

Youth urged to adopt ICT in agriculture

By Faridah Kulabako

The youth have been urged to harness the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in agriculture to accelerate wealth creation and address the country's perennial food shortage through increased productivity.

Samuele Otim Rizzo, the chief of party AVSI Foundation Uganda, said the deployment of ICT will act as a springboard for inclusive agricultural development and tame unemployment. He made the remarks ahead of the 2017 annual Source of the Nile National Agriculture show slated for July 17-22.

It should be noted that while

agriculture is the backbone of Uganda's economy, most youth shun it, considering it a dirty and low-paying job.

The deployment of ICT, however, would make agriculture profitable and attractive to the youth.

Rizzo said attracting the youth into agribusiness needs to be supported by role models from the young population.

Youth unemployment in Uganda is estimated at 83%, the highest in Africa, according to a 2015 African Development Bank report.

The agricultural show will seek to devise means of attracting more youth into agriculture and agribusiness. It is being organised in partnership with

the National Farmers' Federation, Uganda Agribusiness Alliance (UAA) and AVSI Foundation through the Skilling Youth for Employment in Agribusiness project. The show is expected to attract over 30,000 young agripreneurs. The UAA/National Youth4Agribusiness will display innovations and ventures, as well as a platform for participating youth to have face-to-face interactions with the agribusiness industry lead entrepreneurs, business development service providers and policy makers.

The UAA chairperson, Victoria Sekitoleko, said they will persuade the youth to pursue agriculture as a career by exposing the lucrative benefits of agribusiness.



Rizzo and Sekitoleko during a press conference on the forthcoming agricultural show in Jinja. Photo by Denis I