FAOâ??s Investment Centre forges projects worth $49.5 billion to boost global agri-tech landscape

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Boosting investments in agrifood systems is a powerful lever to improve lives and can address the â??alarming gapâ?• of employment opportunities facing the 1.2 billion young people expected to enter the job market in the next decade, QU Dongyu, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), said in remarks opening FAO Investment Days 2025.

FAOâ??s Investment Centre noting its evolution over 60 years, together with partners, to introduce innovative approaches, technologies and cutting-edge tools that help countries attract more public and private investment and achieve impact at scale. The Centreâ??s outreach now encompasses more than 120 countries, and last year helped design 51 public investment projects in 36 countries with an array of partners worth $7.3 billion. And it supported ongoing investment projects, totaling over $49.5 billion to ensure end-to-end quality.

In 2024, the Centre contributed to 48 agricultural strategies, 33 sector studies, 21 policy studies and 5 policy dialogues in 92 countries, and also provided technical assistance to improve the quality of lending to private investment in 50 countries, according to itsÂ latest annual review.

This yearâ??s Investment Days, attended by more than 200 experts, will look at key factors influencing agrifood employment in developing countries, including productivity, changing demographics, labour migration, access to finance, and an evolving demand for skills amid technological advancements. Thematic sessions will explore the types of policies and enabling environments that can encourage job growth and innovation. They will also look at how local value addition and enterprise development can create meaningful jobs along agrifood value chains, especially for young people.

The status of youth in the worldâ??s agrifood systems was the theme of aÂ recent groundbreaking reportÂ by FAO. Only about 400 million jobs are projected to be created in the next decade, highlighting the importance of balancing technology and tradition to design labor-intensive transformation of agrifood systems. Some 87 million additional jobs could be created by agrifood systems with targeted interventions, according toÂ The Status of Youth in Agrifood Systems.

â??Investment Days is a reminder that we need to think bigger, think deeper, and design bigger,â?? said FAOâ??s Director-General, urging all to see investment opportunities wherever there are challenges. He highlighted how well-crafted interventions can unleash the powerful opportunities offered by e-commerce platforms to fill in the gaps between producers and agrifood systems.