies are critical to empowering the next generation of agriculturalists to build economic, environmental and social resilience in their communities. When school-aged youth have a direct hand in developing agriculture and improving nutrition within their community, they foster a positive attitude of the sector.

HOW CAN THIS SOLUTION ADDRESS THAT PROBLEM?

SCHOOL-BASED AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION SYSTEM



The SBAE system is built around the four components of the agricultural education model: classroom instruction, school demonstration farm, home entrepreneurship projects and leadership development. A graphic illustration of the system shows the inputs and outputs necessary to achieve the short-term (youth) and long-term (community transformation) outcomes of SBAE. Owing to a collaboration of institutions, pedagogy and agricultural innovations are imparted to agriculture teachers through a series of trainings. Teachers diffuse these ideas to students, who practice them on school and home farms. Through the framework of an agricultural student organization, such as 4-H or Young Farmer Organizations, SBAE gives students the opportunity to build leadership, entrepreneurship and core life skills. As parents and other farmers in the community witness the confidence, increased agricultural production and income generated as youth employ their newly learned innovations, they begin to ask questions and slowly adopt the same innovations until a tipping point of diffusion occurs, leading to community transformation. While strengthening the economic, environmental and social resilience of rural communities, SBAE is a cross-cutting approach to support all five action tracks.

- SBAE reduces rural hunger and improves access to more nutritious food through the education of better nutrition and agricultural practices.
- SBAE nudges school-aged youth, as early adopters, to consider and adopt healthier and more sustainable production and consumption patterns along the agrifood value chain.
- SBAE empowers school-aged youth, as community change agents, to shift behaviors towards better farming practices and innovations that protect, manage and restore natural resources and ecosystems.
- SBAE is a youth-centered, gender inclusive system of diffusing improved agricultural innovations into rural communities, through local schools, in order to increase agricultural production, job/entrepreneurship opportunities and family incomes.
- SBAE equips school-aged youth as problem solvers, through an experiential learning pedagogy, preparing them with leadership, entrepreneurial and life skills to be resilient leaders of tomorrow.

WHY DOES THIS SOLUTION ALIGN TO THE DEFINITION AND CRITERIA FOR A 'GAME CHANGING SOLUTION' DEVELOPED BY THE SUMMIT?

Not only is school-based agricultural education a uniquely youth-centered, gender-inclusive solution, it is also a *scalable* model that connects the dots of a country's existing infrastructure: schools, teachers, agricultural extension and agricultural research. It is a cost effective, holistic system of delivering agricultural innovations within a local context that improves the lot of everyone currently in agriculture – those who remain smallholding, those who transition into commercial agriculture and those who exit the sector altogether.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT AND/OR LIKELY POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR THIS IDEA

- The Movement for School-Based Agricultural Education, and its corresponding Secretariat, are uniting stakeholders to build capacity and create an enabling environment to advance school-based agricultural education systems in sub-Saharan Africa. www.sbae.org
- The Movement for School-Based Agricultural Education's leadership circle includes three former African heads of state:
 - H.E. Joyce Banda, former President of Malawi
 - H.E. Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, former president of Mauritius
 - H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, former president of Liberia
- Ambassador Kip Tom, US Permanent Representative to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture in Rome.
- SBAE-Council on Research and Evidence (CORE), housed at Texas A&M's Borlaug Institute, is building a consortium of researchers and academics to investigate SBAE.
- Section 3307 of the Trade Title of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (US Farm Bill) created the International Agricultural Education Fellowship to "assist eligible countries in developing school-based agricultural education and youth extension programs."

ARE THERE CERTAIN CONTEXTS FOR WHICH THIS SOLUTION IS PARTICULARLY WELL SUITED, OR, CONVERSELY, CONTEXTS FOR WHICH IT IS NOT WELL-SUITED AT ALL.

The solution is globally applicable to lower-, middle- or higher-income countries. It is specifically relevant to sub-Saharan Africa.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE KEY ACTIONS REQUIRED TO ADDRESS THIS SOLUTION?

Scale and increase investment in school-based agricultural education (SBAE) systems as a youth-centered, gender inclusive system of diffusing improved agricultural innovations into rural communities, through local schools, in order to improve resiliency in local communities and global food systems.

ANY OTHER REMARKS OR COMMENTS YOU WOULD LIKE REFLECTED IN AT5'S REPORT OUT ON 'GAME CHANGING' SOLUTIONS

Supporting evidence and existing programs can be found at the following:

- Northwestern University's Global Poverty Research Lab is currently conducting a Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) on SBAE in Liberia. (Principal Investigator – [Chris Udry](#)).
- Empower Youth, Transform Agriculture: An Introductory Guide to School-Based Agricultural Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: <https://bit.ly/38hima9>
- Future Farmers of Japan, 4-K (Kenya), [United States Department of Agriculture – 4-H](#), [Future Farmers of America](#), [4-H Liberia](#), 4-H Korea, [National Federation of Young Farmers Clubs \(UK\)](#), [AgriCorps](#).