

CLIMATE SMART AGRICULTURE YOUTH NETWORK GLOBAL (GCSAYN)

GCSAYN FIRST ANNUAL FORUM (GAF-I 2026)

Youth, Volunteerism and Climate-Smart Agriculture: Building Resilient Agri-Food Systems from the Grassroots

OUTCOME DOCUMENT AND REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

United States International University – Africa (USIU-Africa)

Nairobi, Republic of Kenya

11 – 12 August 2026

An independent civil society forum convened by GCSAYN in collaboration with the Government of Kenya and the Academia. Volunteerism was reflected on the Forum to celebrate the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development (IVY 2026), observed under United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/78/127.

Incorporating

**THE NAIROBI RESOLUTION ON VOLUNTEERISM FOR CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE
(GAF-I/2026/RES.1)**

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Note on the status of this document

This document is the agreed record of the proceedings, findings, recommendations and commitments of the GCSAYN First Annual Forum (GAF-I). Chapters 1 to 12 constitute the report of proceedings and are descriptive. Chapter 13 contains the Nairobi Resolution on Volunteerism for Climate-Smart Agriculture, which is the negotiated outcome instrument of the Forum and is normative in character. Chapters 14 to 20 set out the analytical findings, recommendations, strategic priorities and follow-up architecture through which the Forum’s outcomes are to be implemented and reviewed.

Designations employed and material presented in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of GCSAYN, the United Nations Volunteers programme, or any partner institution concerning the legal status of any country, territory or area, or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Views attributed to individual speakers are those of the speakers and do not necessarily reflect the position of their institutions or of the convening body.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Acronym	Full form	Acronym	Full form
AGRA	The Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa	IoT	Internet of Things
AI	Artificial intelligence	CMCA	City of Mercy Christian Academy
ACFiSICo	African Centre for Field Schools and Innovation	KALRO	Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization
AfDB	African Development Bank Group	KIAMIS	Kenya Integrated Agricultural Management Information System
AU	African Union	MIL	Media and information literacy
AUC	African Union Commission	MOOC	Massive open online course
AUDA-NEPAD	African Union Development Agency – New Partnership for Africa’s Development	NAP	National adaptation plan
BSSS	British Society on Soil Science	NextGen	Next Generation Global Collaboratory
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme	NDC	Nationally determined contribution
CSA	Climate-smart agriculture	NGO	Non-governmental organization
CAARD	Commonwealth Association for Agricultural Research and Development	NSF	National Science Foundation (United States)
CIWF	Compassion in World Farming	NSO	National statistical office
CIFOR-ICRAF	Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry	RVNP	Rift Valley National Polytechnic
CitSci Africa	Citizen Science Africa Association	REC	Regional economic community
CSGP	Citizen Science Global Partnership	SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
CSO	Civil society organization	SP	Strategic priority
DSP	Digital Services Portfolio (FAO)	SSCP	Soil Science Club Programme
EO	Earth observation	SWVR	State of the World’s Volunteerism Report
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	TVET	Technical and vocational education and training
F20	Foundations-20	GFIS	Global flagship on Food Security
FOLU	Food and Land Use Coalition	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
GAF	GGCSAYN First Annual Forum	UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
FSF	Food Systems for the Future (FSF) Institute	URI	United Religious Initiative
GAF-I	GCSAYN First Annual Forum, Nairobi, 11–12 August 2026	UNV	United Nations Volunteers programme
GCSAYN	Climate Smart Agriculture Youth Network Global	UNV ESARO	UNV Regional Office for East and Southern Africa
GIS	Geographic information system	USIU-Africa	United States International University – Africa
GLOSOLAN	Global Soil Laboratory Network (FAO)	WFP	World Food Programme
IVY 2026	International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development, 2026	WMO	World Meteorological Organization
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development	WYGD	Women, Youth and Gender Directorate (African Union)
ILO	International Labour Organization	WAFUNIF	World Association of Former United Nations Internes and Fellows

FOREWORD

The Climate Smart Agriculture Youth Network Global First Annual Forum (GAF-I) was a civil society convening. It was conceived, organized, financed and owned by a youth-led network and its partners, and it set its own agenda. That is worth stating plainly at the outset, because the most consequential thing to emerge from GAF-I a resolution declaring volunteerism a cornerstone of climate-smart agriculture — arrived on the agenda not by institutional design but by persuasion.

The year 2026 is the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development, proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly to recognize volunteer action as a force for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Advocates of that Year, working through the United Nations Volunteers programme and its Regional Office for East and Southern Africa, made the case to this Forum that volunteerism belonged on an agenda otherwise devoted to agriculture, climate and technology. The Forum was persuaded, and the argument then had to survive two days of scrutiny by agronomists, soil scientists, data specialists, extension practitioners and farmers. It did.

The argument is simple. Climate-smart agriculture succeeds or fails at the last mile in the field of the smallholder, in the village extension meeting, in the demonstration plot, in the soil sample carried on foot to a district laboratory. That last mile is disproportionately covered by people who are not paid to cover it: community volunteers, lead farmers, student field teams, youth extension aides, online volunteers translating advisories into local languages. Their labour is the connective tissue between global commitments and grassroots reality, and it is almost entirely absent from the statistics by which nations measure their agricultural and climate performance.

GAF-I set out to correct that omission. Over two days, more than three hundred participants from governments, United Nations entities, continental bodies, universities and research institutes, civil society and farmer organizations, the private sector, youth networks and volunteer movements examined how artificial intelligence, agro-informatics, citizen science, soil information systems, participatory extension and media and information literacy can be brought to bear on food systems and how volunteer action carries each of them the final distance to the farm gate.

The Forum did not conclude with observations alone. It adopted the Nairobi Resolution on Volunteerism for Climate-Smart Agriculture, which declares volunteerism a cornerstone of climate-smart agricultural transformation, establishes a standing Volunteer Recognition programme from GAF-II onwards, and calls on governments, academia, the private sector, continental bodies and United Nations agencies to recognize volunteerism as a driver of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, to integrate volunteer contribution into national statistical measurement, and to strengthen national volunteer programmes for sustainable development.

GCSAYN records its appreciation to USIU-Africa for hosting the Forum, to the Government of the Republic of Kenya for opening it, and to every institution and individual whose contribution shaped its programme. The measure of GAF-I will not be the quality of what was said in Nairobi. It will be what is done, and by whom, before the Forum meets again.



Mr. Divine Ntiokam
*Founder and Executive Director
Climate Smart Agriculture Youth
Network Global*



Ambassador Mussie Hailu
Co-Chair, GCSAYN Board



Honorable Dr. Ghada Killa James
Co-Chair, GCSAYN Board

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Climate Smart Agriculture Youth Network Global First Annual Forum (GAF-I) was held at United States International University – Africa in Nairobi, Republic of Kenya, on 11 and 12 August 2026. It was an independent civil society forum, convened and owned by GCSAYN and hosted by USIU-Africa. Volunteerism was secured as a substantive item on its agenda through the advocacy of the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development (IVY 2026), proclaimed in United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/78/127 of 18 December 2023 and supported in the region by the United Nations Volunteers Regional Office for East and Southern Africa (UNV ESARO).

The Forum registered 323 participants, comprising an in-person delegation at USIU-Africa and an online cohort joining from across the world. Speakers, moderators, panelists and resource persons were drawn from Twenty-four countries across five continents represented by: Kenya, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Ghana, Uganda, Rwanda, Australia, South Sudan, Zambia, Burundi, Malawi, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Cameroon, Malaysia, Greece, France, Italy, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Spain, the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada. Participation was structured across nine stakeholder constituencies: national governments; United Nations entities and multilateral bodies; continental and regional institutions; academia, research and TVET institutions; civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations; farmer and producer organizations; the private sector and youth-led enterprises; volunteer and youth networks; and development partners and philanthropic institutions.

The central proposition of the Forum

GAF-I advanced a single organizing proposition, put to the Forum through IVY 2026 advocacy, tested across every session and adopted on its merits: that volunteerism is a cornerstone of climate-smart agriculture, and not an adjunct to it. Climate-smart agriculture is delivered at the last mile in the farmer's field, the village meeting, the demonstration plot, the local language advisory. That mile is covered disproportionately by unpaid and under-recognized effort: community volunteers, lead farmers, student field teams, youth extension aides, citizen scientists and online volunteers. The Forum found that this contribution is structurally invisible in national agricultural, climate and development statistics, and that its recognition, resourcing and measurement constitute an immediate and tractable agenda for Member States and their partners.

Proceedings in summary

The Forum was opened on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Kenya by Dr. Christopher Wanga of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, who called for stronger collaboration among young people, institutions, governments, researchers, development organizations and the private sector, and affirmed that young people are partners in designing and driving agricultural transformation rather than beneficiaries of it. Ambassador Mussie Hailu, Co-Chair of the GCSAYN Board, delivered the welcome address, framing climate-smart agriculture as a foundation for community resilience, food security and long-term stability.

The opening plenary drew interventions from senior figures across the food systems, climate, education, information integrity, volunteerism and development finance communities. A consistent theme was that youth creativity and entrepreneurial energy cannot produce durable change without institutional scaffolding: dedicated finance, structured mentorship, market access, technical skills, research access and enabling policy.

Day One proceeded through three parallel technical sessions. The first examined artificial intelligence and agro-informatics in agriculture, using Kenya's Integrated Agricultural Management Information System (KIAMIS) as a working case study for national farmer registries, and stressing data quality, metadata standards, interoperability, data governance and deliberate design for equitable access by young people and women. The second addressed information integrity through the UNESCO Climate and Media and Information Literacy MOOC, distinguishing misinformation from disinformation and grounding public climate discourse in verified science. The third interrogated agricultural extension and community resilience, challenging top-down instruction in favour of participatory systems in which farmers are co-creators of solutions.

Day Two turned to implementation, visibility and partnership. Interns, mentees and Borlaug Scholars from GCSAYN Cohorts 1 to 5 shared experience; the Climate Smart Innovations Showcase gave college and university innovators a competitive platform to pitch working solutions; and the Pick Me Theory of Visibility, Communication and Impact was introduced as an emerging conceptual framework linking capability, documentation and strategic communication to opportunity access. Parallel sessions examined citizen science in sustainable food systems, strategic partnerships for sustainable development, and soil science, soil health and soil information systems.

Outcomes

The Forum adopted the Nairobi Resolution on Volunteerism for Climate-Smart Agriculture (GAF-I/2026/RES.1), reproduced in full in Chapter 13. The Resolution declares volunteerism a cornerstone of climate-smart agriculture; establishes the GAF Volunteer Recognition Awards as a standing feature of all future editions of the Forum from GAF-II onwards; determines that the objectives of IVY 2026 shall be carried forward into every subsequent edition of the Forum irrespective of the conclusion of the Year; and calls upon governments, academia, the private sector, continental bodies, United Nations agencies and volunteer-involving organizations to recognize volunteerism as a driver of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063, to integrate volunteer contribution into national statistical measurement, and to strengthen national volunteer programmes and their advocacy for sustainable development.

The Forum further adopted fifteen recommendations, nine strategic priorities for follow-up, a register of institutional commitments, and a follow-up and review framework under which implementation is to be reported to GAF-II.

The Forum also conferred the 2026 Rebecca Waah Recognition Awards (RWRA) and recognized the leadership of the Executive Director of GCSAYN. These recognitions are recorded in Chapter 12 and constitute the precedent on which the standing Volunteer Recognition Awards established by the Resolution are built.

The Forum was explicit that the absence of implementation timelines and funding commitments is the characteristic failure mode of convenings of this kind. Chapter 18 therefore sets out named responsible actors, indicative timelines and indicators of progress for each strategic priority, to be reported against at GAF-II.

PART I

FRAMING AND CONTEXT

Preamble · Introduction · Purpose · Organization · Participation

Part I establishes the framing of the Forum: the international mandate under which it was convened, the problem it addressed, the objectives it set itself, the manner in which it was organized, and the composition of those who took part. It provides the basis on which the proceedings in Part II and the outcomes in Parts III and IV are to be read.

1. PREAMBLE

The Climate Smart Agriculture Youth Network Global First Annual Forum (GAF-I), meeting in Nairobi, Republic of Kenya, on 11 and 12 August 2026,

Recalling General Assembly resolution, A/RES/78/127 of 18 December 2023, by which the Assembly proclaimed 2026 the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development and called upon Member States, organizations of the United Nations system and other relevant stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector and academia, to observe the Year at national and regional levels,

Recalling also the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 1 on poverty, Goal 2 on hunger and sustainable agriculture, Goal 4 on quality education, Goal 5 on gender equality, Goal 8 on decent work, Goal 13 on climate action, Goal 15 on life on land and Goal 17 on partnerships and the means of implementation,

Recalling further Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, in particular Aspiration 1 on a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development and Aspiration 6 on an Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and the continental commitments on agricultural transformation adopted under the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme,

Recalling the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, and the ongoing work of Parties on agriculture, food security and just transition,

Recognizing climate-smart agriculture as an integrated approach to sustainably increasing agricultural productivity and incomes, adapting and building resilience to climate change, and reducing or removing greenhouse gas emissions where possible,

Acknowledging with appreciation the advocacy undertaken in the framework of the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development, and supported by the United Nations Volunteers Regional Office for East and Southern Africa, which secured the inclusion of volunteerism as a substantive item on the agenda of the Forum,

Welcoming the hosting of the Forum by United States International University – Africa and the contribution of academic and research institutions to its technical content,

Noting the State of the World's Volunteerism Report and the substantial global scale of volunteer engagement that it documents [figures to be confirmed see Annex VII], and noting further the persistent under-representation of volunteer contribution in official statistics,

Concerned that volunteer work in agriculture, extension, natural resource management and climate adaptation remains largely unmeasured in national accounts, agricultural statistics and reporting against the Sustainable Development Goals, with the consequence that it is under-resourced in planning and under-recognized in policy,

Recalling the International Labour Organization Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work and subsequent international statistical guidance as available instruments for addressing that gap,

Emphasizing that young people, women, smallholder farmers, indigenous peoples and local communities, and persons with disabilities are both the principal constituencies of volunteer action in agriculture and the constituencies most exposed to climate-related risk in food systems,

Convinced that the transformation of agri-food systems requires the deliberate combination of scientific research, digital and geospatial technology, farmer knowledge, information integrity, institutional partnership and organized volunteer action,

Having considered the deliberations of the plenary sessions, the six parallel technical sessions, the Climate Smart Innovations Showcase and the reports of the rapporteurs,

Adopts the present Outcome Document and Report of Proceedings, and adopts the Nairobi Resolution on Volunteerism for Climate-Smart Agriculture set out in Chapter 13.

2. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

2.1 A civil society forum, and how volunteerism reached its agenda

GAF-I was an independent civil society convening. It was initiated, organized and owned by a youth-led network and its partners, it set its own agenda and priorities, and it was not convened by, on behalf of, or under the auspices of any United Nations entity. This is recorded here because it bears directly on how the Forum's principal outcome should be read.

The year 2026 is the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development, proclaimed by the General Assembly to recognize volunteer action as a force for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Advocates of the Year, working through the United Nations Volunteers programme and its Regional Office for East and Southern Africa, made the case that volunteerism warranted a place on an agenda otherwise devoted to agriculture, climate, technology and youth enterprise. That advocacy succeeded: volunteerism was taken up as a substantive item, and technical framing on volunteer infrastructure, modalities and measurement was made available to the Forum on request.

What followed was not endorsement by default. The proposition was examined across two days by agronomists, soil scientists, data specialists, extension practitioners, academics and farmers, and it was adopted because it held up against their experience of how agricultural transformation actually reaches the ground. The Forum notes this sequence deliberately: an outcome arrived at by persuasion within a self-governing civil society body carries a different and, in the Forum's view, stronger authority than one arranged in advance.

2.2 The substantive problem

The Forum convened against an urgent global imperative: the need to strengthen climate adaptation and mitigation across agricultural value chains while opening viable, long-term economic pathways for young people and women. Africa carries a particular configuration of this challenge: the world's youngest population, a heavy dependence on rain-fed smallholder agriculture, accelerating climate variability, and extension and research systems that remain thinly staffed relative to the farming populations they serve.

The concept paper for the Forum established three strategic pillars. The first concerned ecological sustainability through optimized resource use and climate-resilient practice. The second concerned data-driven digital infrastructure and information and media literacy as foundations for modern farming. The third concerned employment and enterprise pathways for young people and women across green value chains, framing environmental stewardship as a source of economic opportunity rather than a constraint upon it.

To these three pillars the Forum added, in the course of its deliberations, a fourth cross-cutting dimension: volunteerism as the delivery mechanism through which the other three reach rural and grassroots constituencies. This addition is reflected in the strategic priorities set out in Chapter 17 and is given normative expression in the Resolution.

2.3 Inclusion as a design principle

The Forum deliberately prioritized joint problem-solving and knowledge exchange among constituencies that are historically under-represented in agricultural and climate policy-making: small-scale young farmers, women agriculturalists, indigenous peoples and local communities, and persons with disabilities. Placing these voices in direct dialogue with technical experts and policy-makers was intended to ensure that emerging agricultural frameworks are socially equitable and grounded in real community contexts, and not merely technically sound.

3. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE FORUM

GAF-I was established as a cornerstone platform to expand international youth cooperation and to drive the adoption of climate-smart agriculture through youth-led leadership and organized volunteer action. Its objectives were the following:

- To elevate young people from participation to leadership within climate-resilient agriculture and vulnerable food supply networks, and to establish the institutional conditions under which that leadership is exercised in practice.
- To bridge generational and sectoral divides by convening sustained exchange between young innovators, government bodies, scientific and academic institutions, continental and multilateral organizations, civil society and the private sector.
- To advance inclusive, climate-resilient food and nutrition systems that strengthen long-term community stability and household food security.
- To democratize access to digital infrastructure, scientific data, geospatial technology and modern agricultural tools, with deliberate attention to preventing the emergence of new digital divides.
- To open pathways for historically under-represented groups in particular young farmers, women, and rural and indigenous communities into meaningful livelihoods and leadership positions in the green economy.
- To serve as an incubator for youth-driven innovation and enterprise across the agricultural value chain, and to connect innovators with finance, mentorship, markets, research and policy actors.
- To position volunteerism, following its inclusion on the agenda through IVY 2026 advocacy, as a recognized and measurable driver of climate-smart agriculture, rural inclusion and sustainable development, and to establish durable mechanisms for its recognition within the Forum and beyond it.
- To build multi-sectoral partnerships capable of converting the Forum's conclusions into financed, timebound and accountable action.

4. ORGANIZATION OF THE FORUM

4.1 Convening arrangements

The Forum was convened and owned by GCSAYN and hosted by USIU-Africa in Nairobi. It was conducted in hybrid modality over two days, in English, with simultaneous in-person and online participation. Partner institutions, including United Nations entities, contributed speakers, technical content and session support at the invitation of the convening body.

4.2 Structure of proceedings

Day	Segment	Content
Day One	Inaugural plenary and high-level opening	Official opening on behalf of the Government of Kenya; welcome address; keynote and thematic interventions from government, UN, continental, academic, civil society and private sector leaders
Day One	Parallel Session I	Artificial intelligence, agro-informatics and the national farmer registry (KIAMIS case study)
Day One	Parallel Session II	UNESCO Climate and Media and Information Literacy MOOC; information integrity in climate discourse
Day One	Parallel Session III	Climate resilience and participatory agricultural extension
Day Two	Plenary	Youth experiences and GCSAYN programmes; Climate Smart Innovations Showcase and judging; Pick Me Theory of Visibility, Communication and Impact
Day Two	Parallel Session IV	The role of citizen science in fostering sustainable food systems
Day Two	Parallel Session V	Enhancing partnerships to advance the achievement of sustainable development, including volunteerism
Day Two	Parallel Session VI	Soil science, soil health and soil information systems implementation
Day Two	Closing segment	Recognition and awards; adoption of outcomes; closing statements

4.3 Methodology of the record

Proceedings were documented by a rapporteurs' team assigned to each plenary and parallel session. Session rapporteur notes were consolidated by the Forum Documentation Committee, cross-checked against the programme, speaker submissions and presentation materials, and synthesized thematically rather than chronologically. Recommendations and institutional commitments recorded in this document are those articulated in session and confirmed by the relevant institutions or their representatives.

5. PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION

5.1 Overall participation

The Forum recorded 323 registered participants, distributed between an in-person delegation at USIU-Africa and an online cohort. The composition was weighted towards young people, who participated alongside government officials, United Nations and multilateral representatives, continental body officials, university academics and researchers, technical specialists, smallholder farmers, civil society organizations, volunteers and private sector leaders.

Modality of participation	Number	Notes
In-person, USIU-Africa, Nairobi	150	Registered on-site attendance across both days
Online	173	Registered virtual participation across both days
Total registered participants	323	In-person and online registrants

5.2 Countries and nationalities represented

Speakers, session leads, moderators, panelists, resource persons and award recipients were drawn from Twenty countries across Africa, Europe, North America and Asia, as established from the final programme. The following countries were represented:

Region	Countries represented in the programme
Africa	Kenya (Host), Ethiopia, Nigeria, Malawi, South Africa, Ghana, Uganda, Rwanda, South Sudan, Zambia, Burundi, Cameroon,
Europe	France, Germany, Austria, Greece, Spain, United Kingdom, Italy, Belgium
North America	United States of America, Canada
Asia	Malaysia
Oceanic	Australia
Total	Twenty-four countries represented in the programme of speakers, session leads, panelists and recognized contributors

A consolidated list of speakers, session leads, moderators and panelists, with institutional affiliation and nationality, is set out in Annex II, compiled from the final itemized programme of 31 July 2026.

5.3 Stakeholder constituencies represented

The Forum was constituted as a genuinely multi-constituency convening. The following disaggregation records the categories of participation and their principal contributions to the proceedings.

Constituency	Representation and contribution at GAF-I
Government	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development of the Republic of Kenya, represented by Dr. Christopher Wanga who delivered the official opening on behalf of the Government; national agricultural research and meteorological institutions; county-level agricultural administration; national technical and vocational authorities
United Nations system	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, represented at Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative level; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Regional Office for East Africa; World Meteorological Organization; International Fund for Agricultural Development; United Nations Volunteers (UNV ESARO), which led the Day Two session on partnerships under the IVY 2026 banner

Constituency	Representation and contribution at GAF-I
Continental and regional bodies	African Union, represented by the Director of the Women, Youth and Gender Directorate; African Development Bank Group; African Risk Capacity Group; Commonwealth Association for Agricultural Research and Development; CitSci Africa Association; Africa Projects Development Centre; regional agricultural research and soil networks
Academia and research	USIU-Africa (host); University of Embu and University of Kabianga, Kenya; University Putra Malaysia; International Hellenic University, Greece; Clemson University and Hostos Community College, United States; University of Zambia; Rift Valley National Polytechnic, Kenya; CIFOR-ICRAF Soil and Land Health Laboratory; British Society of Soil Science, City of Mercy Christian Academy. Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, University of Jos.
TVET institutions	Technical and vocational education and training institutions, represented both as participants and as a constituency identified in session as a strategic workforce for digital agricultural service delivery
Civil society and NGOs	Compassion in World Farming International; Global Commons Alliance; Foundations Platform F20; Children of the Earth; Karen Forte Environmental Conservation Foundation; Global Flagship Initiative on Food Security; Next generation Global Collaboratory, Food and Land Use Coalition (FOLU) Kenya, Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, EarthforAll, Food System for the Future (FSF) Institute, Growth Further, and STEMles Network.
Farmer and producer organizations	Smallholder farmers and farmer organization representatives participating in the participatory extension and citizen science sessions as knowledge holders and co-designers
Private sector	Agri-enterprise and agricultural technology leadership, including Hello Tractor and Tailored Food; Food Systems for the Future Institute; Grow Further; digital services and investment actors; youth-led enterprises pitching at the Climate Smart Innovations Showcase
Volunteers and volunteer-involving organizations	United Nations Volunteers, through the IVY 2026 East and Southern Africa regional coordination; World Association of Former UN Interns and Fellows; community and national volunteers; online volunteers; student volunteer corps; GCSAYN volunteer cadres supporting Forum delivery, rapporteuring, logistics and communications
Youth networks and young professionals	GCSAYN interns and mentees of Cohorts 1 to 5; Borlaug Scholars, who read the GAF-I Communiqué at the closing; GCSAYN Youth Advisory Panel; the Soil Science Club Programme; GCSAYN national coordinators; student innovators from colleges and universities
Development partners and philanthropy	Bilateral and multilateral development actors, foundations and funding institutions engaged in the partnerships and financing discussions
Media and communicators	Science communicators and media and information literacy practitioners contributing to the information integrity session

5.4 Youth and volunteer participation as structural features

Youth involvement extended beyond attendance into the structure and delivery of the Forum. Young people contributed through the GCSAYN internship tracks, formal mentorship networks, the Borlaug Scholars cohorts and the Youth Advisory Panel, and they led dedicated youth-centered sessions and technical showcases in which they demonstrated working solutions, research findings and practical contributions.

Volunteer effort was equally structural. The Forum was substantially delivered by volunteers: rapporteurs, session facilitators, technical and online moderation teams, registration and logistics support, communications and documentation. The Forum noted that this pattern — a global convening materially dependent on volunteer labour that appears in no budget line and no statistic — is itself an illustration of the measurement gap that the Resolution addresses.

Observation recorded by the Forum

The Forum observed that it had itself been delivered in significant part through volunteer effort, and that no standard reporting instrument available to the convening body was capable of capturing the volume, hours or economic value of that contribution. The Forum treated this as a concrete instance of the broader problem identified in the Preamble and addressed in operative paragraphs 9 and 10 of the Nairobi Resolution.

PART II

PROCEEDINGS

Plenary and parallel sessions, Days One and Two

Part II is the record of what was discussed and concluded in each session, in the order in which the Forum met. It covers the inaugural plenary, the three parallel technical sessions of Day One, the Day Two plenary, and the three parallel sessions of Day Two. Each chapter records the panel, the substance of the discussion and the framework for action agreed in that session.

6. INAUGURAL PLENARY AND HIGH-LEVEL OPENING

6.1 Official commencement

The Forum opened with welcome remarks by GCSAYN and USIU-Africa. Dr. Christopher Wanga, Director of the Livestock Policy Research and Regulations Directorate, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, represented the Government of the Republic of Kenya, delivering the Government intervention in the inaugural plenary and the closing statement at the conclusion of the Forum. He called for stronger collaboration among young people, institutions, governments, researchers, development organizations, the private sector and other stakeholders, and affirmed the Forum’s foundational premise on behalf of the host Government.



Dr. Christopher Wanga

*Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
Development, Kenya*

“Young people are not only beneficiaries of the transformation we seek; they are partners in designing and driving the change.”

The inaugural ceremony ran from 08:30 to 10:45 and comprised welcome addresses, formal opening remarks and a sequence of thematic interventions delivered by representatives of youth networks, public administration, United Nations entities, continental bodies, international development organizations, civil society, the private sector and research institutions. It was followed by group photographs and an interlude presenting the GCSAYN Decade of Action and the success stories of interns, mentees and Borlaug Scholars, delivered by Ms. Olasunkanmi Deborah Moyosore, Mr. Ahmadou Aihijo and Ms. Abena Takyiwa Gyan.

6.2 Opening of the Forum

The Forum was formally opened by a sequence of representatives of the convening and host institutions. Ms. Emmanuella Peter, Special Envoy to GAF-I 2026 (Nigeria), opened the proceedings. She was followed by Mr. Divine Ntiokam, Executive Director of GCSAYN; Mr. Bonfas Salano, Dean of Students, USIU-Africa, on behalf of the host institution; Ambassador Mussie Hailu, GCSAYN Board Co-Chair (Ethiopia); and Honorable Dr. Ghada Killa, GCSAYN Board Co-Chair (South Sudan).

Welcome address by the Board Co-Chair

Ambassador Mussie Hailu, Co-Chair of the GCSAYN Board, delivered the welcome address. He underscored the importance of convening young people, policy-makers, researchers, development partners and other stakeholders to strengthen collective action on climate change, food security and sustainable agriculture, and highlighted the role of young people as innovators, advocates and agents of change in advancing climate-smart agriculture. He emphasized the need for stronger partnerships, knowledge exchange and practical solutions responsive to the realities of vulnerable farming communities, and encouraged participants to use the Forum to generate actionable commitments rather than declarations alone.

6.3 Host institution

Mr. Bonfas Salano, Dean of Students, welcomed participants on behalf of USIU-Africa. Prof. Maina Muniafu of USIU-Africa, Chair of the CitSci Africa Association and Vice-Chair of the Citizen Science Global Partnership, noted the value of connecting universities, young people, researchers and development partners in addressing agricultural and sustainability challenges, positioning the university sector as an active partner in agricultural transformation rather than an observer of it.

6.4 High-level and thematic interventions

The opening plenary drew interventions from leaders across the food systems, climate, education, information integrity, volunteerism and development finance communities. The following summarizes the substance of those contributions.

Speaker	Substance of intervention
Amb. Ertharin Cousin Food Systems for the Future Institute, United States	Investment in youth-led food systems enterprise. Called for dedicated capital to convert concepts into viable businesses, and for direct investment in youth, women and indigenous communities.
Amb. Stephane Gompertz Councilor of Chavenay, France	Youth participation in global processes, including the UNCCD Conference of the Parties. “The goal isn’t more data, but more decisions.”
Mr. Jay Ralitera UNESCO Regional Office for East Africa, Kenya	Information integrity: misinformation, shared without harmful intent, distinguished from disinformation, which is deliberately misleading. Presented the Media and Information Literacy MOOC, five modules, more than 1,800 multilingual enrollees.
Mr. Zablon Shilenje WMO Coordinator for Climate Services for Africa, Ethiopia	Translating research, technical expertise and partnership into practical programmes and measurable outcomes.
Dr. Conrad Rein Global Flagship Initiative on Food Security, Germany	Translating expertise and partnership into measurable programme outcomes.
Mr. Philip J. Lymbery Compassion in World Farming International, United Kingdom	Transition from factory farming to agroecological and regenerative agricultural practice.
Mr. Andrew Morris British Society of Soil Science, United Kingdom	Soil health and land management as the technical foundation of resilient food systems.
Ms. Katrin Harvey Foundations Platform F20, Austria	Inclusion of youth and youth-led organizations within partnerships from the outset, rather than after decisions have been taken.
Prof. Rebecca Boger NextGen, United States	Citizen science as a bridge between communities, technology and research; connecting generations, disciplines and institutions, and positioning Africa to lead.
Mr. Michael Onchabo Food and Land Use Coalition, Kenya	Structured youth engagement through platform initiatives including the Food and Land Use Coalition.
Dr. Christopher Wanga Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Kenya	Government of Kenya intervention on collaboration across young people, institutions, governments, researchers, development organizations and the private sector. “Young people are not only beneficiaries of the transformation we seek; they are partners in designing and driving the change.”
Ms. Karen W. Kimani Karen Forte Environmental Conservation Foundation, Kenya	Youth inclusion in solution design. “If young people are expected to be part of tackling climate challenges, shouldn’t they also be involved in designing the solutions?”
Ms. Emmanuella Peter Special Envoy to GAF-I 2026, Nigeria	Capacity building through GCSAYN, illustrating the pathway from volunteer engagement to substantive contribution.
Mr. Max Olupot African Centre for Field Schools and Innovation, Uganda	Deep listening and inclusive design. “What do the people say? What do they care about?” Adoption follows when communities help identify the problem.

Taken together, these interventions established an interdisciplinary foundation for the Forum and underscored the shared responsibility of government, academia, civil society, the private sector, volunteer movements and youth-led organizations in driving agricultural transformation.

6.5 Founder's address: the trajectory of the Network

Mr. Divine Ntiokam, Founder and Executive Director of GCSAYN, reflected on the journey of the Network from its founding vision in 2004 to its emergence in May 2014 as a global platform for youth engagement in climate-smart agriculture. He attributed the Network's growth to consistency, self-belief, resilience and deliberate character building, noting that meaningful global change requires sustained commitment and the courage to pursue long-term goals.

He recalled milestones in the Network's evolution, including its contribution to global development processes such as the design and advancement of the Sustainable Development Goals and efforts to promote the localization of climate action, and underscored the importance of translating global climate and development commitments into practical, locally relevant actions responsive to community realities. He encouraged members and partners to build an enduring movement capable of influencing policy, strengthening partnerships and supporting youth-led solutions.

6.6 Outcomes of the opening plenary

The opening plenary centered on youth leadership as a primary engine of food systems transformation, urging participants to move beyond presence into the roles of architect, enterprise creator and lead innovator. Ambassador Ertharin Cousin reinforced this mandate by calling for dedicated capital to convert concepts into viable businesses. Ambassador Mussie Hailu framed climate-smart agriculture as a cornerstone of community resilience, food security and long-term stability, emphasizing that individual initiative must be paired with supportive national policy and shared accountability.

Subsequent dialogue on nutrition security, land resource management and biodiversity focused on practical strategies to strengthen smallholder livelihoods, including expanded local market access, crop diversification, reduction of post-harvest loss and protection of regional biodiversity, while stressing the role of indigenous peoples and local communities in sustainable ecosystem management.

The plenary examined technological integration as an accelerator of agricultural modernization, referencing precision agriculture, artificial intelligence, remote sensing, unmanned aerial systems, Internet of Things networks, early-warning platforms, digital financing and blockchain traceability. The central caution was that digital tools must augment and empower smallholders rather than displace them. Further interventions addressed soil degradation research, reliable climate forecasting, civic volunteerism, public sector governance, and the structural policies required for youth-led enterprises to scale.

7. DAY ONE, PARALLEL SESSION I: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, AGRO-INFORMATICS AND THE NATIONAL FARMER REGISTRY

7.1 Parallel Session I

Session title: FAO Agro-Informatics and Digital Public Infrastructure for Agriculture. Session leads: Mr. Karl Robert Morteo and Mr. Stuart Tippins, FAO. Day One, 13:00–16:00.

Speaker	Role and affiliation
Mr. Karl Robert Morteo	Senior Information Technology Officer, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations — session lead
Mr. Stuart Tippins	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations — session lead; presenter on e-Extension and the Agripreneur e-Extension model
Dr. Nor-Khaizura M. Ab Rashid	Associate Professor and Head, Laboratory of Food Safety and Food Integrity, Institute of Tropical Agriculture and Food Security, Universiti Putra Malaysia — Malaysia
Mr. David Kasibante	Space Law and Policy Specialist, Space Generation Advisory Council — Uganda
Dr. Gladys Khisa Sitati	Dean, School of Education and Social Sciences, University of Embu — Kenya
Dr. Valasia Iakovoglou	Director, Ecotourism Sector, UNESCO Chair Con-E-Ect, International Hellenic University — Greece

7.2 Core thematic focus

The session examined the application of artificial intelligence and agro-informatics platforms to data-driven decision-making, the establishment of national farmer registries as a basis for targeted digital service delivery, and the deliberate closing of youth and gender gaps in technology access, financial inclusion and agricultural extension.

7.3 Data, information systems and digital services

The FAO session explored how data, information systems and digital tools can support agricultural planning, service delivery, and decision-making. It also highlighted an important role for youth in bridging the gap between available digital tools and farmers who need support in identifying and using the most appropriate solutions to improve their productivity and livelihoods. Young people can help translate technology into practical, user-focused services, while also contributing to the development of new tools based on existing agricultural data.

The session also showcased FAO's broader work, including the [FAO Agro-Informatics Platform](#) (AIP) and [Digital Services Portfolio](#) (DSP), which provide tools and services to help users access agricultural data, information and practical knowledge. The AIP is available to all users, and FAO's team can work with governments and other partners to incorporate additional information and develop custom views of their data, helping countries make their own agricultural information more accessible and useful (contact the FAO team [here](#)).

For Karl Morteo, Senior Information Technology Officer, FAO, the session highlighted the importance of making agricultural information useful and accessible. "The real value of agricultural data comes from what we can do with it. By connecting data, technologies and people, we can generate insights that support better decisions and open new opportunities across agrifood systems." added Karl.

The panel brought together a wide range of expertise, including Nor-Khaizura M. Ab Rashid of the Institute of Tropical Agriculture and Food Security at Universiti Putra Malaysia; David Kasibante, Space Law & Policy Specialist at the

Space Generation Advisory Council in Uganda; Gladys Khisa Sitati, Dean of the School of Education and Social Sciences at the University of Embu, Kenya; and Valasia Iakovoglou, Director of the Ecotourism Sector of the UNESCO Chair Con-E-Ect at the International Hellenic University, Greece.

“The real value of agricultural data comes from what we can do with it. By connecting data, technologies and people, we can generate insights that support better decisions and open new opportunities across agri-food systems.”

Mr. Karl Robert Morteo, Senior Information Technology Officer, FAO

Central to the dialogue was the principle that high-quality, standardized and well-documented data are essential to effective agricultural decision-making. Delegates emphasized that clear metadata, system interoperability and robust data standards are prerequisites for the sharing, analysis and reuse of agricultural information.

7.4 Building a national farmer registry: the KIAMIS case

Kenya’s Integrated Agricultural Management Information System served as the principal case study for constructing a comprehensive national producer registry paired with value-added digital services. Deliberations identified the structural pillars required to sustain a connected digital farming ecosystem: political leadership, effective governance, strategic investment, physical and digital infrastructure, and strict data standards ensuring cross-system interoperability.

Operational success was found to depend on clear data governance policy, rigorous privacy and security protocols, enabling legislation, targeted workforce training, and coordination between national and county-level administrative bodies. The session concluded by examining farmer profiling techniques and tailored digital delivery models, with particular attention to the KALRO agripreneurs e-extension initiative as a vehicle for reaching local producers.

7.5 Youth, gender and volunteer dimensions of digital inclusion

Participants identified TVET graduates as a strategic workforce capable of expanding digital literacy, facilitating information access and delivering modern agricultural services directly to farming communities. The session also brought forward persistent gender and demographic disparities in the adoption of digital agricultural services, noting that women agriculturalists face restricted access to smartphones, digital equipment and modern financial products.

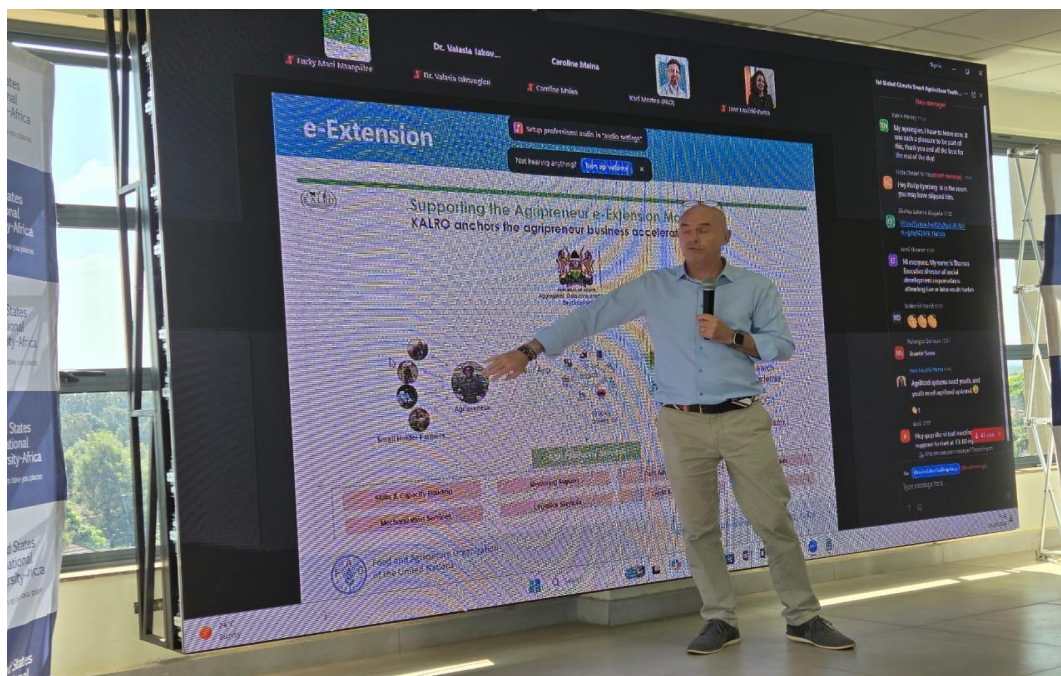
The session further observed that digital agricultural services reach the last mile through intermediaries, and that in most rural settings those intermediaries are volunteers, lead farmers and community-based youth aides rather than salaried extension officers. The Forum noted that investment in digital public infrastructure for agriculture will under-perform unless it is matched by investment in the volunteer and community layer that connects that infrastructure to farmers who cannot reach it unaided.

Framework for action

- Increase capital allocation to digital literacy and to the expansion of national agricultural data systems.
- Scale artificial intelligence applications across farming networks, supported by upgraded institutional training curricula covering artificial intelligence, geographic information systems, Earth remote sensing and advanced data analytics.
- Design digital platforms for practical usability, ensuring that farmer-facing tools remain simple, accessible and grounded in real-world application.
- Sustain financing for system interoperability and for the streamlining of information management protocols across institutions.
- Expand electronic extension services to broaden technical outreach, and deliberately target women and young people in digital agriculture policy to prevent their marginalization in the digital agricultural economy.
- Recognize, train and support community volunteers, lead farmers and TVET-trained youth aides as the delivery layer for digital agricultural services at the last mile, and account for their contribution in programme design and budgeting.



Karl Robert Morteo (FAO) presenting on e-Extension and the Agripreneur e-Extension Model during the Agro-Informatics and Digital Public Infrastructure session.



Stuart Tippins presenting on e-Extension and the Agripreneur e-Extension Model during the Agro-Informatics and Digital Public Infrastructure session.

8. DAY ONE, PARALLEL SESSION II: UNESCO CLIMATE AND MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY MOOC

8.1 Parallel Session II

Session title: UNESCO Climate and MIL MOOC. Session lead: Mr. Jay Ralitera, UNESCO. Day One, 13:00–16:00.

Speaker	Role and affiliation
Mr. Jay Ralitera	Information and Communication Specialist, UNESCO Regional Office for East Africa — Kenya; session lead
Mr. Sammy K. Chemoiwa	Principal, Rift Valley National Polytechnic — Kenya; intervention presented on his behalf by Dr. Irene Kimani
Ms. Karen W. Kimani	Founder, Karen Forte Environmental Conservation Foundation — Kenya
Mr. Onen Charles	Coordinator, GCSAYN South Sudan — South Sudan
Mr. Zablon W. Shilenje	Coordinator (Services) for Africa, World Meteorological Organization — Ethiopia

8.2 Core thematic focus

The session addressed the necessity of reliable and accessible information as a foundational driver of effective climate action. A substantial portion of the dialogue concerned the distinction between misinformation and disinformation, and the obligation on communicators to analyse and verify environmental information before dissemination or application.

The MOOC was presented across five instructional pillars: a foundational overview of media and information literacy; an examination of false narratives in public discourse; techniques for identifying sustainable and accurate climate information; methods for the critical evaluation of environmental reporting; and strategies for managing climate anxiety while sustaining meaningful engagement. Panelists repeatedly emphasized anchoring public messaging and policy decisions in empirical science, verified research and expert consensus.

8.3 Youth, ecosystems and climate action

The dialogue established the link between media and information literacy, youth engagement and practical climate solutions. Delegates stressed that empowering young people with accurate, science-based information is a precondition of their meaningful contribution to environmental policy formulation and grassroots climate initiatives, and underlined the need to safeguard ecosystems while integrating public environmental awareness with actionable adaptation strategies.

8.4 Institutional partnership opportunity

The potential for institutional partnerships to expand youth access to climate education, including through the MOOC platform, was brought forward on behalf of Mr. Sammy Chemoiwa of Rift Valley National Polytechnic by Dr. Irene Kimani. Participants explored mechanisms for integrating TVET trainees into these digital learning pathways, and emphasized deepening collaboration between academic institutions and climate initiatives through shared digital learning platforms, environmental sustainability curricula and improved access to reliable climate data.

8.5 Volunteer dimension

The session noted that information integrity in rural and low-connectivity settings depends on trusted local intermediaries. Community volunteers, student volunteer groups and online volunteers translating and contextualizing climate advisories into local languages were identified as a practical response to the offline dimension of the digital divide, and as candidates for structured training under media and information literacy programmes.

Framework for action

- Adopt the UNESCO Climate and Media and Information Literacy MOOC across participating organizations, and embed fact-checking practice and evidence-based research in public discourse.

- Leverage digital learning tools to broaden access to verified environmental information, and deepen youth involvement in policy dialogue and local initiatives.
- Establish framework mechanisms to incorporate the MOOC into formal academic curricula and existing youth empowerment networks.
- Develop targeted strategies to bridge the digital divide so that reliable climate information and adaptation resources reach underserved and offline communities, including through trained community and online volunteers.
- Strengthen multi-stakeholder partnerships between UNESCO, academic bodies, civil society and volunteer-involving organizations.



Panel discussion during a Day One parallel session, USIU-Africa, Nairobi.

9. DAY ONE, PARALLEL SESSION III: CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND PARTICIPATORY EXTENSION

9.1 Parallel Session III

Session title: *Climate Resilience and Adaptation — Participatory Extension Approaches.*

Session lead: *Mr. Max Olupot. Day One, 13:00–16:00.*

Speaker	Role and affiliation
Mr. Max Olupot	Co-Founder and Managing Director, African Centre for Field Schools and Innovation — Uganda; session lead
Prof. Joash Kibett	Associate Professor of Agricultural Education and Extension and Director of Graduate Studies, University of Kabianga — Kenya
Ms. Jane Lowicki-Zucca	Youth Development Expert — United States
Prof. Wale Adekunle	President and Chief Executive Officer, Commonwealth Association for Agricultural Research and Development — United States
Mr. Taylor Quinn	Executive Director, Tailored Food — Canada
Ms. Abigail Wambui	GCSAYN Youth Advisory Panel — Kenya

9.2 Core thematic focus

The session examined climate adaptation through the lens of community-centered outreach models, addressing local agricultural capacity, grassroots climate resilience, collaborative extension frameworks, youth involvement and practical climate-response initiatives.

9.3 Farmer empowerment and participatory extension

Collaborative extension frameworks were identified as flexible instruments capable of responding to diverse agricultural demands and operational scales, shifting climate adaptation from isolated practice to collective community capability. The panel emphasized equipping producers to anticipate, absorb and adjust to shifting climate patterns, and underscored that scaling grassroots models depends on supportive policy environments and strong multi-stakeholder coalitions.

9.4 Co-creation of knowledge

A central finding was that producers hold substantial ground-level knowledge. Participants urged a shift towards collaborative solution design in which farming communities directly shape, internalize and deploy adaptation strategies. Digital tools were positioned as accelerators for democratizing technical expertise rather than as substitutes for farmer judgement.

9.5 Youth voice and the volunteer extension model

Delegates underscored the imperative of amplifying youth perspectives and providing meaningful decision-making space across the agricultural ecosystem, including field-level extension, research, policy design and community programmes. Young people were urged to pursue pathways building specialized technical expertise while drawing on research partnerships, professional extension networks, internships and digital tools. The session gave particular attention to the volunteer extension model. In most of the represented countries, the ratio of public extension officers to farming households is such that conventional extension cannot achieve coverage. Participants identified trained community volunteers, farmer-to-farmer volunteer networks, lead farmers and student volunteer field teams as the practical means by which participatory extension is delivered at scale, and called for their formal recognition within national extension policy, their inclusion in training and certification systems, and the provision of basic support covering transport, materials and communication costs.

Framework for action

- Elevate youth perspectives within agricultural decision-making frameworks and scale digital and community-led extension services.
- Foster multi-sector coalitions among producers, young innovators, researchers, technical experts and policy actors to ensure that solutions are co-created with farming communities.
- Expand hands-on technical training, research access and professional internships for emerging leaders.
- Embed environmental stewardship, SDG alignment and climate-smart practice across youth and agricultural initiatives.

- Formally recognize community volunteers, lead farmers and volunteer extension aides within national agricultural extension policy, and provide them with training, certification pathways and basic operational support.

10. DAY TWO PLENARY: YOUTH EXPERIENCE, INNOVATION AND VISIBILITY

10.1 Core thematic focus

The Day Two plenary combined lived youth experience, practical technological solutions and conceptual frameworks to examine how emerging leaders drive climate resilience and agricultural innovation, and how their contributions become visible to the institutions that allocate opportunity.

10.2 Youth experiences and GCSAYN programmes

Facilitated by Ms. Caroline Maina, Ms. Veronica Edeki and Dr. Irene Kimani, the segment convened interns and mentees from GCSAYN Cohorts 1 through 5, alongside Borlaug Scholars, to exchange insights and lessons learned. It reinforced the Forum's commitment to structured pathways for early-career professionals, providing industry knowledge, field experience, mentorship and career exposure. Speakers traced a consistent trajectory from initial volunteer engagement, through structured internship and mentorship, to substantive professional contribution — a progression the Forum identified as the practical mechanism by which volunteerism functions as a leadership development pipeline.

10.3 Climate Smart Innovations Showcase

The Climate Smart Innovations Showcase and Judging segment, facilitated by Ms. Caroline Maina, provided a competitive platform for innovators from colleges and universities to pitch original projects. By placing youth-led ingenuity at the center of the agenda, the session bridged high-level policy dialogue and deployable technology, and demonstrated the necessity of giving young problem-solvers concrete platforms not only to discuss climate and farming challenges but to present market-ready solutions.

10.4 The Pick Me Theory of Visibility, Communication and Impact

Presented under the title “Rethinking Youth Opportunity Recognition in the 21st Century”, the Pick Me Theory of Visibility, Communication and Impact was introduced by Dr. Irene Kimani as an emerging conceptual framework examining how individual capability becomes recognizable within modern opportunity ecosystems. The presentation explicitly framed the model as an evolving concept open to academic critique, empirical testing and refinement rather than a settled doctrine.

The framework connected skill development, strategic communication and documented impact to access within digital-first professional networks, and stressed that young leaders must build tangible solutions, document their contributions, publish research and advance innovations so that their work remains discoverable to prospective partners and institutions. The Forum noted the framework's direct relevance to the recognition agenda: volunteer contribution that is undocumented is, by the logic of the framework, structurally invisible to the institutions capable of rewarding it.

11. DAY TWO PARALLEL SESSIONS

11.1 Parallel Session IV: the role of citizen science in fostering sustainable food systems

Session lead: Prof. Rebecca Boger. Day Two, 11:30–13:30.

Speaker	Role and affiliation
Prof. Rebecca Boger	Founding Member and Vice-President, NextGen — United States; session lead
Mr. Sandeep Chittimalli	Data Scientist and AI/ML Expert, National Science Foundation — United States
Prof. Maina Muniafu	Chair, CitSci Africa Association and Vice-Chair, Citizen Science Global Partnership — Kenya
Ms. Florence Munyiri	Social Inclusion Officer for East and Southern Africa, International Fund for Agricultural Development — Kenya
Dr. Chiji Ojukwu	Managing Director, Africa Projects Development Centre — Nigeria
Ms. Caroline Maina	Chief Executive Officer, STEMleNs Network — Kenya

The session examined how citizen science drives sustainable food systems by involving communities and young people in data collection and research. Participants noted that citizen-generated evidence enriches academic study by supplying local context on agricultural and environmental conditions, that grassroots research builds public engagement and ecological literacy, and that it equips young participants with practical skills in data and technology. Robust partnerships across academia, youth groups, local communities and research networks were identified as necessary to ensure that community-generated data remains credible, actionable and capable of informing policy.

The Forum recorded that citizen science is, in operational terms, volunteer science. Its contributors are volunteers; its scale depends on volunteer mobilization; and its sustainability depends on whether those contributors are recognized, trained, credited in resulting publications and supported with basic materials. Citizen science was accordingly identified as one of the clearest demonstrable cases of volunteer contribution to scientific and agricultural output, and as a candidate domain for the measurement work called for in the Resolution.

Framework for action and commitments

Actor	Committed action
Universities and research institutions	Integrate citizen science methodologies across academic curricula, research projects and community outreach; credit volunteer contributors in resulting outputs
GCSAYN and youth networks	Map and drive youth-led participation in grassroots research initiatives
Citizen-science organizations and development partners	Enhance targeted training, mentorship pipelines and accessible platforms for emerging researchers
All participating institutions	Apply community-generated evidence to guide and refine future agricultural and environmental strategies
All participating institutions	Expand inclusive citizen science programmes for youth, women and rural populations, equipping participants with skills in data collection, digital platforms and scientific method



Prof. Rebecca Boger presenting on "The Role of Citizen Sciences in Fostering Sustainable Food Systems" session.

11.2 Parallel Session V: Enhancing partnerships to advance the achievement of sustainable development

Session lead: Mr. Frank Gisha, Regional Coordinator, IVY 2026 East and Southern Africa, United Nations Volunteers. Day Two, 11:30–13:30.

Speaker	Role and affiliation
Mr. Frank Gisha	Regional Coordinator, IVY 2026 East and Southern Africa, United Nations Volunteers — Kenya; session lead
Ms. Liliana Bucur Cress	President, World Association of Former UN Interns and Fellows — United States
Mr. Jon Wogman	Senior Director I, Global Youth Programs and Partnerships, World Food Prize Foundation — United States
Dr. Irene Kimani	Head of Corporate Affairs, Rift Valley National Polytechnic — Kenya
Dr. Fiordaliza Ippolito	Adjunct Professor, Hostos Community College — United States
Dr. Laila B. Lokosang	Group Board Member, African Risk Capacity Group — Malawi

This session was led by the United Nations Volunteers programme, East and Southern Africa through its IVY 2026 regional coordination, and was the point at which the case for volunteerism as a substantive element of climate-smart agriculture was put directly to the Forum. The deliberations of this session provided the principal substantive basis for the Nairobi Resolution adopted at the closing plenary.

The session examined how cross-sector partnerships drive sustainable development while creating viable avenues for youth involvement. Participants stressed that addressing complex youth and sustainability challenges requires combined effort across government, academia, the private sector, development organizations and civil society, and that well-structured collaborative networks unlock access to technical knowledge, funding, mentorship, internships, applied research and sustainable employment.

The dialogue framed volunteerism as a catalyst for youth action, enabling emerging leaders to deliver community impact while acquiring practical skills and professional connections. Participants called for a decisive shift away from tokenistic or purely consultative arrangements towards high-impact partnerships grounded in dedicated resources, concrete programming and measurable outcomes for young people. This session provided the principal substantive basis for the Nairobi Resolution adopted by the Forum.

The six entry points: how other actors join forces with UNV

The session lead framed the partnership question in operational rather than aspirational terms. Rather than asking how an organization might partner with the volunteer system, he argued, the more productive question is which of the existing mechanisms already open into that organization's work — and that in climate-smart agriculture, all of them do.

Entry point	Mechanism and evidence presented
Governments	Embed volunteerism in national strategy: designate a focal point, form a National Committee — the mechanism IVY 2026 requires under ECOSOC resolution 1980/67 — and write volunteer-generated agricultural data into national climate and food security plans. Kenya and Zambia were cited as demonstrating this at scale.
United Nations entities	Request volunteer expertise rather than rebuild it: FAO, UNDP and UN Women request UN Volunteers with specific technical profiles in agronomy, artificial intelligence, geographic information systems and digital public infrastructure, and deploy them into live programmes.
Private sector	Sponsor a volunteer or co-fund a cohort — the fastest-growing channel. A company can fund a trained specialist to work inside a climate-smart agriculture programme for a year. For agriculture specifically, an agritech or energy company could sponsor volunteers training smallholders in sensor use, artificial intelligence tools or productive-use technology.
Academia	Co-develop the workforce pipeline: host online volunteers for research, co-design certification pathways for climate-smart agriculture skills, and supervise youth volunteer placements for academic credit — turning volunteering into a recognized career on-ramp rather than an unpaid detour.
Civil society and NGOs	Become a host entity. Organizations in Uganda and Zimbabwe have received volunteers bringing technical planning, monitoring and evaluation systems and market development skills their own budgets could not otherwise buy.
Regional and international bodies	Co-convene. GCSAYN was identified as the model: fora such as GAF-I create the shared table at which volunteer bodies, governments and agricultural networks align agendas before any request for funding — partnership by co-design rather than by request.

“There is no single door. Do not ask how we join forces with UNV — ask which of the six doors already open into our work, because in climate-smart agriculture, all six do.”

— Mr. Frank Gisha, Regional Coordinator, IVY 2026 East and Southern Africa, United Nations Volunteers

Three mechanisms of immediate relevance to climate-smart agriculture

- Data partnerships. Agricultural actors need last-mile ground-truth data, and volunteers are already the trusted, embedded people positioned to collect it. Open data-sharing agreements turn volunteer observation into policy-grade evidence.
- Sponsorship at scale rather than one-off. The strongest partnerships are multi-year commitments rather than single donations, because durable impact requires durable presence rather than a single funded year.
- Certification and career pathways. Partners who help build a recognized skills-certification track for community agriculture and energy volunteers create a pipeline that no single institution could fund alone, and acquire a trained workforce they helped design.

Why partnerships fail, and five conditions for durability

The session identified a specific and recurrent failure mode: most partnerships die because they were built to serve a project rather than an institution. A project has a start date, a budget line and a close-out report built into its design. A partnership living entirely inside that structure ends when the project does — not through failure, but because it was never designed to outlive its funding cycle. Five conditions were advanced for building partnerships that survive.

Condition	Rationale presented to the Forum
A name, a rhythm and a life of its own	A partnership that becomes an annual convening, a standing committee or a named institution develops its own gravity, independent of any project code or funding cycle.
A self-sustainability pathway from day one	Registration income, certification income and commercial sponsorship phased in over successive editions, so that the institution progressively covers the majority of its own costs. A partnership dependent forever on one donor will not survive that donor's next strategic pivot.
Anchorage in national government structures	United Nations presence can shrink, rotate or restructure; a ministry does not disappear the way a project team does. Partnerships survive longest where government regards them as its own institution rather than as a guest programme.
An independent delivery vehicle	A social enterprise, trust or hosted secretariat existing outside any single entity's organizational chart can continue operating through leadership changes and funding transitions on either side.
Metrics about the relationship, not the deliverables	Where success is measured only in activities completed by a deadline, the partnership has no reason to continue once the count is reached. Where it is measured in volunteers certified, jobs created or communities reached year on year, it has reason to keep showing up.

“A partnership survives a project's end when it was never actually inside the project to begin with — when it has its own name, its own income, its own government home, and its own board.”

— Mr. Frank Gisha, Regional Coordinator, IVY 2026 East and Southern Africa, United Nations Volunteers

Case evidence presented

The session cited working examples of each channel: research and analysis of digital agriculture solutions for UNDP North Macedonia; research on artificial intelligence, digital public infrastructure and data-driven agriculture for UNDP India; agricultural planning, monitoring and evaluation and market development support to the Empower and Care Organization in Uganda; and public awareness campaigns connecting climate change, water security and sustainable agriculture for the Simuka Africa Youth Association in Zimbabwe. The pattern across them was consistent: host entities in Africa, Asia and Europe obtained research capacity, technical advice and outreach that their own budgets could not have purchased.

Session pillars

The session organized its deliberations around six pillars: participation; decision-making; co-creation; partnership principle; equality; and partnership health checks. These pillars informed the formulation of operative paragraph 15 of the Nairobi Resolution, which calls upon governments, academia, the private sector, United Nations agencies and continental bodies to contribute substantively to future sessions of the Forum.

Recommendations

- Build action-oriented coalitions across public agencies, academic bodies, private enterprises, civil society and youth networks that deliver tangible programmes rather than remaining limited to consultations and conferences.
- Establish structured career pathways through internships, fellowships, mentorship pipelines, research grants, volunteer programmes and entrepreneurship initiatives.
- Strengthen university and TVET linkages with market opportunity providers.
- Scale South–South and international cooperation to expand global mobility and knowledge exchange.
- Recognize community volunteerism as a formal mechanism for leadership development, paired with robust metrics tracking the volume and quality of opportunities generated.

Institutional commitments

Actor	Committed action
GCSAYN and strategic partners	Expand dedicated partnership platforms connecting young leaders with research, mentorship and professional growth opportunities
Academic and vocational institutions	Deepen ties with development agencies and industry to streamline transition pathways for students and graduates
Development agencies and international organizations	Increase youth inclusion within internship programmes, field research initiatives and volunteer schemes
Youth networks	Drive member participation in collaborative initiatives and maintain transparent channels for disseminating opportunities
All GAF-I partners	Establish lasting operational mechanisms ensuring that cross-sector collaboration continues beyond the conclusion of the Forum



Mr. Frank presenting on “Enhancing partnerships to advance the achievement of sustainable development”

11.3 Parallel Session VI: soil science, soil health and soil information systems

Session leads: Ms. Veronica Edeki (Nigeria) and Ms. Emmanuella Bredu (United States), Global Co-Chairs, Soil Science Club Programme. Day Two, 11:30–13:30.

Speaker	Role and affiliation
Ms. Veronica Edeki	Global Co-Chair, Soil Science Club Programme — Nigeria; session lead
Ms. Emmanuella Bredu	Global Co-Chair, Soil Science Club Programme — United States; session lead
Mr. Andrew Morris	Executive Director, British Society of Soil Science — United Kingdom
Ms. Olipa Lunga	Land Management Expert, University of Zambia — Zambia
Mr. Paul Murage	Assistant Director, Kenya Meteorological Service Authority — Kenya
Ms. Shannon Alford	Director of Analytical Laboratories, Regulatory Services, Clemson University — United States
Mr. Peter Kelly	Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Grow Further — United States
Mr. Weulow Elvis	Senior Soil Laboratory Enterprise Manager, CIFOR–ICRAF Soil and Land Health Laboratory, Nairobi — Kenya

The session examined the role of soil science, soil health and data-driven information systems in building resilient food networks. Participants underscored that healthy soils are fundamental to farm productivity, food security, environmental integrity and climate resilience.

Developing the next generation of soil leaders requires repositioning the discipline in the perception of young people — not as laboratory work alone but as a multidisciplinary field essential to food security, climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods. Early-career professionals were encouraged to combine established methods with spectroscopy, geographic information systems and data science, to acquire practical experience from soil sampling through to data interpretation, to join networks such as the FAO Global Soil Laboratory Network, and to focus on delivering actionable solutions to farmers and policy-makers rather than diagnosing problems alone.

Soil testing must be made useful and accessible without compromising data quality. Laboratories were urged to convert results into concrete management recommendations on crop choice, application timing and land stewardship rather than issuing raw data. Addressing accessibility in Africa requires strengthening the full pipeline from sample collection to extension, using soil spectroscopy and digital systems for rapid, low-cost analysis, and maintaining rigorous standards through quality control, standardized procedure and network initiatives such as GLOSOLAN. Participants noted that sample collection across dispersed smallholdings is in practice frequently undertaken by student volunteers, community volunteers and farmer groups, and that the reliability of national soil information therefore depends directly on the training and support given to volunteer samplers.

Recommendations

- Expand youth pathways in soil science through specialized educational tracks, field studies, mentorship pipelines and hands-on training.
- Modernize soil data and information infrastructure using digital tools and spatial mapping to guide national agricultural policy, climate adaptation and sustainable land stewardship.
- Bridge academic research and local farming knowledge, translating technical research into accessible, practical guidance for producers and young innovators.
- Build collaborative relationships across research institutions, farming communities, government and international partners to move youth-designed land-management tools from testing into application.
- Train and support volunteer and student soil samplers as an integral part of national soil information system design.

Institutional commitments

Actor	Committed action
Universities and research bodies	Broaden educational opportunities and field research placements focused on land degradation and soil health
GCSAYN and associated networks	Champion soil-focused career pathways through youth campaigns, technical challenges and open-access knowledge hubs
Technical agencies and global partners	Facilitate open access to analytical tools, soil databases, applied research and specialized internships for early-career scientists
Multi-sector stakeholders	Unify regional efforts around comprehensive soil intelligence platforms supporting climate-smart farming



Panel discussion on soil science, soil health and soil information systems

11.4 Closing segment

The Forum concluded with a structured closing segment. Rapporteurs reported back from the parallel sessions from 14:30 to 15:00. The GAF-I 2026 Communiqué was read by the Borlaug Scholars from 15:00 to 15:10. The vote of thanks and closing statement were delivered by Dr. Christopher Wanga of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of the Republic of Kenya from 15:10 to 16:00, a segment which also incorporated the conferment of recognition and awards recorded in Chapter 12 and the adoption of the outcomes recorded in Chapter 13.

PART III

VOLUNTEERISM, RECOGNITION AND THE OUTCOME INSTRUMENT

The cornerstone finding · Awards · The Nairobi Resolution

Part III sets out the Forum's principal substantive finding and the instrument it adopted. Chapter 12 consolidates the volunteerism dimension that recurred across every session and records the recognition conferred at GAF-I. Chapter 13 reproduces the Nairobi Resolution on Volunteerism for Climate-Smart Agriculture, which is the negotiated outcome instrument of the Forum.

12. VOLUNTEERISM AS A CORNERSTONE OF CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE

This chapter consolidates the volunteerism dimension that recurred across every session of GAF-I. It is presented as a distinct chapter because the Forum concluded that volunteerism is not one theme among several but the delivery condition on which the others depend, and because the Forum resolved, having examined the proposition on its merits, to carry the objectives of the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development forward into its own future work.

12.1 The finding

Cornerstone finding of GAF-I

The Forum finds that volunteerism is a cornerstone of climate-smart agriculture. Climate-smart agriculture is realized at the last mile, and the last mile in rural and grassroots settings is covered predominantly by volunteer effort: community volunteers, lead farmers, farmer-to-farmer networks, student field teams, citizen scientists, youth extension aides and online volunteers.

The Forum further finds that this contribution is systematically absent from national agricultural, climate and development statistics, and that its invisibility in measurement produces its under-resourcing in planning and its under-recognition in policy.

The Forum accordingly determines that recognition, resourcing and statistical measurement of volunteer contribution to agriculture and climate action constitute an immediate, tractable and measurable agenda for Member States, United Nations entities, continental bodies, academia, the private sector and volunteer-involving organizations.

12.2 Why volunteerism is structural rather than supplementary

Four features of agricultural systems in the countries represented at the Forum make volunteer action structural rather than supplementary.

Structural feature	Consequence for volunteerism
Extension coverage deficit	The ratio of public extension officers to farming households in most represented countries makes universal conventional extension coverage unattainable. Participatory extension, farmer-to-farmer learning and volunteer extension aides are not an enhancement of the extension system; in practice they constitute much of it.
Last-mile digital delivery	Digital public infrastructure for agriculture — registries, advisories, e-extension, early warning — reaches farmers through human intermediaries. Where those intermediaries are absent, investment in the infrastructure does not convert into farmer benefit. In rural settings the intermediary layer is largely volunteer.
Data collection at dispersed scale	Soil sampling, citizen science observation, agro-meteorological reporting and farmer registry enrolment all require presence across dispersed smallholdings. That presence is routinely supplied by student volunteers, community volunteers and farmer groups.
Trust and adoption	Adoption of climate-smart practice depends on trust. Trusted messengers in rural communities are typically local and unpaid. The Forum noted that people are far more likely to adopt and own solutions when they help identify the problems and shape the response — a process mediated by community volunteers.

12.3 Benefits identified by the Forum

At grassroots and farm level

- Extends the practical reach of climate-smart agricultural advisory, demonstration and adoption support into communities that public and commercial extension does not reach.
- Converts scientific and digital outputs into locally intelligible guidance, including through translation and contextualization into local languages.
- Builds community ownership of adaptation strategies, improving the durability of adoption beyond the life of externally financed projects.
- Strengthens local early-warning, agro-meteorological reporting and post-disaster response capacity.

For inclusion

- Provides an entry point into the agricultural and climate sector for young people, women, rural residents and persons with disabilities who lack formal credentials, capital or professional networks.
- Functions as a leadership development pipeline: the Forum documented the progression from volunteer engagement through structured internship and mentorship to substantive professional contribution.
- Enables participation by constituencies excluded from formal employment markets, including through online and skills-based volunteering that does not require physical relocation.
- Supports the deliberate inclusion of indigenous peoples and local communities as holders of ecological knowledge rather than as recipients of instruction.

For sustainability

- Sustains activity between funding cycles, providing continuity where project financing is intermittent.
- Reduces the marginal cost of reaching additional farmers, improving the cost-effectiveness of climate-smart agriculture programming.
- Builds social cohesion, civic trust and local resilience, which are themselves determinants of adaptive capacity.
- Generates a standing local capability that persists after implementing partners withdraw.

12.4 The measurement gap

The Forum identified measurement as the binding constraint. Volunteer contribution to agriculture and climate action is not recorded in national accounts, is not disaggregated in agricultural statistics, and is not reported against the Sustainable Development Goal indicator framework by most represented countries. The consequences are direct: contributions that are not measured are not budgeted for; capabilities that do not appear in workforce statistics are not planned for; and a delivery layer that is statistically invisible cannot be argued for in national planning processes.

The Forum noted the existence of established international statistical guidance, including the International Labour Organization Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work, and concluded that the constraint is one of application rather than of method. Operative paragraphs 9 and 10 of the Nairobi Resolution addresses this directly.

12.5 Recognition and awards at GAF-I

The Forum recognized outstanding individual contribution through two acts of recognition, which together establish the precedent on which the standing Volunteer Recognition Awards are founded.

12.5.1 Recognition of the Executive Director

In recognition of his contributions to advancing the vision and objectives of GCSAYN, the Executive Director, Mr. Divine Ntiokam, was presented with an award by Ambassador Mussie Hailu. The award acknowledged his leadership, mentorship, dedication, commitment, resilience and sustained efforts towards strengthening meaningful youth engagement in advancing sustainable agri-food systems globally.



In recognition of his outstanding contributions in enhancing the vision and objectives of GCSAYN, the Executive Director was presented with an award by Ambassador Mussie Hailu. The award

acknowledged his leadership, mentorship, dedication, commitment, resilience and sustained efforts towards strengthening youth meaningful engagement in advancing sustainable agri-food systems initiatives globally.

12.5.2 The 2026 Rebecca Waah Recognition Awards

The Forum featured the 2026 Rebecca Waah Recognition Awards, established by Mr. Divine Ntiokam, Founder and Executive Director of GCSAYN, with the support of Dr. Irene Kimani and Mr. Anant Dhillon, in memory of his late mother, Rebecca Waah, whose life was characterized by compassion, resilience, service and a commitment to uplifting others. The awards preserve her legacy by recognizing individuals demonstrating exceptional commitment to sustainable development, community service, mentorship, education, environmental stewardship and the empowerment of others.

The awards are conferred in three categories: the Award of Honour, recognizing transformational leadership, sustainable development advocacy, youth mentorship, gender equity and educational inclusion; the Sustainability Award, recognizing innovative contributions to environmental stewardship, sustainable development and responsible resource management; and the Education Award, recognizing outstanding contributions to education and the empowerment of girls and women.

Beyond individual achievement, the awards reinforce the Network's commitment to service, leadership, sustainability, education and intergenerational empowerment, including through recognition, opportunity and scholarship support for deserving young girls. The 2026 awards were conferred on the following recipients.

No.	Recipient	Nationality	Award category
1	Ms. Abigail Wambui	Kenya	Sustainability Award
2	Ms. Olasunkanmi Deborah Moyosore	Nigeria	Sustainability Award
3	Dr. Nina Meyerhof	United States of America	Award of Honour
4	Ms. Tarkang Abunaw Margaret	Cameroon	Education Award



12.6 The GAF Volunteer Recognition Awards from GAF-II onwards

The Forum determined that recognition of volunteer contribution shall become a standing activity highlight of every future edition of the Forum, commencing with GAF-II. This determination is given normative effect by operative paragraphs 4 and 5 of the Nairobi Resolution. The indicative design of the programme, for adoption by the GCSAYN Secretariat and its partners, is set out in Annex VI and summarized below.

Element	Provision
Status	A standing activity highlight of every edition of the Global Annual Forum from GAF-II onwards, held in plenary during the closing segment
Purpose	To make visible, and to place on the public record, volunteer contribution to climate-smart agriculture, rural inclusion and sustainable development
Indicative categories	Grassroots Volunteer of the Year; Youth Volunteer Leadership; Women's Volunteer Leadership in Agriculture; Online and Skills-Based Volunteering; Citizen Science Contribution; Volunteer-Involving Organization of the Year; National Volunteer Programme Award; Corporate Employee Volunteering Award; Academic Service-Learning Award
Eligibility	Open to individuals and organizations globally, with deliberate provision for nominees without institutional affiliation, formal credentials or digital access, including nomination by community endorsement
Nomination	Open call issued not less than four months before each Forum, with nominations accepted from governments, UN entities, academia, civil society, farmer organizations, private sector and self-nomination
Adjudication	An independent panel constituted with regional and gender balance and including volunteer representation
Data function	Nomination dossiers to capture volunteer hours, modality, beneficiary reach and outcome, contributing to the evidence base for the statistical measurement agenda under operative paragraph 9 of the Resolution
Relationship to existing awards	Complementary to, and distinct from, the Rebecca Waah Recognition Awards, which continue under their own terms

THE NAIROBI RESOLUTION ON VOLUNTEERISM FOR CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE

GAF-I/2026/RES.1

Adopted by the First Global Annual Forum at its closing plenary, Nairobi, 12 August 2026

The First Global Annual Forum of the Global Climate Smart Agriculture Youth Network, an independent civil society forum meeting in Nairobi on 11 and 12 August 2026,

Recalling General Assembly resolution, A/RES/78/127 of 18 December 2023, by which the Assembly proclaimed 2026 the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development and called upon Member States, organizations of the United Nations system and other relevant stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector and academia, to observe the Year at the national and regional levels,

Reaffirming the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the pledge to leave no one behind, and reaffirming Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, in particular its commitment to people-driven development relying on the potential of Africa's people, especially its women and youth,

Recognizing climate-smart agriculture as an integrated approach to sustainably increasing productivity and incomes, adapting and building resilience to climate change, and reducing or removing greenhouse gas emissions where possible,

Acknowledging the advocacy undertaken in the framework of the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development, and supported by the United Nations Volunteers Regional Office for East and Southern Africa, which secured the inclusion of volunteerism as a substantive item on the agenda of the Forum, and welcoming the hosting of the Forum by United States International University – Africa,

Affirming that the present resolution is adopted by an independent civil society forum on its own authority and on the merits of the case examined in its sessions,

Having examined the contribution of volunteer action across each of the technical domains considered by the Forum, namely digital agriculture and agro-informatics, information integrity and media and information literacy, participatory agricultural extension, citizen science, soil health and soil information systems, and strategic partnership,

Noting with concern that volunteer contribution to agriculture, extension, natural resource management and climate adaptation remains largely unmeasured in national accounts, agricultural statistics and reporting against the Sustainable Development Goal indicator framework, and that this invisibility results in its under-resourcing in planning and its under-recognition in policy,

Recalling the International Labour Organization Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work and related international statistical guidance as available and sufficient instruments for addressing that gap,

Emphasizing that young people, women, smallholder farmers, indigenous peoples and local communities, and persons with disabilities constitute both the principal constituencies of volunteer action in agriculture and the constituencies most exposed to climate-related risk in food systems,

Convinced that the recognition, support and measurement of volunteer action is among the most immediate, tractable and cost-effective means available to Member States and their partners for accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 in rural and agricultural settings,

1. **Declares** volunteerism to be a cornerstone of climate-smart agriculture, and affirms that the promotion of climate-smart agriculture at the grassroots level, the inclusion of rural farmers, young people, women, indigenous peoples and local communities, and persons with disabilities, and the sustainability of agricultural transformation beyond the life of external financing, depend materially upon organized, supported and recognized volunteer action;
2. **Adopts** the Outcome Document and Report of Proceedings of the First Global Annual Forum, together with the recommendations, strategic priorities and follow-up framework set out therein;
3. **Decides** that the objectives of the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development shall be carried forward into every future edition of the Global Annual Forum as a commitment of the Forum itself, notwithstanding the conclusion of the Year, and that each future edition shall accordingly:
 - (a) include volunteerism as a standing thematic pillar of its programme, on an equal footing with its technical pillars;
 - (b) convene a dedicated plenary or parallel session on volunteerism for sustainable development, agriculture and climate action;
 - (c) hold the Volunteer Recognition Awards established under paragraph 4 below as an activity highlight of the Forum;
 - (d) report on progress in the integration of volunteerism into national statistical measurement and national volunteer programmes, as called for in paragraphs 9 and 11 below;
 - (e) ensure the meaningful participation of volunteers, including grassroots and community volunteers, in the design, delivery and governance of the Forum itself; and
 - (f) maintain partnership with the United Nations Volunteers programme and with national and regional volunteer infrastructure;
4. **Decides** to establish the Global Annual Forum Volunteer Recognition Awards as a standing activity highlight of every edition of the Forum from the Second Global Annual Forum onwards, to make visible and place on the public record the contribution of volunteers to climate-smart agriculture, rural inclusion and sustainable development;
5. **Requests** the GCSAYN Secretariat, in consultation with the United Nations Volunteers programme and other partners, to finalize and publish the terms of reference, categories, eligibility criteria, nomination procedure and adjudication arrangements of the Volunteer Recognition Awards not less than four months before the Second Global Annual Forum, taking into account the indicative design set out in Annex VI to the Outcome Document, and to ensure that the criteria are accessible to nominees without institutional affiliation, formal credentials or reliable digital access;
6. **Calls upon** Governments to recognize volunteerism as a driver of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063, and to that end to:
 - (a) integrate volunteer action into national agricultural extension policy, national adaptation plans, nationally determined contributions and national food systems pathways;
 - (b) establish or strengthen national volunteer programmes and volunteer infrastructure, with dedicated budget lines;
 - (c) provide legal recognition, basic protection, insurance where appropriate, and operational support covering transport, materials and communication costs for community volunteers engaged in agricultural extension, climate adaptation and natural resource management;
 - (d) establish certification and recognition-of-prior-learning pathways enabling volunteer experience to count towards formal qualification and employment; and

- (e) establish national committees or focal points for the observance and legacy of the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development;
7. **Invites** the organizations of the United Nations system, in particular the United Nations Volunteers programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Food Programme, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Development Programme, to integrate volunteer engagement into their agricultural, climate and food systems programming, to include volunteer contribution in their reporting, and to contribute technical support to future sessions of the Global Annual Forum;
 8. **Invites** the African Union Commission, the African Union Development Agency, the regional economic communities and other continental and regional bodies to reflect volunteerism within continental agricultural, climate and youth frameworks, including those adopted under the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, and to support the participation of young volunteers in continental processes;
 9. **Calls upon** Governments, national statistical offices and international statistical bodies to integrate volunteerism into statistical measurement, including by:
 - (a) applying the International Labour Organization Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work and related guidance to the measurement of volunteer work in agriculture, extension and natural resource management;
 - (b) incorporating volunteer work modules into labour force surveys, agricultural censuses and household surveys;
 - (c) disaggregating volunteer data by sex, age, disability, location and modality, including online and community-based volunteering; and
 - (d) reflecting volunteer contribution in national reporting against the Sustainable Development Goal indicator framework and in voluntary national reviews;
 10. **Requests** the GCSAYN Secretariat, in partnership with the United Nations Volunteers programme, academic institutions and volunteer-involving organizations, to establish a standing mechanism for the recording of volunteer hours, modalities, beneficiary reach and outcomes across GCSAYN programmes and Forum delivery, to contribute to the evidence base referred to in paragraph 9 above;
 11. **Calls upon** all stakeholders to enhance advocacy for national volunteer programmes for sustainable development, and encourages the establishment of national volunteer schemes in agriculture, climate adaptation and rural development, in partnership with the United Nations Volunteers programme and national volunteer infrastructure;
 12. **Invites** academic, research and technical and vocational education and training institutions to embed structured service-learning and volunteering within curricula, to award academic credit for volunteer field engagement, to credit volunteer contributors in resulting research outputs, and to open laboratory, field and data resources to volunteer and citizen science initiatives;
 13. **Invites** the private sector, including agri-enterprise, agricultural technology and financial service providers, to establish and expand employee and skills-based volunteering programmes in support of climate-smart agriculture, to provide in-kind technical support to volunteer-delivered extension, and to report on such contribution within sustainability and environmental, social and governance disclosure;
 14. **Encourages** civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations, farmer and producer organizations, youth networks and volunteer-involving organizations to strengthen the quality, safety, inclusiveness and effectiveness of volunteer engagement, with deliberate provision for the

participation of women, rural residents, indigenous peoples and local communities, and persons with disabilities;

15. ***Calls upon*** Governments, academia, the private sector, United Nations agencies, continental bodies and development partners to contribute substantively to future sessions of the Global Annual Forum, including to its volunteer recognition programme, and to bring together the constituencies of volunteerism, food and agriculture, digitalization and academia in a standing collaboration of which the Forum is the convening platform;
16. ***Requests*** the GCSAYN Secretariat to transmit the present resolution and the Outcome Document to participating Governments, the United Nations Volunteers programme and other organizations of the United Nations system, the African Union Commission, participating academic and research institutions, and partner organizations, and to make them publicly available;
17. ***Requests*** the GCSAYN Secretariat to report to the Second Global Annual Forum on the implementation of the present resolution, in accordance with the follow-up and review framework set out in Chapter 18 of the Outcome Document;
18. ***Decides*** to keep the implementation of the present resolution under review at each session of the Global Annual Forum, and to consider at the Second Global Annual Forum whether further measures are required.

Adopted at the closing plenary, Nairobi, 12 August 2026

PART IV

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND FOLLOW-UP

Themes · Outcomes · Gaps · Recommendations · Strategic priorities · Review

Part IV moves from record to consequence. It identifies the themes that cut across the sessions, states the outcomes achieved and the gaps that remain, sets out the recommendations and strategic priorities adopted, and establishes the follow-up framework with named actors, timelines and indicators against which implementation is to be reported to GAF-II.

14. CROSS-CUTTING THEMES EMERGING FROM GAF-I

Although the sessions addressed distinct aspects of agriculture, climate change, technology and development, eight themes recurred across the proceedings.

Theme	Finding
Youth leadership	Young people should not be regarded only as beneficiaries of development programmes. The Forum consistently positioned them as leaders, innovators, entrepreneurs, researchers, communicators and solution developers, and identified the institutional conditions required for that positioning to be real rather than rhetorical.
Volunteerism as delivery infrastructure	Volunteer action emerged in every session as the mechanism by which technical solutions reach grassroots and rural constituencies. The Forum treated this as a structural finding rather than an incidental observation, and gave it normative expression in the Nairobi Resolution.
Innovation and implementation	Youth innovation is already occurring in colleges, universities and other youth spaces. Promising ideas nevertheless require financing, mentorship, technical support, partnerships, markets and enabling policy to move from prototype to sustainable solution.
Digital transformation	Artificial intelligence, geospatial technologies, Earth observation, digital agriculture, farmer registries, e-extension, digital finance and data systems featured prominently. Technology must be inclusive and responsive to farmer needs rather than a source of new exclusion.
Information integrity and literacy	Access to information does not equate to access to reliable knowledge. Fact-checking, scientific evidence, responsible communication and media and information literacy were identified as prerequisites of effective climate action.
Farmer knowledge	Farmers are not simply recipients of technical knowledge. Their experiential and local knowledge is a resource for designing solutions that communities can understand, own and implement.
Partnerships	Partnership emerged repeatedly as a condition of implementation, requiring governments, youth, universities, research institutions, farmers, international organizations, development partners, volunteer movements and the private sector to act together.
Green jobs and opportunity pathways	Climate-smart agriculture and innovation connect directly to employment, but practical pathways linking young people to finance, markets, skills, mentorship, research and opportunity gatekeepers remain underdeveloped.

15. KEY OUTCOMES OF THE FORUM

The Forum produced the following outcomes.

Outcome	Description
Adoption of a normative instrument	The Forum adopted the Nairobi Resolution on Volunteerism for Climate-Smart Agriculture, establishing volunteerism as a cornerstone of climate-smart agriculture and setting out obligations and invitations addressed to governments, United Nations entities, continental bodies, academia, the private sector and civil society.
Establishment of a standing recognition mechanism	The Forum established the GAF Volunteer Recognition Awards as a standing activity highlight of every edition from GAF-II onwards, with an indicative design set out in Annex VI.
Continuity of the International Year	Having examined the case put to it, the Forum determined on its own authority that the objectives of IVY 2026 shall be reflected in all future editions of the Forum, notwithstanding the conclusion of the Year, through six specified means set out in operative paragraph 3 of the Resolution.
Convergence of constituencies	The Forum brought together, in a single structured deliberation, the constituencies of volunteerism, food and agriculture, digitalization and academia, together with government, continental bodies, civil society and the private sector, and established the Forum as the standing convening platform for that collaboration.
Increased understanding of climate-smart agriculture	Participants gained perspectives on climate-smart agriculture as an approach to strengthening food security, livelihoods, resilience and environmental sustainability.
Increased awareness of digital agricultural transformation	Participants engaged with artificial intelligence, agro-informatics, Earth observation, digital farmer registries, e-extension and related systems, including the KIAMIS case study.
Strengthened climate information literacy	The UNESCO session raised awareness of misinformation, disinformation, fact-checking and the role of credible scientific information in climate action.
Greater emphasis on youth-led solutions	The Forum reinforced the movement from participation to leadership and from ideas to practical, financed solutions.
Recognition of farmer knowledge	The participatory extension session established co-creation of knowledge with farmers and community ownership as operating principles rather than aspirations.
Strengthened partnerships	The Forum generated a register of institutional commitments across academia, development agencies, technical agencies, youth networks and the convening body, recorded in Annex V.
Visibility for youth innovation	The Climate Smart Innovations Showcase provided a competitive platform for innovators from colleges and universities to demonstrate deployable work.
Scholarly contribution	The Pick Me Theory of Visibility, Communication and Impact was introduced for scholarly consideration, connecting opportunity recognition with communication, visibility and contemporary digital opportunity ecosystems.

16. CHALLENGES AND GAPS IDENTIFIED

The Forum identified the following challenges, which condition the feasibility of its recommendations.

Gap	Description
Limited pathways for scaling innovation	Youth innovations exist without adequate pathways for financing, incubation, market access, technical support or policy integration.
Financing gaps	Access to finance was repeatedly identified as the binding constraint on transforming youth innovation into sustainable enterprise.
Digital exclusion	Gender and youth gaps persist in access to smartphones, digital tools, connectivity and digital financial services.
Research–practice gap	Research and technical knowledge are insufficiently connected to farmer knowledge and practical field realities.
Climate information gaps	Reliable climate information does not reliably reach young people, farmers and communities with limited access to digital learning, leaving an offline population underserved.
Measurement gap for volunteer contribution	Volunteer work in agriculture and climate action is absent from national accounts, agricultural statistics and SDG reporting, producing under-resourcing in planning and under-recognition in policy.
Absence of recognition and support for volunteers	Community volunteers and volunteer extension aides generally lack legal recognition, basic operational support, insurance, certification pathways or recognition of prior learning.
Implementation gaps	The opening session noted the absence of specific implementation timelines and funding commitments attached to some recommendations, and called for measurable action plans. Chapter 18 responds to this finding.
Partnership and coordination gaps	The digital agriculture session identified the need for greater partnership capacity and further clarity on the role of TVET graduates in information dissemination and service delivery.

17. RECOMMENDATIONS AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

17.1 Recommendations

On the basis of the documented discussions, the Forum adopted the following recommendations.

1. Strengthen meaningful youth participation and leadership in climate-smart agriculture, agri-food systems and sustainable development.
2. Recognize volunteerism as a cornerstone of climate-smart agriculture and a driver of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, and integrate it into national agricultural, climate and development policy.
3. Integrate volunteer contribution into national statistical measurement, applying available international statistical guidance, and enhance advocacy for national volunteer programmes for sustainable development.
4. Increase investment in youth-led innovation, including finance, mentorship, incubation, technical skills and market access.
5. Develop practical pathways for scaling youth innovations from ideas and prototypes into sustainable enterprises and green jobs.
6. Strengthen digital agricultural infrastructure, including data systems, interoperability, artificial intelligence applications, remote sensing and e-extension, and invest in the human intermediary layer through which that infrastructure reaches farmers.
7. Promote inclusive digital transformation with deliberate attention to women, youth, smallholder farmers and other underserved groups.
8. Strengthen climate and media information literacy and promote responsible communication grounded in credible scientific evidence.
9. Expand access to climate information and digital learning, including through institutional partnerships and through trained community and online volunteers serving offline populations.
10. Strengthen participatory agricultural extension, promote co-creation of knowledge with farmers, and formally recognize volunteer extension aides within national extension policy.
11. Improve synergies between research institutions and farming communities so that research findings are translated into locally relevant solutions, and credit volunteer and citizen science contributors in research outputs.
12. Strengthen partnerships among government, youth, academia, research institutions, farmers, development partners, volunteer-involving organizations and the private sector.
13. Expand opportunities for youth technical development, including internships, mentorship, volunteer placements, research opportunities and specialized training, with certification and recognition-of-prior-learning pathways.
14. Promote climate adaptation and resilience, including early-warning systems, climate information services, ecosystem protection and climate-smart agricultural practice.
15. Establish measurable follow-up mechanisms for Global Annual Forum recommendations, specifying responsible actors, timelines, resources and indicators of progress.

17.2 Strategic priority areas for follow-up

The Forum identified nine strategic priority areas for continued engagement and follow-up.

Ref.	Priority area	Content
SP 1	Children and youth innovation and scaling	Strengthen mechanisms for identifying, showcasing, mentoring, financing and scaling children and youth-led innovations, particularly those emerging from primary and secondary schools, TVET institutions, universities and other youth platforms, and link innovators with technical expertise, mentorship, investors, markets, research institutions and policy actors.
SP 2	Digital agriculture and emerging technologies	Strengthen meaningful youth participation in artificial intelligence, geographic information systems, remote sensing, agricultural data systems, digital extension and other emerging technologies contributing to resilient and sustainable food systems, and invest in the volunteer and community intermediary layer that delivers them.
SP 3	Citizen science and sustainable food systems	Promote citizen science as an inclusive approach to engaging young people and communities in generating, sharing and applying knowledge relevant to agriculture, food systems, climate and environmental sustainability; and enhance collaboration among citizen scientists, researchers, schools, TVET institutions, universities, communities and development partners to strengthen evidence-based solutions and public participation in scientific processes.
SP 4	Climate information and media literacy	Strengthen access to reliable climate information and promote media and information literacy, fact-checking and responsible communication, including through digital learning platforms, institutional partnerships and trained volunteer intermediaries serving offline communities.
SP 5	Participatory extension services and farmer knowledge	Promote extension approaches combining farmer knowledge, scientific research, youth innovation and digital technologies, ensuring that farmers are active partners in the development, ownership and application of solutions, and that volunteer extension aides are recognized and supported.
SP 6	Youth skills, employment and green jobs	Strengthen pathways connecting young people's skills, innovations and education with internships, entrepreneurship, employment and emerging opportunities in climate-smart agriculture and the wider green economy, including recognition of volunteer experience towards formal qualification.
SP 7	Volunteerism, recognition and community engagement	Promote volunteerism as a practical pathway for participation in sustainable development, climate action and community resilience, including grassroots initiatives, community-based activities, knowledge sharing, and on-site and online volunteering; deliver the GAF Volunteer Recognition Awards from GAF-II onwards; and secure legal recognition, basic support and certification pathways for community volunteers.
SP 8	Measurement of volunteer contribution	Integrate volunteerism into statistical measurement through application of international statistical guidance, incorporation of volunteer modules into labour force surveys, agricultural censuses and household surveys, disaggregation by sex, age, disability, location and modality, and reflection in SDG reporting and voluntary national reviews.
SP 9	Strategic partnerships	Foster local, national and international partnerships among stakeholders, educational and research institutions, farmer organizations, non-state actors, volunteer-involving organizations and the private sector to strengthen opportunities for young people to implement sustainable solutions.

18. FOLLOW-UP, MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Forum identified the absence of named actors, timelines and indicators as the characteristic weakness of convenings of this type. The following framework is adopted to address that weakness. The GCSAYN Secretariat is requested to report against it to the Second Global Annual Forum, in accordance with operative paragraph 17 of the Nairobi Resolution.

Ref.	Action	Responsible actors	Timeline	Indicator of progress
SP 7	Establish and publish terms of reference for the GAF Volunteer Recognition Awards	GCSAYN Secretariat and partners	Not less than 4 months before GAF-II	Terms of reference published; open call issued
SP 7	Deliver the inaugural Volunteer Recognition Awards	GCSAYN Secretariat; independent adjudication panel	GAF-II	Awards conferred in plenary; recipients recorded in the GAF-II outcome document
SP 8	Establish the volunteer contribution recording mechanism across GCSAYN programmes	GCSAYN Secretariat with UN and academic partners	Within 6 months of GAF-I	Recording mechanism operational; baseline volunteer hours and modality data published
SP 8	Advocate application of international statistical guidance on volunteer measurement	Participating Governments; national statistical offices	Continuous; report at GAF-II	Number of countries incorporating volunteer modules into national surveys
SP 7	Advocate national volunteer programmes and national IVY legacy focal points	Participating Governments; UNV; GCSAYN; youth networks	Continuous; report at GAF-II	Number of national volunteer programmes strengthened or established
SP 5	Advocate formal recognition of volunteer extension aides in national extension policy	Ministries of agriculture; GCSAYN; farmer organizations	Continuous; report at GAF-II	Number of national extension policies referencing volunteer extension
SP 1 / SP 6	Establish structured pathways: internships, fellowships, mentorship, research grants, volunteer placements	GCSAYN; academic and TVET institutions; development agencies; private sector	Within 12 months of GAF-I	Number and quality of placements generated, disaggregated by sex, age and location
SP 2 / SP 4	Integrate the UNESCO Climate and MIL MOOC into curricula and youth networks	Academic and TVET institutions; UNESCO; GCSAYN	Within 12 months of GAF-I	Number of institutions integrating the MOOC; enrolment figures
SP 3	Integrate citizen science methodologies into curricula, research and outreach	Universities and research institutions	Within 12 months of GAF-I	Number of institutions integrating citizen science; volunteer contributors credited in outputs
SP 9	Establish operational mechanisms sustaining cross-sector collaboration beyond the Forum	All GAF-I partners	Within 6 months of GAF-I	Partnership mechanism constituted and convening regularly
All	Transmit the Resolution and Outcome Document to Governments and partners	GCSAYN Secretariat	Within 60 days of GAF-I	Transmission completed; document publicly available
All	Report on implementation to GAF-II	GCSAYN Secretariat	GAF-II	Implementation report tabled and considered in plenary

19. CONCLUSION

The First Global Annual Forum provided a substantive platform for convening young people and diverse stakeholders around the interconnected challenges of climate change, food systems, agricultural transformation and sustainable development. It demonstrated that young people possess significant capacity to contribute to climate-smart agriculture through innovation, technology, entrepreneurship, research, communication and leadership — and, with equal clarity, that this capacity alone is insufficient. Young people require enabling ecosystems providing access to knowledge, skills, finance, technology, mentorship, research, markets, partnerships and supportive policy.

The Forum also established that sustainable agricultural transformation requires more than technological innovation. It requires reliable information, farmer participation, climate adaptation, environmental stewardship, appropriate extension, institutional collaboration and sustained attention to social inclusion.

Its distinctive contribution was to identify volunteerism as the mechanism through which each of these reaches the ground, and to convert that identification into a normative instrument. The Nairobi Resolution declares volunteerism a cornerstone of climate-smart agriculture, establishes a standing recognition mechanism, carries the objectives of the International Year into all future editions of the Forum, and places before governments, United Nations entities, continental bodies, academia, the private sector and civil society a specific and achievable agenda: recognize volunteer contribution, support it, and measure it.

A consistent message across the documented sessions was the need to move from participation to leadership, from ideas to implementation, and from isolated initiatives to scalable solutions. GAF-I accordingly provides a foundation for continued engagement among GCSAYN and its partners. Its value will be measured not by the quality of the discussions held in Nairobi, but by the extent to which the knowledge shared, the partnerships established, the commitments registered and the recommendations adopted are translated into practical action and measurable outcomes before the Forum meets again.

20. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

GCSAYN expresses its sincere appreciation to all individuals and institutions that contributed to the successful convening of the First Global Annual Forum.

Appreciation is extended to the advocates of the International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development, and to the United Nations Volunteers Regional Office for East and Southern Africa, for making the case that volunteerism belonged on the agenda of this Forum and for the technical framing on volunteer infrastructure, modalities and measurement subsequently made available to it. That advocacy shaped the Forum's principal outcome.

Appreciation is extended to United States International University – Africa for hosting the Forum and for the support extended throughout the programme, and to the Government of the Republic of Kenya, through the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, for opening the Forum and for its engagement in its proceedings.

GCSAYN acknowledges the government representatives, United Nations entities, continental and regional bodies, international organizations, development partners, academic, research and TVET institutions, private sector actors, civil society organizations, farmer and producer organizations, youth networks and volunteer-involving organizations that contributed through their participation, presentations, panel contributions and technical input.

The Network appreciates the speakers, moderators, facilitators, rapporteurs, volunteers, interns, mentees, Borlaug Scholars, youth leaders and young innovators whose contributions enriched the Forum. It records with particular emphasis that this Forum was delivered in substantial part through volunteer effort in rapporteuring, facilitation, technical and online moderation, registration, logistics, communications and documentation and that the Forum's central argument was demonstrated in the manner of its own delivery.

GCSAYN particularly recognizes the young people who participated in the Forum and those who showcased innovations from colleges and universities. Their creativity, commitment and willingness to contribute solutions is a reminder that young people are not only beneficiaries of development but contributors to its advancement.

The Network looks forward to continued collaboration with all stakeholders in translating the outcomes of GAF-I into practical initiatives that strengthen youth leadership, volunteerism, climate-smart agriculture, resilient food systems and sustainable development.

ANNEXES

Programme · Speakers · Participation · Awards · Commitments · Recognition framework · Verification · Photographs

ANNEX I — PROGRAMME OF THE FORUM

Reproduced from the final itemized programme dated 31 July 2026.

Day One — Tuesday, 11 August 2026

Time	Activity
07:00–08:30	Arrivals, registration and confirmation of parallel sessions — GCSAYN / USIU-Africa
08:30–09:00	Welcome remarks and official opening — GCSAYN / USIU-Africa
09:00–09:05	Ms. Emmanuella Peter, Special Envoy to GAF-I 2026, Nigeria
09:05–09:10	Mr. Divine Ntiokam, Executive Director, GCSAYN
09:10–09:15	Mr. Bonfas Salano, Dean of Students, USIU-Africa, Kenya
09:15–09:20	Amb. Mussie Hailu, GCSAYN Board Co-Chair, Ethiopia
09:20–09:25	Hon. Dr. Ghada Killa, GCSAYN Board Co-Chair, South Sudan
09:25–09:30	Amb. Ertharin Cousin, CEO, Food Systems for the Future Institute, United States
09:30–09:35	Amb. Stephane Gompertz, Councilor of Chavenay, France
09:35–09:40	Dr. Abebe H. Gabriel, Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa, FAO, Ghana
09:40–09:45	Ms. Prudence Ngwenya, Director, Women, Youth and Gender Directorate, African Union, Ethiopia
09:45–09:50	Mr. Jay Ralitera, Information and Communication Specialist, UNESCO Regional Office for East Africa, Kenya
09:50–09:55	Mr. Zablon Shilenje, WMO Coordinator for Climate Services for Africa, Ethiopia
09:55–10:00	Dr. Conrad Rein, Secretary-General, Global Flagship Initiative on Food Security, Germany
10:00–10:05	Mr. Philip J. Lymbery, Global CEO, Compassion in World Farming International, United Kingdom
10:05–10:10	Ms. Margarita Astralaga, Board Chair, Global Commons Alliance, Spain
10:10–10:15	Mr. Andrew Morris, Executive Director, British Society of Soil Science, United Kingdom
10:15–10:20	Mr. Jehiel Oliver, CEO, Hello Tractor, Kenya
10:20–10:25	Ms. Katrin Harvey, Secretary-General, Foundations Platform F20, Austria
10:25–10:30	Prof. Rebecca Boger, Founding Member and Vice-President, NextGen, United States
10:30–10:35	Mr. Michael Onchabo, World Resources Institute, Kenya
10:35–10:40	Dr. Nina Meyerhof, President, Children of the Earth, United States
10:40–10:45	Mr. Paul Murage, Assistant Director, Kenya Meteorological Service Authority, Kenya
10:45–11:00	Dr. Christopher Wanga, Director, Livestock Policy Research and Regulations Directorate, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Kenya
11:00–11:20	Group photographs
11:20–11:50	Interlude: GCSAYN Decade of Action, success stories, interns, mentees and Borlaug Scholars (video) — Ms. Debbie Kesh Arabella, Mr. Ahmadou Aihijo and Ms. Abena Takyiwa
12:00–13:00	Lunch break
13:00–16:00	Parallel Sessions I, II and III (below)

Parallel session	Title, lead and panel
Session I	FAO Agro-Informatics and Digital Public Infrastructure for Agriculture. Leads: Mr. Karl Robert Morteo and Mr. Stuart Tippins. Panel: Dr. Nor-Khaizura M. Ab Rashid (Malaysia); Mr. David Kasibante (Uganda); Dr. Gladys Khisa Sitati (Kenya); Dr. Valasia Iakovoglou (Greece)
Session II	UNESCO Climate and MIL MOOC. Lead: Mr. Jay Ralitera. Panel: Mr. Sammy K. Chemoiwa (Kenya); Ms. Karen W. Kimani (Kenya); Mr. Onen Charles (South Sudan); Mr. Zablon W. Shilenje (Ethiopia)

Parallel session	Title, lead and panel
Session III	Climate Resilience and Adaptation — Participatory Extension Approaches. Lead: Mr. Max Olupot (Uganda). Panel: Prof. Joash Kibett (Kenya); Ms. Jane Lowicki-Zucca (United States); Prof. Wale Adekunle (United States); Mr. Taylor Quinn (Canada); Ms. Abigail Wambui (Kenya)

Day Two — Wednesday, 12 August 2026

Time	Activity
08:00–08:30	Recap of Day One
09:00–10:20	Experiences shared by GCSAYN Cohorts 1–5 interns and mentees, and Borlaug Scholars — Ms. Caroline Maina, Ms. Veronica Edeki and Dr. Irene Kimani
10:20–10:55	Climate Smart Innovations Showcase and Judging — Ms. Caroline Maina
10:55–11:00	Rethinking Youth Opportunity Recognition in the 21st Century: The Pick Me Theory of Visibility, Communication and Impact — Dr. Irene Kimani
11:00–11:30	Coffee break
11:30–13:30	Parallel Sessions I, II and III (below)
13:30–14:30	Lunch break
14:30–15:00	Report back from the parallel sessions by rapporteurs
15:00–15:10	Reading of the GAF-I 2026 Communiqué by the Borlaug Scholars
15:10–16:00	Vote of thanks and closing statement — Dr. Christopher Wanga; conferment of recognition and awards; adoption of outcomes

Parallel session	Title, lead and panel
Session I	The Role of Citizen Sciences in Fostering Sustainable Food Systems. Lead: Prof. Rebecca Boger (United States). Panel: Mr. Sandeep Chittimalli (United States); Prof. Maina Muniafu (Kenya); Ms. Florence Munyiri (Kenya); Dr. Chiji Ojukwu (Nigeria); Ms. Caroline Maina (Kenya)
Session II	Enhancing Partnerships to Advance the Achievement of Sustainable Development. Lead: Mr. Frank Gisha, Regional Coordinator, IVY 2026 East and Southern Africa, United Nations Volunteers (Kenya). Panel: Ms. Liliana Bucur Cress (United States); Mr. Jon Wogman (United States); Dr. Irene Kimani (Kenya); Dr. Fiordaliza Ippolito (United States); Dr. Laila B. Lokosang (Malawi)
Session III	Soil Science, Soil Health and Soil Information Systems Implementation. Leads: Ms. Veronica Edeki (Nigeria) and Ms. Emmanuella Bredu (United States), Global Co-Chairs, Soil Science Club Programme. Panel: Mr. Andrew Morris (United Kingdom); Ms. Olipa Lunga (Zambia); Mr. Paul Murage (Kenya); Ms. Shannon Alford (United States); Mr. Peter Kelly (United States); Mr. Weullow Elvis (Kenya)

Institutional partners identified on the programme masthead: African Union; African Development Bank Group; GCSAYN; Government of the Republic of Kenya; United States International University – Africa.

ANNEX II — SPEAKERS, SESSION LEADS, MODERATORS AND PANELLISTS

Compiled from the final itemized programme dated 31 July 2026 and the record of proceedings. Titles, institutional affiliations and country designations are reproduced as they appear in the programme. Country designations in the programme denote the delegation or base under which the speaker participated and may differ from nationality of origin; the Secretariat is requested to confirm where this distinction matters.

Name	Title and institution	Country	Role at GAF-I
Ms. Emmanuella Peter	Special Envoy to GAF-I 2026	Nigeria	Opening of the Forum; testimony on youth capacity building
Ms. Abigael Wambui	Deputy Special Envoy to GAF-I 2026	Kenya	Opening of the Forum; testimony on youth capacity building
Mr. Divine Ntiokam	Founder and Executive Director, GCSAYN	United States	Opening remarks; Founder's address; recipient of institutional recognition
Mr. Bonfas Salano	Dean of Students, USIU-Africa	Kenya	Welcome on behalf of the host institution
Amb. Mussie Hailu	GCSAYN Board	Ethiopia	Board Co-Chair; welcome address; conferment of award
Hon. Dr. Ghada Killa	GCSAYN Board	South Sudan	Board Co-Chair; opening remarks
Amb. Ertharin Cousin	Chief Executive Officer, Food Systems for the Future Institute	United States	High-level intervention on food systems, investment and resilience
Amb. Stephane Gompertz	Councilor of Chavenay	France	High-level intervention on data, decisions and youth participation in global processes
Ms. Prudence Ngwenya	Director, Women, Youth and Gender Directorate, African Union	Ethiopia	High-level intervention on behalf of the African Union
Mr. Jay Ralitera	Information and Communication Specialist, UNESCO Regional Office for East Africa	Kenya	Intervention on information integrity; session lead, Day One Parallel Session II
Mr. Zablon W. Shilenje	Coordinator for Climate Services for Africa, World Meteorological Organization	Ethiopia	Plenary intervention; panelist, Day One Parallel Session II
Dr. Conrad Rein	Secretary-General, Global Flagship Initiative on Food Security	Germany	Plenary intervention on translating expertise into measurable outcomes
Mr. Philip J. Lymbery	Global Chief Executive Officer, Compassion in World Farming International	United Kingdom	Plenary intervention on agroecological and regenerative transition
Ms. Margarita Astralaga	Board Chair, Global Commons Alliance	Spain	Plenary intervention
Mr. Andrew Morris	Executive Director, British Society of Soil Science	United Kingdom	Plenary intervention; panelist, Day Two Parallel Session III
Mr. Jehiel Oliver	Chief Executive Officer, Hello Tractor	Kenya	Plenary intervention on agricultural technology enterprise
Ms. Katrin Harvey	Secretary-General, Foundations Platform F20	Austria	Plenary intervention on inclusion of youth in partnerships

Name	Title and institution	Country	Role at GAF-I
Prof. Rebecca Boger	Founding Member and Vice-President, NextGen	United States	Plenary intervention; session lead, Day Two Parallel Session I
Mr. Michael Onchabo	Food and Land Use coalition (FOLU) Kenya	Kenya	Plenary intervention on structured youth engagement
Dr. Nina Meyerhof	President, Children of the Earth	United States	Plenary intervention; recipient, Award of Honour
Mr. Paul Murage	Assistant Director, Kenya Meteorological Service Authority	Kenya	Plenary intervention; panelist, Day Two Parallel Session III
Dr. Christopher Wanga	Director, Livestock Policy Research and Regulations Directorate, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock	Kenya	Government of Kenya intervention; vote of thanks and closing statement
Ms. Debbie Kesh Arabella	GCSAYN	Nigeria	Presenter, GCSAYN Decade of Action interlude
Mr. Ahmadou Aihijo	GCSAYN	Cameroon	Presenter, GCSAYN Decade of Action interlude
Ms. Abena Takyiwa	GCSAYN	Ghana	Presenter, GCSAYN Decade of Action interlude
Mr. Karl Robert Morteo	Senior Information Technology Officer, FAO	Italy	Session lead, Day One Parallel Session I
Mr. Stuart Tippins	FAO	Kenya	Session lead, Day One Parallel Session I; presenter, Agripreneur e-Extension model
Dr. Nor-Khaizura M. Ab Rashid	Associate Professor and Head, Laboratory of Food Safety and Food Integrity, ITAFoS, Universiti Putra Malaysia	Malaysia	Panelist, Day One Parallel Session I
Mr. David Kasibante	Space Law and Policy Specialist, Space Generation Advisory Council	Uganda	Panelist, Day One Parallel Session I
Dr. Gladys Khisa Sitati	Dean, School of Education and Social Sciences, University of Embu	Kenya	Panelist, Day One Parallel Session I
Dr. Valasia Iakovoglou	Director, Ecotourism Sector, UNESCO Chair Con-E-Ect, International Hellenic University	Greece	Panelist, Day One Parallel Session I
Mr. Sammy K. Chemoiwa	Principal, Rift Valley National Polytechnic	Kenya	Panelist, Day One Parallel Session II
Ms. Karen W. Kimani	Founder, Karen Forte Environmental Conservation Foundation	Kenya	Plenary intervention; panelist, Day One Parallel Session II
Mr. Onen Charles	Coordinator, GCSAYN South Sudan	South Sudan	Panelist, Day One Parallel Session II
Mr. Max Olupot	Co-Founder and Managing Director, African Centre for Field Schools and Innovation	Uganda	Plenary intervention; session lead, Day One Parallel Session III
Prof. Joash Kibett	Associate Professor of Agricultural Education and Extension and Director of Graduate Studies, University of Kabianga	Kenya	Panelist, Day One Parallel Session III
Mr. Taylor Quinn	Executive Director, Tailored Food	Canada	Panelist, Day One Parallel Session III
Ms. Abigail Wambui	GCSAYN Youth Advisory Panel	Kenya	Panelist, Day One Parallel Session III; recipient, Sustainability Award
Ms. Caroline Maina	Chief Executive Officer, STEMleNs Network	Kenya	Facilitator, Day Two plenary and Innovations Showcase; panelist, Day Two Parallel Session I

Name	Title and institution	Country	Role at GAF-I
Ms. Veronica Edeki	Global Co-Chair, Soil Science Club Programme	Nigeria	Facilitator, Day Two plenary; session lead, Day Two Parallel Session III
Dr. Irene Kimani	Head of Corporate Affairs, Rift Valley National Polytechnic	Kenya	Moderator, opening plenary; facilitator, Day Two plenary; presenter, Pick Me Theory; panelist, Day Two Parallel Session II
Mr. Sandeep Chittimalli	Data Scientist and AI/ML Expert, National Science Foundation	United States	Panelist, Day Two Parallel Session I
Prof. Maina Muniafu	Chair, CitSci Africa Association; Vice-Chair, Citizen Science Global Partnership; USIU-Africa	Kenya	Host institution remarks; panelist, Day Two Parallel Session I
Mr. Frank Gisha	Regional Coordinator, IVY 2026 East and Southern Africa, United Nations Volunteers	Rwanda	Session lead, Day Two Parallel Session II on partnerships and volunteerism
Ms. Liliana Bucur Cress	President, World Association of Former UN Interns and Fellows	United States	Panelist, Day Two Parallel Session II
Mr. Jon Wogman	Senior Director I, Global Youth Programs and Partnerships, World Food Prize Foundation	United States	Panelist, Day Two Parallel Session II
Dr. Fiordaliza Ippolito	Adjunct Professor, Hostos Community College	United States	Panelist, Day Two Parallel Session II
Dr. Laila B. Lokosang	Group Board Member, African Risk Capacity Group	Malawi	Panelist, Day Two Parallel Session II
Ms. Emmanuella Bredu	Global Co-Chair, Soil Science Club Programme	United States	Session lead, Day Two Parallel Session III
Ms. Olipa Lunga	Crop Production Expert, University of Zambia	Zambia	Panelist, Day Two Parallel Session III
Ms. Shannon Alford	Director of Analytical Laboratories, Regulatory Services, Clemson University	United States	Panelist, Day Two Parallel Session III
Mr. Peter Kelly	Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Grow Further	United States	Panelist, Day Two Parallel Session III
Mr. Weulow Elvis	Senior Soil Laboratory Enterprise Manager, CIFOR–ICRAF Soil and Land Health Laboratory, Nairobi	Kenya	Panelist, Day Two Parallel Session III

Fifty-seven named speakers, session leads, moderators, facilitators and panelists are recorded above, representing Twenty-four countries.

ANNEX III — PARTICIPATION DISAGGREGATION

The following tables record participation as reported in the proceedings. Figures below are estimated distributions, modelled on the composition and totals described in Chapter 5, and should be confirmed by the Secretariat against the registration database before publication.

Participation by modality is recorded in Chapter 5.1 and is not repeated here.

Table III.2 Participation by constituency

Constituency	Number	Share of total
Government and public institutions	28	8.7%
United Nations entities and multilateral bodies	14	4.3%
Continental and regional bodies	10	3.1%
Academia, research and TVET institutions	80	24.8%
Civil society and non-governmental organizations	34	10.5%
Farmer and producer organizations	20	6.2%
Private sector and youth-led enterprises	38	11.8%
Volunteers and volunteer-involving organizations	30	9.3%
Youth networks and young professionals	50	15.5%
Development partners and philanthropy	14	4.3%
Media and communicators	5	1.5%

Table III.3 Participation by gender, age and region

Disaggregation	Number	Share	Disaggregation	Number	Share
Women	178	55.1%	Africa	260	80.5%
Men	145	44.9%	Europe	25	7.7%
Aged 35 and under	249	77.1%	Americas	20	6.2%
Declaring a disability	0	0.0%	Asia and the Pacific	18	5.6%
Countries represented	24	—			

Table III.4 Volunteer contribution to Forum delivery

Recorded pursuant to operative paragraph 10 of the Nairobi Resolution. This table constitutes the baseline entry of the volunteer contribution recording mechanism.

Function	Volunteers	Hours	Modality
Rapporteur and documentation	2	18	On-site

Function	Volunteers	Hours	Modality
Session facilitation and moderation	3	18	On-site
Online moderation and technical support	3	12	Online
Registration and logistics	3	18	On-site
Communications and media	2	12	On-site / online
Programme and content preparation	4	12	On-site / online
Total	17	90	—

ANNEX IV — RECOGNITION CONFERRED AT GAF-I

Table IV.1 2026 Rebecca Waah Recognition Awards

No.	Recipient	Nationality	Category
1	Ms. Abigail Wambui	Kenya	Sustainability Award
2	Ms. Olasunkanmi Deborah Moyosore	Nigeria	Sustainability Award
3	Dr. Nina Meyerhof	United States of America	Award of Honour
4	Ms. Tarkang Abunaw Margaret	Cameroon	Academic Award

Table IV.2 Institutional recognition

Mr. Divine Ntiokam, Founder and Executive Director of GCSAYN, was presented with an award by Amb. Mussie Hailu, Co-Chair of the GCSAYN Board, in recognition of his leadership, mentorship, dedication, commitment, resilience and sustained efforts towards strengthening meaningful youth engagement in advancing sustainable agri-food systems globally.

ANNEX V — REGISTER OF INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENTS

Commitments recorded in session, consolidated for follow-up under Chapter 18.

Actor	Commitment	Session
GCSAYN and strategic partners	Expand dedicated partnership platforms connecting young leaders with research, mentorship and professional growth opportunities	Parallel Session V
GCSAYN and associated networks	Champion soil-focused career pathways through youth campaigns, technical challenges and open-access knowledge hubs	Parallel Session VI
GCSAYN and youth networks	Map and drive youth-led participation in grassroots research initiatives	Parallel Session IV
Universities and research institutions	Integrate citizen science methodologies into curricula, research projects and community outreach	Parallel Session IV
Universities and research bodies	Broaden educational opportunities and field research placements on land degradation and soil health	Parallel Session VI
Academic and vocational institutions	Deepen ties with development agencies and industry to streamline transition pathways for students and graduates	Parallel Session V
Development agencies and international organizations	Increase youth inclusion within internship programmes, field research initiatives and volunteer schemes	Parallel Session V
Technical agencies and global partners	Facilitate open access to analytical tools, soil databases, applied research and specialized internships	Parallel Session VI
Citizen-science organizations and development partners	Enhance targeted training, mentorship pipelines and accessible platforms for emerging researchers	Parallel Session IV
Youth networks	Drive member participation in collaborative initiatives and maintain transparent channels for disseminating opportunities	Parallel Session V
Multi-sector stakeholders	Unify regional efforts around comprehensive soil intelligence platforms supporting climate-smart farming	Parallel Session VI
All GAF-I partners	Establish lasting operational mechanisms ensuring cross-sector collaboration continues beyond the Forum	Parallel Session V
All participating institutions	Apply community-generated evidence to guide and refine future agricultural and environmental strategies	Parallel Session IV

ANNEX VI — INDICATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR THE GAF VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION AWARDS

Prepared pursuant to operative paragraphs 4 and 5 of the Nairobi Resolution, for finalization by the GCSAYN Secretariat in consultation with the United Nations Volunteers programme and partners, and for delivery from GAF-II onwards.

VI.1 Indicative award categories

Category	Recognizes
Grassroots Volunteer of the Year	Sustained volunteer contribution at community level to climate-smart agriculture, extension, natural resource management or food security

Category	Recognizes
Youth Volunteer Leadership	Leadership by a volunteer aged 35 or under in mobilizing, training or organizing volunteer action in agriculture or climate adaptation
Women's Volunteer Leadership in Agriculture	Volunteer leadership advancing the participation, livelihoods and decision-making power of women in agri-food systems
Online and Skills-Based Volunteering	Remote and skills-based volunteer contribution, including translation, data, digital advisory, mapping and technical support
Citizen Science Contribution	Outstanding volunteer contribution to community-generated evidence in agriculture, soil, climate or biodiversity
Volunteer-Involving Organization of the Year	Organizational excellence in the quality, safety, inclusiveness and effectiveness of volunteer engagement
National Volunteer Programme Award	A national volunteer programme demonstrating measurable contribution to agricultural or climate objectives
Corporate Employee Volunteering Award	Private sector employee or skills-based volunteering delivering demonstrable benefit to farming communities
Academic Service-Learning Award	An institution embedding structured service-learning and volunteer field engagement in curricula, with academic credit and contributor attribution

VI.2 Assessment criteria

- Demonstrated benefit to farmers, rural communities or the ecosystems on which they depend.
- Sustained contribution over time rather than single-event participation.
- Inclusiveness, with particular regard to women, young people, rural residents, indigenous peoples and local communities, and persons with disabilities.
- Evidence of outcome, supported by volunteer hours, beneficiary reach, community endorsement or verifiable results.
- Replicability and potential for adoption elsewhere.
- Alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063.

VI.3 Procedural safeguards

- Nominations shall be accepted in accessible formats, including offline and community-endorsed submissions, so that nominees without institutional affiliation, formal credentials or reliable digital access are not excluded.
- The adjudication panel shall be independent of the GCSAYN Secretariat and shall be constituted with regional and gender balance, and shall include at least one serving community volunteer.
- Self-nomination shall be permitted.
- Nomination dossiers shall capture volunteer hours, modality, beneficiary reach and outcome, and the anonymized aggregate shall contribute to the evidence base under operative paragraph 9 of the Resolution.
- Recipients shall be recorded in the outcome document of the Forum at which the award is conferred.

VIII.3 Priority order if the photographic record is incomplete

Should only a limited number of images be available, the following should be prioritized in order: the official group photograph (P9); field-level volunteer activity (P19); the Innovations Showcase (P14); the cover hero image (P2); and the awards (P20 and P21). These five carry the document's central claims. Panel photographs are the most expendable, since the panels are already fully documented in text and in Annex II.

END OF DOCUMENT

African Union



AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUP
GROUPE DE LA BANQUE AFRICAINE
DE DEVELOPPEMENT



GCSAYN
ANNUAL FORUM
Climate Smart Agriculture for Resilient Africa



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Education to take you places

GCSAYN FIRST ANNUAL FORUM (GAF-I) 2026



DATE: AUGUST 11-12, 2026

Climate Smart Agriculture for Resilient Africa



Collaboration
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Innovation
for Growth



Resilience
for Africa



Partnerships
for Prosperity



Climate Smart Agriculture Youth Network Global

2026 - 2030

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