

Young farmers turn to social media to adapt to climate change 年輕農夫轉向社群媒體以適應氣候變遷

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Farmer Julius Cheruiyot checks his smart phone for advice on adapting his farm to changing climate conditions. THOMSON REUTERS FOUNDATION/ Caleb Kemboi

農夫朱利葉斯·切魯伊約特從他的智慧手機尋找調整農場作業以因應氣候變遷的建議。路透基金會/ Caleb Kemboi

ELDORET, Kenya (Thomson Reuters Foundation) — Julius Cheruiyot has been a farmer since he was 16 years old. Forced to drop out of school because his family was

unable to pay the fees, he went to work on his father's farm in Uasin Gishu county, in Kenya's Rift Valley region.

（湯姆森·路透基金會來自肯亞—埃爾多雷特報導）—朱利葉斯·切魯伊約特從他 16 歲時就從事農夫的工作。當時他因家中無力負擔他的學費，不得不輟學，從此他就在父親位於肯亞裂谷區域的烏雅新吉蘇郡的農場上工作。

Today, Cheruiyot, 32, is a father of three who can afford to feed and educate his family by cultivating his own land. But as increasingly unpredictable weather in Kenya makes life difficult for subsistence farmers, he has joined a number of younger farmers who are using social media to learn how to cope.

今天，32 歲的切魯伊約特已是三個孩子的父親，他靠在自己的農地工作，以養育他的家庭。但當肯亞愈來愈難預測的天氣，使得原本就勉強度日的農民的生活愈來愈困難時，他加入數個年輕農夫的行列，透過社群媒體學習如何因應氣候變遷。

Standing on his 5-acre (2-hectare) plot of land, Cheruiyot pulls out his mobile phone, clicks on a Facebook tab, and logs in to the page of Young Volunteers for the Environment (YVE), a group that posts updates on the latest news about the environment and climate change.

站在他占地五英畝（二公頃）的土地上，切魯伊約特拿出他的行動電話，按一下臉書鍵，連上一個名為「青年環境義工 [Young Volunteers for the Environment](#), YVE」的網頁，該團體張貼有關環境及氣候的最新消息。

“Social media ... has assisted us a lot,” he says. “(With) the information we receive, we can now know the right time to plant our crops, because sometimes we realise it's a short rain not a long rain, and end up incurring losses (if we don't take the right action).”

「社群媒體...真的幫助很大，」他說。「(利用)所收到的資訊，我們能夠知道播種的恰當時機，因為有時我們會以為只是一場小雨，而不是大雨（而沒能採取適當的行動），因此造成損失。」

Changing weather patterns in recent years have affected most farmers in Kenya and other parts of eastern Africa.

在近幾年，不斷變化的天氣模式在肯亞及非洲一些地區對農戶有很大的衝擊。

Over the past 10 years, Cheruiyot says, he has seen drastic changes in the local climate, whether low rainfall during the planting season or heavy rains at harvest time,

resulting in low yields or completely failed harvests.

在過去十年中，切魯伊約特親身經歷了當地氣候大幅度的變化，不論是播種期間的雨量不足或收割期間的雨量過多，有時造成收穫量銳減，甚或毀了所有收成。

He learned about Young Volunteers for the Environment at an agricultural exhibition. “I decided to join the group and since then I have learned (about) various aspects of climate change and how to cope with it as a young farmer,” he explains.

他在一個農業展覽會得知「青年環境義工 YVE」這個組織。「我決定加入該團體，從此我學到許多有關氣候變遷的事情，及身為青年農夫的我應如何面對它」，他解釋。

YVE is the Kenyan chapter of a pan-African organisation founded in Togo in 2011. The group is concerned about declining agricultural production, which contributes to food insecurity and poverty in the region. Its goal is to help young farmers understand the best way to practise sustainable farming and increase their productivity.

YVE 是一個在 2011 年成立於多哥（共和國 Togo，位於西非，西鄰加納）的泛非洲組織的一個分會。該團體關切逐漸降低的農業產量，造成大區域性的糧食不安全（food insecurity）及貧窮問題。該團體的目標是協助青年農夫了解實施永續農業的最佳方法，及如何提高他們的生產力。

“(YVE) engages youth across the country in environment and climate change issues that make a positive impact in the life of the community by enabling communities to effectively adapt to the effects of the rapidly changing climate,” according to Emmanuel Serem, the organisation’s president.

根據該組織會長 Emmanuel Serem 所說，「(YVE) 協助全國青年參與環境與氣候變遷議題，以幫助社區有效地適應快速變遷氣候的影響，對地方生活有很積極的正面影響。」

ADAPTING TO RISING TEMPERATURES 適應持續升高的氣溫

YVE’s 10 members in the Rift Valley aim to raise public awareness about climate change and how to adapt to rising temperatures in the region, which is known as the country’s bread basket. They educated themselves by attending workshops and conferences organised by environmental organizations.

YVE 在裂谷區域的十位成員，旨在提升公眾對氣候變遷的意識，及協助號稱肯亞全國「麵包籃子 bread basket」的該區域如何調適持續升高的氣溫。他們透過環保組織所辦的工作坊及會議教育這些青年農民。

The group has more than 900 followers on Facebook who access the information shared on the site and have online discussions about farming.

該團體在臉書有 900 多位粉絲，他們可以取得在網頁上分享的資訊，也可以在線上做些農作方面的討論。

Use of social media networks among young Kenyans is growing rapidly. Most use them for socialising, but YVE sees them as a means to reach young farmers.

肯亞青年利用社群媒體網絡的普及率正快速增加；大部分人只是用來社交，但 YVE 視其為連結青年農夫的好方法。

Recent changes in weather patterns have affected cereal farmers in parts of the Rift Valley, yet most of them don't understand what is going on, said Ken Ruto, leader of the North Rift Theatre Ambassadors, another organisation that uses social media to sensitise young people about conservation issues.

近年來的天氣模式變化對部分裂谷區域穀類農戶有很大的影響，但他們大部分人都了解這是怎麼回事，「北裂谷行動大使 North Rift Theatre Ambassadors, NRTA」的領導人 Ken Ruto 如是說。NRTA 是一個利用社群媒體，以使年輕人敏感於有關各類保育、節約議題的團體。該團體的總部設在 Uasin Gishu 郡的 Eldoret。



“Through social media we have managed to inform young farmers to plant more trees in their farms as a best way to cope with climate change,” said Ruto, whose group is based in Eldoret, in Uasin Gishu county.

「透過社群媒體，我們設法告知年輕農夫要在農場上多種樹，才是適應氣候變遷的最佳方法」，Ruto 說。

The Rift Valley is known for maize and dairy farming. But planting maize every year is an increasing challenge because of irregular rainfall, as well as outbreaks of pest-borne diseases such as maize lethal necrosis, which affected crops in the valley in September 2012 and spread across the country.

裂谷區域以種植玉米及生產乳製品而聞名。但是因為不規則的降雨及大規模的害蟲傳播疾病，如「[玉米致死性枯斑病 maize lethal necrosis, MLN](#)」，使得種植玉米越來越困難。

YVE advises farmers on the kinds of crops suitable for planting according to changes in weather patterns. Among those it recommends to cope with the weather changes are millet 小米, wheat, potatoes and sorghum 高粱. The group explains that rotating crops helps rebalance the acidity and alkalinity of the soil and improve its fertility.

YVE 根據天氣規則的變化，指導農夫適合種植的作物。YVE 所推薦種植的作物包括小米、小麥、馬鈴薯及高粱。該團體解釋說，輪作幫助重新平衡土壤的酸鹼度，並改善生產率。

“We have been planting maize since colonial time and this has really affected the production,” said farmer Cosmas Biwott. Following YVE’s advice, he switched to potatoes, and is delighted with the result. “It’s doing good and I am expecting a bumper harvest,” he said, laughing.

「我們從殖民時期就一直種植玉米，這使得產量受到影響」，農夫卡斯瑪斯·畢瓦特表示。遵循 YVE 的建議，畢瓦特轉作馬鈴薯，而獲得很滿意的結果。「(作物)表現很好，我期待豐收」，他笑著說。

According to Serem, the president of YVE, farmers are in dire need of good information about changing weather patterns. Some farmers, he said, believe that poor harvests are divine retribution for the violence that wracked parts of the country, including the Rift Valley region, after Kenya’s 2007 general elections.

根據 YVE 會長希瑞姆 (Serem) 的說法，農夫急需天氣規則變化的正確資訊。有一些農夫，他說，相信歉收是肯亞 2007 年的總統大選後，神對長年的暴力拖垮國家部分地區（包括裂谷地區）的懲罰。

Serem said he is pleased with the response from farmers to the organisation’s efforts. 希瑞姆說他很高興農夫們對該組織所作努力的回應。

PROBLEMS OF ILLITERACY, ACCESS 文盲及資訊管道方面的問題

“Young farmers (are) commenting and asking more questions,” he said. But he acknowledges that YVE’s services are not available to everyone. Most farmers who access the service use internet-enabled phones. But farmers in remote areas have difficulty accessing the internet, and not all are well versed in social media.

「年輕的農夫已經開始提出評論及提問」，他說。但他也了解 YVE 的服務還不能普及到每一個有需要的人。大部分使用 YVE 服務的農民，使用的是有上網功能的手機；但偏遠地區農民多無法取得上網管道，也對社群媒體的溝通語言不熟悉。

Cosmas Biwott, one young Rift Valley farmer who has used the social media service, warned that the level of illiteracy among many young rural farmers is high.

一位使用過社群媒體服務的裂谷年輕農夫畢瓦特 (Cosmas Biwott)警告說，偏遠地區農民對社群媒體的文盲率是很高的。

“The social sites have really assisted us ... to get more information concerning adaptation (to) climate change, but most of the farmers don't know to use phones or even read the information,” he said. “That's a big challenge.”

「這些社群網站真的在取得關於適應氣候變遷方面資訊，對我們幫助很大...但大部分的農夫不會使用手機，或閱讀相關資訊」，他說。「這是一個巨大的挑戰。」

Biwott thinks that farmers in the region would benefit from an information centre equipped with computers and internet access.

畢瓦特認為一個配備有電腦及網路線路的資訊中心，應該可以造福該地區的農夫。

Serem said YVE hopes to open offices in every county in the Rift Valley region to reach farmers through forums, field days and exhibitions.

希瑞姆說 YVE 希望能在裂谷地區每一郡都設有辦公室，用論壇、實地參訪及展示等方式與向農民宣導。

“Eight out of ten people (in the region) are farmers,” he said. “Therefore we need to embrace togetherness for the good of food security in the country.”

「(該地區)十人中有八人是農夫」，他說。「所以我們需要為了國家的糧食安全而大團結。」

Caleb Kemboi is an environmental and climate change reporter based in Eldoret, in Kenya's Rift Valley.

本文作者：

卡列·肯柏伊 (Caleb Kemboi) 係一位在肯亞裂谷地區 Eldoret 的環保及氣候變遷記者。

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