



**International Crops Research Institute
for the Semi-Arid Tropics**

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EMBARGOED UNTIL 25 SEPTEMBER 2015

New approaches and priority international investments have Malawi's young farmers sing out loud to support Global Goals

Hyderabad, India | Malawi, (25 September 2015) – On September 25th 2015, world leaders will commit to [The Global Goals](#) for sustainable development including ending extreme poverty and fighting inequality. Malawi's young farmers [sing out loud](#) to show farming can be one way to do this. Their song Kondwa was inspired by the [song 'Happy'](#) by Pharrell Williams.

Malawi young farmers sing out loud: https://youtu.be/GIT79hz_BOI

(Short version: <https://youtu.be/LRd4sOQRWMI>)

Malawi farmers dubbed with Pharrell Williams: <https://youtu.be/XwiPxRWbbnw>

'I'm 21. Look at me. I'm self-reliant, I buy my own clothes, go to the salon for my hair *and* I'm a farmer.' Juliette Harawa, 21, is just one of the many young farmers ready revolutionize rural Malawi. 'The big problem is when the young think farming is just subsistence and traditional. It isn't. With the right means we can turn it into a modern business,' says Juliette.

Malawi needs to be driven out of its rural rut. The World Bank's [most recent data](#) shows the country is the poorest in the world. Agriculture employs 80% of the people but is crippled by a reliance on the single erratic rainy season, droughts and poor soil fertility. There is limited rural infrastructure, low diversification, and poor access to credit, quality seeds and markets.

Malawi is an agro-based economy, it shouldn't be so poor and hungry. [The stifled potential of youth](#) in the agricultural sector is hindering Malawi's potential to fight back. [2 out of 3](#) people in Malawi are under 25 yet they face serious under and unemployment. Young farmers want change and can show how farming is the future when conditions are right. Access to modern tools, quality seeds, training and capital for example. We asked young farmers in Mchinji in central Malawi to share their views, stories and demands. From this animated workshop came their catchy '*kondwa*' (happy) tune.

Studies show that sustained agricultural growth is 2 – 4 times more effective in reducing poverty than any other sector. Malawi's President Mutharika wants young people to drive this growth. Plans are being made for training centres to improve skills and focus on agro-industries and value addition. Every village in Malawi boasts young farmers desperate for these changes to become tangible.

[ICRISAT](#) has been working with farmers in the drylands over the last 40 years to ensure their research has a positive impact on smallholder farmers. Access to [drought and pest resistant seeds](#), [innovative water and soil conservation](#), [famine-beating farming](#), [agribusiness](#) , [better nutrition](#) and [women empowerment](#) are just some of the results.

ICRISAT is committed to the [Global Goals](#) to overcome poverty and hunger, achieve good health and gender equity and tackle climate change.

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The Global Goals for sustainable development: <http://www.globalgoals.org/>

About ICRISAT

The **International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid-Tropics** (ICRISAT) is a non-profit, non-political organization that conducts agricultural research for development in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa with a wide array of partners throughout the world. Covering 6.5 million square kilometers of land in 55 countries, the semi-arid tropics have over 2 billion people, and 644 million of these are the poorest of the poor. ICRISAT innovations help the dryland poor move from poverty to prosperity by harnessing markets while managing risks – a strategy called Inclusive Market- Oriented development (IMOD). ICRISAT is headquartered in Patancheru, Hyderabad, Telangana, India, with two regional hubs and six country offices in sub-Saharan Africa. It is a member of the CGIAR Consortium.

About ICRISAT: www.icrisat.org; For ICRISAT's scientific information see: <http://EXPLOREit.icrisat.org>

CGIAR is a global agriculture research partnership for a food secure future. Its science is carried out by 15 research Centers who are members of the CGIAR Consortium in collaboration with hundreds of partner organizations. www.cgiar.org