A revolutionary approach to Enterprise Driven Youth Led Design Thinking in Community Empowerment for Africa

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# Table of Contents

**SUMMARY** .................................................................................................................................................. 2

1. **INTRODUCTION** ........................................................................................................................................ 2

2. **ABOUT P4CAD** .......................................................................................................................................... 3
   - Why P4CAD? ................................................................................................................................................ 3
   - What we do in P4CAD .................................................................................................................................... 4
   - Linking Farmers to Research: The role of aiTex Hubs and local youths ...................................................... 4
   - Student Mentorship .................................................................................................................................... 5

3. **OUR EXPERIENCE IN FARMER SYSTEMS LEVEL ENGAGEMENT DOMAINS** ............................................. 6
   - Supporting to women and youth as stakeholders in implementation activities ............................................ 6
   - Relationships working with the Farmer’s Focus Value Chains in Kenya ..................................................... 6
   - GALS-P4CAD Model .................................................................................................................................... 7
   - Action Research focus .................................................................................................................................... 9

4. **THE YOULEAD IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK** ....................................................................................... 9
   - Implementation Committees .......................................................................................................................... 9
   - Committee on Nutrition ............................................................................................................................... 10
   - Committee on Marketing and Trade ............................................................................................................ 10
   - Committee on Warehousing and Logistics .................................................................................................. 10
   - Committee on Processing and Cottage Industries Development .............................................................. 10
   - Committee on Production and Productivity .................................................................................................. 10
   - Committee on Pre-production Inputs Support .............................................................................................. 11
   - Research Committee ..................................................................................................................................... 11
   - Committee on Academia and Knowledge ..................................................................................................... 11
   - Financial Services Committee .................................................................................................................... 11
   - Committee on Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) ....................................................... 11
   - Committee on Design Thinking Driven Innovations .................................................................................... 12
SUMMARY

While the value chain is a very useful approach to addressing the operational efficiency of value chain actors and infusion of governance within the same, rarely is an organizational paradigm presented as the vehicle for supporting the producers, yet the value chain is an organizational framework rather than an agricultural construct. The Programme for Capacity Development in Africa (P4CAD Africa) therefore introduces a new thinking in addressing agriculture in Africa by introducing the Youth Led Advisory, and Extension for Development (YouLead) initiative. The YouLead initiative is created to address the challenge that policy institutions face when they try to implement programmes without grassroots engagement. Farmers have limited capacity to create agribusinesses. Researchers seek to impact the producers through their knowledge but may face language and cultural challenges when they visit the farmers. Use of children from in school through the 4H/4K Clubs, supporting the clubs and farmers through students in higher institutions like colleges and universities, and integrating the key elements of the value chain as critical segments of the Agribusiness, Incubation, Technologies, and Extension (aiTex) through farmer own agribusiness hubs presents a new paradigm in enhancing value chain productivity. This is what P4CAD seeks to do through partnerships with other organizations at policy, development partnership, research, and academia at local, subnational, national, regional and continental levels.

1. INTRODUCTION

Africa faces many problems associated with i) food security ii) youth employment, and iii) diminished investments.

Addressing the challenge of food security in a continent gifted with land resources, appropriately trained youths and the right agronomical conditions even in the face of the hostility associated with climate change or weather variability, calls for an assessment of the key strengths of the continent, which we note to be its natural resources and a youthful labour force. Combining the exploitation of the minerals and agricultural land provide opportunity to engage the youths who have little sources of employment. Creating an avenue of harnessing the potential in these key resources is the greatest challenge, not because of the heavy investments required, but because of the lacking frameworks that are necessary to exploit the resourcefulness in these natural resources.

Programme for Capacity Development in Africa (P4CAD) aligns its work with the “Partnership for Inclusive Agricultural Transformation in Africa (PIATA)” which seeks to support African countries to address the agenda on addressing SDG 2 on Ending Hunger, within a perspective that supports the realization of SDG 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure. A key focus of our work is to promote the use of SDG 17: Revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable through collaborations with others. It is for this reason that we work closely with the Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition (GODAN) to create data driven paradigms in the spirit of the sentiments of 8th Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, when he says ‘Nutrition is both a maker and a marker of development. Improved nutrition is the platform for progress in health, education, employment, empowerment of women and the reduction of poverty and inequality, and can lay the foundation for peaceful, secure and stable societies.’ We have evolved a model of implementing this through the anchorage of these efforts on SDG 4: to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education which promotes lifelong learning opportunities for all through experiential learning..

Creating the right organizational framework for Africa that addresses the foregoing calls for an assessment of what has happened within the continent, and what remains to be done, given the diverse investments
that have been used to address the challenges. It is for this reason that food security, youth employment, and diminished investments are the foundation of the data driven initiatives of the P4CAD.

**Food security**: the ‘condition in which all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life’ calls for a people based framework that promotes production, physically harnessing the production, and making business out of what has been harnessed using both the science and social practice of health and nutrition that is driven by agriculturally produced diets.

P4ACAD’s initiative on Youth Lead Advisory and Extension for Development (**YouLead**) brings together development actors, governments (in their national and subnational perspectives), private sector, research, and academia to support youths working with farmers in their rural domains; to create agribusiness, incubation, technologies and extension (aiTex) Hubs. Youths are mentored and supported at their local, rural domiciles; to promote production and productivity, process enhancement at the agribusiness level, support investment mobilized from local farmers and community members, whose opportunities are demonstrated at the value chain segments they relate with. This then links with markets in a way that delivers direct benefit to producers and consumers by removing the exploitative intermediaries that do not add value in the chain, and enhancing collaboration with those that add value. Development programmes that seek to realize diverse SDG agendas are encouraged to challenge P4CAD to help realize their desired measurable outcomes. We believe we are equal to any challenge.

2. **ABOUT P4CAD**

**Why P4CAD?**

P4CAD is a not-for-profit Company Limited by Guarantee, which has evolved from the entrepreneurial drive of WillPower Enterprise Development, its Technology Development Arm, and Octagon Data Systems, which are then combined with research work undertaken at the Center for Agricultural Networking and Information Sharing (CANIS) of the University of Nairobi. These efforts are joined with efforts from partnering Research organizations, Development Partners, the Kenya Government, Private Sector, and Farmer organizations; in collaboration with an NGO to promote the creation of Value Addition and Cottage Industry Development in Africa (**VACID Africa**) which we registered in Kenya in 2006. The intension of promoting farmer owned cottage industries, while good, has been slow in forming, just like the dream of the Comprehensive Africa, Agriculture, Development Programme (CAADP). CAADP’s slow pace in realizing investment by national governments in Africa has been associated with the poor organizational framework that can promote demand for the investment governments were supposed to provide for. In order to address this challenge VACID Africa created linkages with organizations that are owned by those keen in economically delivering produce to the consumers. It is for this reason that a

![Figure 1: P4CAD is a product of Continuous Value Chain Agripreneurial innovation](image-url)
programme that addresses the constraints that producers face through diverse value chain aligned capacity development needs has become necessary.

**What we do in P4CAD**

The economics behind productivity of a commodity calls for skills and knowledge that producers in rural areas may not have. Youth are trained in silo leaning skills in production, processing, logistics, linkage to trade, and consumption which farmers only get from others, who exploit them. The art of negotiation with consumers or those that represent them leaves the farming opportunities and the potential for creating jobs for their youth in the hands of the intermediaries. Without an organizational framework to harness the potential of the youth, farmers will forever fail to create partnership with governments and consumers, who are critical partners to rural agriculture. P4CAD supports the creation of this enabling framework to enable the harness the potential of consumers willing to pay for what farmers produce.

**Linking Farmers to Research: The role of aiTex Hubs and local youths**

The Structural Adjustment Programmes of the 1980s proposed the separation of productive agriculture, extension and local processing. The call to governments to leave activities that are necessarily private sector aligned when no vibrant private sector existed meant that the space left by government and development partner investment was taken by a few rich Africans and a host of multinational corporations. With industry left to these two, the producers were left at the mercy of the profiteers who without extension capacity had to rely on NGOs and exploitative intermediaries. The few and diminishing numbers of extension personnel, owing to natural attrition has been exacerbated by the implementation of the Schedule 4 of Kenya’s Constitution 2010, insofar as agriculture is concerned. It is for this reason that P4CAD is designed to promote collaborative research delivered through an inter-universities, inter-colleges nexus that supports Governments (at National and Subnational Levels), the Private Sector, Development Partners and Farmer Organizations to unlock the potential of agriculture through Youth Led Advisory and Extension for Development (YouLead) initiative that supports youths through mentorship and training to create farmer owned Agribusiness, Incubation, Technologies, and Extension (aiTex) Hubs.

The open data agenda in research and academia, the African Agenda of driving the realizing the Continental Free Trade Area; to integrate the CAADP Framework that has inspired and energized African agricultural research institutions, farmers’ associations, African governments and the private sector has promoted the belief that agriculture has a pivotal role in development. It is this agenda that has inspired the need of a social enterprise that P4CAD is. It is this thinking that as advised the creation of a YouLead initiative across Africa. P4AD therefore seeks to support CAADP’s desire to boost investment to stimulate
growth in the agricultural sector by bringing together the public and private sectors and civil society – at the continental, regional and national levels – which improves coordination, share knowledge, successes and failures, encourage one another and promote joint efforts.

Our new thinking presented in Figure 2 on the P4CAD Implementation Framework introduces a community-research driven engagement that overcomes the challenges that devolution visited Kenya. Our approach is anchored on support to either college based youths, or those seeking opportunities after college, hence incubation. We are keen to identify those that appreciate the benefit of working in the agricultural value chain space through experiential engagement with agribusinesses based in their rural areas. This will help explore the possibilities in invigorating investments at farmer owned Agribusiness Hubs. Through these aiTex Hubs, the students/youth become the extension arm of the researchers.

**Student Mentorship**

The students are supervised by P4CAD Mentors, faculty from participating colleges/universities that sign MoUs with P4CAD, extension people (the few that have remained) at the County level, and/or those working with the private sector, or NGOs. Our operational framework is based on the perspective that any region of any country, has youths that would engage with agriculture if it is driven by an agribusiness perspective, uses technologies, and relies on knowledge, from whatever sources, and challenges their thinking paradigms. P4CAD is therefore the culmination of a mentorship driven entrepreneurial business which started in 1995 and has evolved from an SME Support and ICT business that was tasked by the British Council to train and mentor over 500 SMEs in 1998–2002, then undertook the UNIDO/UNDP Women Enterprise Development (WED) Programme in 2003 which resulted to a 6 months Value Chain Training in Vienna. This initiative has since created value chain orientation in agriculture for the country arising from the introduction of value chain orientation to the UNIDO/UNDP Programme that made it necessary to create Value Addition and Cottage Industry Development as a community facing NGO. VACID Africa promotes the creation of agro-industries that are owned by farmers. P4CAD is therefore not a research outcome of the 2016 research work of Wageningen University, CTA, CABI and CANIS but a sequel of actions that seek to promote value chain empowerment. The sequel training of faculty from other universities proposed that instead of having CANIS in UoN train other universities, a neutral organization that focuses on capacity building of all universities was necessary. The evolution that has advised the formation of P4CAD. The Programme identifies its own initiatives guided by an entrepreneur who have created three other institutions that continue offering support services to SMEs, Automating Agriculture, and Support Communities to create cottage industries. The offering of P4CAD to farmer owned value chain cooperatives and use of ICTs that integrate youth to agriculture using value chain aligned agribusinesses therefore borrows from over 23 years span.
3. **OUR EXPERIENCE IN FARMER SYSTEMS LEVEL ENGAGEMENT DOMAINS**

P4CAD has partnered with academia, KALRO, GODAN Action, National and Subnational governments, in its model of linking research to students who deliver extension. David Karanja, the lead of the seed Unit in KALRO will be the seed expert in the team and will be backed by Anne Nyambok, a seed systems specialist. Their work will be supported by the value chain and academic linkage that P4CAD is promoting in Kenya and Africa. P4CAD further adopts the foundational work undertaken by Octagon Data Systems and VACID Africa in supporting the research to market systems and process development/enhancement for the promotion of policy engagement for wealth creation through value chain driven initiatives. The PIATA transformation agenda will benefit from the experience we have gained from the work we have undertaken in the market systems of tea, dairy and horticulture subsectors where Octagon’s technologies through weighment management has provided efficiencies that have delivered market and private sector driven investments in those sub-sectors. At the policy level, P4CAD takes over the work that its founder and Executive Director has been doing with the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation through collaboration with the State Department of Research that has given its Director Policy to join the P4CAD Board. On advocacy and linkage with CGIAR, P4CAD has agreed to support the work of GODAN in promoting the Open Data Agenda in Africa to promote youth based data acquisition, aggregation, analytics and related synthesis for decision making. On finance and partnerships, P4CAD benefits from the work WillPower, Octagon, and VACID Africa have been engaged in creating farmer owned Savings and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOs) and the linkage with institutions that fund value chain actors.

**Supporting to women and youth as stakeholders in implementation activities**

Our value chain work has been created out of the UNIDO engagement with Women Enterprise Development (WED). In the WED Programme which created our value chain orientation, we supported the initiative to promote women, who were hitherto in producer groups, to create agribusinesses. We supported the WED groups to integrate solar power to dry their produce and create food concentrates in the post-harvest loss management agenda of UNIDO that was funded by UNDP, an initiative that has to date advised UNDP’s engagement with agriculture and policy development. One group started the processing of banana floor in Meru, and has had support from diverse development partners including the government, the banana floor brand, Wedo is available on Amazon, much as it was taken over by American youth interns who made it an enterprise outside the women group, but the concept has been proved in this agenda. Another group started the processing of sun flower oil which was the first agricultural product that was dispensed at the T-Mall in Nairobi a model that has been adopted in milk vending. We have been picked to partner with the Hivos/IFAD Project in their **Empowerment2Scale** Project through which we shall support Gender Action Learning for Sustainability (GALS) Project for which P4CAD has been positively evaluated to implement the YouLead initiative under the Hivos/IFAD Collaboration. Through this project, IFAD household methodology and gender tools on GALS and related methodology guidelines will be available to the work that we seek to do in this project.

**Relationships working with the Farmer’s Focus Value Chains in Kenya**

Agribusiness grows when women and youth are integrated to provide labour and effective planning to agricultural engagements. Infusion of value chain focus changes the odds against the feasibility. Integrating SMEs into what communities do is not new to us as this was the foundation of WillPower Enterprise Development Limited, a company registered and nurtured then by the Kenya Management
Assistance Programme (KMAP). WillPower became and continues to be a mentoring organization to empower others. The mentorship and empowerment model has guided us ever since. Figure 1 presents the evolution that has filtered into the actions that create the social enterprise that the Programme for Agricultural Capacity Development in Africa (P4CAD Africa) has emerged to be.

Our founders were persuaded by the British Council to focus on what has been an action research focus in enterprise thinking, anchored on SME training. DfID agreed with the British Council that WillPower has the potential to drive the KMAP Programme to a national mentorship programme for SMEs. Many years since, Hivos has joined us when the model to d roll out to productivity is ready. Out effort is driven by productive and educated youth and women that we empower through enterprise thinking ever since the programme was formulated two decades ago. We are excited that WillPower’s Programme in Women Enterprise Development (WED) is culminating to, what UNIDO and WillPower initiated as, a value chain thinking programme that seamlessly integrates enterprise thinking using agriculture and agricultural research, within a policy paradigm. It is out of our work that the creation of the threesome:

1. Agribusiness Department in the Ministry of Agriculture
2. The Department of Agroindustry in the Ministry of Industrialization, and
3. Value Addition and Cottage Industry Development in Africa (VACID Africa) was done.

WillPower’s desire of a gender driven agribusiness and agroindustry dimension inspired by the Women Enterprise Development was halted by the government ministries’ performance assessment where industrialization felt WillPower had bequeathed what was their project to agriculture. Indeed there was no way the country could create value chain inspired without bringing agro-industry, agriculture and enterprise thinking without brining all three together. It is out of the WillPower and UNIDO efforts that we formulated the processing of the now visible composite flours. Many poorly integrated agribusiness and agro-industrial efforts have been made without addressing the organizational innovation that P4CAD now comes to address by infusing a structure, systems, strategic thinking and staffing through students, researchers and teachers. Having been the author of the agroindustry revolution that we started with UNIDO it is painful that we head to twenty years without any results as the sector goes to youth inspired anarchy.

**GALS-P4CAD Model**

The infusion of ICTs to farmer owned agribusinesses like the many tea factories supported by Octagon, to Githunguri Dairy, Mubeles Dairy, Nduumberi Dairy, among others; provides the foundation of the success that stems from automating smallholder farm processes; and the nurturing of the organizations that they create. Progressive thinking however calls for the optimization of investments in ICTs! Indeed, investing so heavily in ICTs at the community level, dictates there be investment to generate more wealth for the investors within a value chain focus. This anchors the thinking behind the youth driven engagement in ICTs for the optimization of value chains in rural areas using commodities that people produce. Moreover just like ICT is an investment that supports agribusiness work in dairy processing through data management, the human resource to manage an agribusiness, incubation, technologies and extension (aiTex) hub has become necessary, which is where GALS-P4CAD’s programme for linking Universities and Research comes in. This focus will reinforce devolution more so the agricultural sectoral lacuna created by lack of extension.
The model of learning proposed by GALS seeks creates a new thinking in agriculturally driven human centered design thinking in the expected project. Indeed, with so much effort pushing for ‘private sector led’ models that present the mythical thinking that smallholders cannot create own agribusinesses, an engendered model is what need to debunk the myth. We seek to support GALS-implementation backed opportunity thinking that delivers knowledge to farmers using a new farmer owned private sector thinking. P4CAD Africa will help drive a micro-thinking approach to drive innovation using students, women and men to create farmer owned agribusinesses. Through the agribusiness vehicle that will be created through aTex Hubs, men who are land owners will be supported to earn more from the knowledge input of the students. Students will be tethered away from urban centers by the learning that their colleges examine. Women the traditional workers rarely rewarded for their toil, will through GALS and supported by the youths be supported to link to markets that. The increased earnings will create rewards to the physical resource owners, as well as to the value chain service providers within an engendered model.

The capacity building dimension of integrating the student led dimension of P4CAD into the GALS will support the case to create a new curriculum to promote engendered learning for value chain anchored sharable wealth thinking. Within the curriculum, and guided by the TVET agenda, each value chain role player will get their rewards in the form of wealth generated from the chains for the service they play through a transparent organizational modeling. Youths will be empowered to realize where the fees they use comes from, men will participate with women in apportioning earnings to household chores that otherwise is the headache of women; and the entire family will transparently participate in making decisions on household investments that are commonly left in the hands of the men, creating drunkenness when they can’t provide.

This proposal is presented to Hivos with the understanding that an action research organizational focus is not a common model to development thinking. P4CAD is a research outcome of a technology company that is supported by an enterprise and community development institution working closely with universities and governments. It is the product of a research driven social enterprise which will also address a constitutional challenge for Kenya in the form of the confusion created by a diminished agricultural extension. The model which will ride on agricultural university learning will support Kenya, and indeed Africa, to address the challenge faced by the failed realization of the CAADP implementation of the Maputo 2003-2013 agenda. The evidence informed decision making focus of the Malabo Declaration will benefit from data that is collected and curated by students as evidence to foster decision making in Agriculture. It is this that will help realize a new paradigm of student engagement in extension.

Moreover, the GALS- P4CAD to be evolved in this engagement is designed to address the ever increasing youth bulge through a domestically aligned gender agenda. Creating an agricultural extension dimension is brought to play within a value chain perspective to attract county, national and regional investments to participate in identifying where their revenues will come from and hence support the agripreneurial activities of the agribusiness technology and extension (aTex) hubs now passionately owned by the farmers with the Support of Hivos and P4ACA. Our framework model entails the creation of aITex Hubs at farmer level driven by the commodities or animals (hence the advisory rather than extension alone) and supported by diverse actors. We have partnered with partner organizations to second subject matter experts who will be available as part of our programme to support project implementation as we win projects from partners who find value in our model. We are currently working with Hivos/IFAD and CTA.
to establish aiTex Hubs in some regions of the country and collaborating with the Council of Governors in its efforts to establish Incubation Hubs at the County level.

**Action Research focus**

Our development agenda is data and data analytics driven. We seek to create student led advisory, extension and development agenda that anchors on the data that students will collect from the field and guided by our data and analytics partners Octagon Data systems and Ycenter, we shall with guidance from our technical board present an organizational action research framework that links research to producers through our students interface. Our agribusiness orientation derives from our past engagement with the DfID funded programme from which WillPower’s incubation effort was created. We changed the enterprise focus to agribusiness focus when DfID linked Willpower to UNIDO. We initiated the support to women in post-harvest loss management culminating in the value chain focus we have used to guide research commercialization. Our passionate engagement with *value chain research and foundational thinking for women in rural areas which created nutritional products we support to date.* Through UNIDO, Octagon, then part of the ICT function of WillPower, was challenged to evolve a technology platform that would ensure that a farmer does not lose their income to intermediaries. It is this process that has created the vibrant dairy subsector where governance was then absent. VACID Africa, a not-for-profit organization, is an outcome of UNIDO’s work, which we created to drive the agenda of integrating ICTs to Agriculture. Diverse interests in Kenya’s agricultural sector ensures that a Kenyan not for profit initiative can’t work...won’t work! Driving development for smallholder farmers calls for a business case. *This realization has made P4CAD to be registered as a Company Limited by Guarantee,* which we present to Hivos.

4. **THE YOULEAD IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK**

Our effort has evolved out of a community NGO, which was itself a product of the implementation of a UNIDO/UNDP Project with the Kenya Government to manage women enterprise development programmes that focused on post-harvest losses in agriculture. The project was the precursor of value chain promotion in Kenya that supported linkage of capacity building within all layers of an agricultural products’ value chain. It is this initiative that has shaped the country’s transformation in the dairy sector with examples such as Githunguri Dairy, and which has also infused private sector engagement in the tea sectors challenging the space that was a comfort zone for KTDA. After going through the challenges of implementing value chain aligned agribusinesses, the need to integrate research, students and farmers became clear with the devolution of Kenya’s agriculture in 2013. We have gone through diverse motions to now register our programmes in September this year. The effort has however existed since last October as the process of registering a company limited by guarantee takes a longer timeframe to register. It is for this reason that we now seek to work closely with the Academia, State Department of Research, the Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition (GODAN), The African Union in its effort to promote the Continental Free Trade Area, Ycenter - a design thinking innovation organization that promotes youths to use value chain linked blockchain technology engagement, and the Center for Tropical Agriculture (CTA) in Wageningen.

**Implementation Committees**

P4CAD’s actions are implemented under the YouLead Agenda of promoting a perspective of delivering innovation through collaboration. The collaboration draws the leaders from diverse institutions through which we sign memorandum of agreements on the role they will [play within our implementation committees. Our committees are defined using the value chain as the framework of engagement using
the SDGs as the basis of evidence capture. The implementation of our programmes aligns with the SDGs using the value chain perspective of: i) nutrition through consumption, ii) marketing and trade, iii) warehousing and logistics, iv) processing through cottage industries, iv) production and productivity, and v) pre-production inputs support. These are supported through the service orientation of: vi) research, vii) academia and knowledge, viii) financial services, ix) ICTs and Design thinking driven innovations.

Committee on Nutrition
This committee explores how African economies driven as they are by agriculture also focus on creating a food secure continent. Partnerships are drawn from institutions that promote the agenda on safe foods within the focus on nutrition at the community level. All efforts anchored on African Government and community programmes are integrated into this committee through the aiTex Hub thinking of P4CAD.

Committee on Marketing and Trade
This committee identifies with the CAADP Agenda of Intra-Africa Trade and its implementation instruments such as the Africa Free Trade Area. Partnerships are drawn from all institutions engaged in trade facilitation such as the chambers of commerce and industry, blockchain practitioners, consumer and producer organizations with value chain traceability and transparency as well as all such actions that promote marketing and trade. The committee is supported by the YouLead actors at the aiTex Hubs.

Committee on Warehousing and Logistics
This committee is created to address the challenge that African agriculture faces in food loss and waste. It helps the aiTex Hubs plan the food loss strategies and linkage of the foods to the consumers; ensuring that the producers gain the necessary bargaining power in the sale of their produce as they are able to contain food losses associated with the poor storage infrastructure that has forever dogged commodity management. Partners to this committee will be drawn from institutions that deal in logistics management and storage systems management as well as trade or such others that feel inclined to support post-harvest loss management. The committee is supported by the YouLead actors at the aiTex Hubs.

Committee on Processing and Cottage Industries Development
There is no secret that processed food fetches better prices in the market. African governments have since the structural adjustment programmes indicated that processing and establishment of cottage industries is the responsibility of the private sector. It is the private sector that has funded the extortionist tendencies seen along the agricultural value chains. This committee will be responsible for working with aiTex Hubs at the grassroots level to explore the best way to partner with consumers and other trading organizations to ensure standards that are needed by the consumers are addressed as the processing is undertaken close to where the production take place. This will be undertaken with a desire to create value chain opportunities for youths in the agricultural space. The committee is supported by the YouLead actors at the aiTex Hubs.

Committee on Production and Productivity
This committee is for the people who possess knowledge in production, who seek to see standards in input management at the farm level for both crops and animals. It seeks to enhance productivity through knowledge dissemination. It is the layer where the farmers interact with the knowledge providers as
youths, extension, policy, and research workers who need to link with the farmers. The aiTex Hub provides the infrastructure for the implementation of the agenda of the YouLead initiative.

**Committee on Pre-production Inputs Support**

This committee formulates the standards for the procurement and use of inputs in production. The linkage with the aiTex extension and advisory youths provides the need for people who can guide on the best practices in production. The committee works as the guide to the YouLead actors at the aiTex Hubs and will be expected to advice on what the agribusiness function of the aiTex Hub should stock. It is the one that provides guidelines on which inputs to consider valuable to work with based on the right criteria and if Africa should start producing its own inputs either in partnership with other external private sector actors or alone.

**Research Committee**

Much of the research undertaken remains only in publications and demonstration farms. Never in Africa has a framework of diffusion of research been articulated as is being done in the YouLead Initiative. This committee will work with the youths to deliver research to producers and getting feedback Data driven research actions will be captured and the actions documented at the farm level according to the interaction between researchers from research organizations and faculty. The committee will be supported by P4CAD and the youths responsible to implement the YouLead actors at the aiTex Hubs and the grassroots.

**Committee on Academia and Knowledge**

Alignment of the value chain aligned agribusiness curriculum in colleges and universities is the foundation on which the Youth Led Advisory and Extension for Development hinges on. Academia will work with P4CAD to promote experiential learning that shall be anchored at the farmer owned aiTex Hubs. All the areas of farmer engagement need to be supported by the diverse committee in the P4CAD initiatives and for that reason makes the academia and knowledge dissemination the central pillar of this initiative. Working with development actors, policy institution and all actors that need the support of students means there will be need to support this agenda by organized and mentored students, a function that universities, colleges and policy institutions will be expected to play a key role in making this committee yield the desired results.

**Financial Services Committee**

While finance is a necessary ingredient to agriculture, the advice on its use for investment is hardly available to rural communities. The flow of funds from the consumers and how, and in what quantities, it reaches the producers is a critical challenge. Farmers need inputs to their productive activities, investment, foods, fees and pocket money. Sometimes the cash needs come when the earning from their consumer payment has been sorted which makes financial service providers become critical actors. Appropriate planning around this is critical which is why a committee on financial planning and partnerships is important to deliberate all. Government and development partners will be critical partners to support the investment resources, but communities will also be encouraged to invest in shares in the agribusinesses that the aiTex Hubs will become in each locality they are implemented.

**Committee on Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)**
Agriculture has gone digital. Satellite monitoring of the status of agriculture has become commonplace with data being released through programmes supported by NASA and other private Earth Observation Stations which Africa partners with. Similarly, drones and the Internet of Things (IoT) has become easily accessible so that inputs are monitored using sensors and cameras that have hitherto been out of reach for agriculture. The challenge of feeding a population expected to hit unsustainable levels calls for technologies to be integrated into the value chain which is what this committee needs to focus on. The committee will be supported by the YouLead actors at the aiTex Hubs to become the drivers of the technology thinking including integration of data so necessary for marketing insofar as traceability and value chain transparency are concerned.

**Committee on Design Thinking Driven Innovations**

P4CAD makes a case for open data rather plainly but also acknowledges that innovation is a productive of qualitative data which plays a major part in innovative thinking. Data-driven research normally yields data driven answers, which more often than not misses out on the life experiences of the people who participate in problem solving and for whom problems are solved. This committee explores the diverse approaches to mix qualitative and quantitative approaches to guide problem solving using design thinking paradigms. The committee will therefore influence the learning paradigm of the YouLead actors at the aiTex Hubs.