



Class of 2026

Rural Leaders Training Program



Since 1973, ARI has invited rural community leaders from grassroots organizations in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Pacific to our campus in Japan. In our 9-month program, ARI provides practical learning to build a just, peaceful, and sustainable society, respecting differences such as ethnicity, culture, religion and gender, by facilitating the self-development of rural people.

This year, we welcome 22 participants to the Rural Leaders Training Program and 2 graduates to the Advanced Training Program, representing 14 countries.

Kenya



Victor Pnenei Lemluk

Organization of African Instituted Churches (OAIC)

Farmers Resource Person

Meza

My community faces scarcity of food, and our current agricultural practices are inadequate for our needs. I am inspired to transform my community by improving livelihoods. I expect ARI to equip me with greater knowledge and strong leadership skills to influence my community, especially to engage in productive farming for food security.

India



Kaveri Hosuru Mariga

Aniketana Pragne Matthu Parisara

C.E.O.

Kaveri

My organization works directly with people of Dalit and Adivasi communities to promote education and social equality, helping children receive a full education. At ARI, I hope to learn new methods for leadership, project planning, social change, and sustainable agriculture, so I can provide more educational support, environmental awareness, and social justice for my community.



Khumlanthung Nzothung Thungbeni Humtsoe

Bethesda Youth Welfare Center

Consultant Trainer

Beni

My community has strong bonds with nature and with each other, rich cultural traditions rooted in food and nature, but conflicts between social classes and tribes. In my work, I provide counseling to marginalized men and women, and demonstrate livestock raising with compost. I'm training at ARI to improve my ability to empower the women of my community.



Pongom

Chingthur Foundation

Assistant Program Manager (Farming)

Lamthew

I work with people who follow traditional farming and artisanal practices in an isolated area. At ARI I want to learn sustainable agricultural practices, including composting, and improve my community leadership skills. By building patience and trust, I can help my communities follow improved farming techniques and adjust to the changing climate.

Malawi



Fyness Chiwanda

Kachere Progressive Women's Group (KPWDG)

Programmes Manager

FynRose

I am committed to empowering marginalized women and youth through sustainable farming approaches. My community is hard-working, mostly women-headed households, smallholder farmers, and young people. At ARI, I hope to gain skills in sustainable agriculture, leadership, and development to address the root causes of poverty and inequality in my community.



Jacob Jumpha

Nkope Area Development Committee

Permaculture Community Volunteer

JJ

My community is a vibrant place where residents traditionally depend on fishing from Lake Malawi for their livelihoods. However, we face significant challenges, including resource management conflicts and food insecurity during the dry seasons. I practice farming and train women to make products like bags and mats from waste plastic.



Pauline Mwenekaundi

Youth Alliance For Sustainable Development (YASD)

Agricultural Extension Officer

Pauline

I was raised on a farm in north Malawi. To improve food self-sufficiency in our communities, including for marginalized people, all must be involved in decision-making for change. I respect their individual needs, help them to find their common goals, and seek solutions that are fair for all.

Malawi



Victor Mnelemba

Anglican Church of the Province of Central Africa, Diocese of Upper Shire

Project Officer

Victor

My home community is densely populated, primarily composed of low-income families who rely on rain-fed agriculture and lack solutions for difficult times. As an agent of change, I believe change must start from within, and I will apply these skills to benefit both my household and the communities I serve.



Anisman Gea

Banua Niha Keriso Protestan (BNKP)

Pastor

Anis

I have a great desire to be a blessing to the people in Nias by sharing the knowledge I gain with those in need, because I know exactly what their lives and economic conditions are like. My community faces significant socio-economic challenges, including poverty, limited educational access, and environmental vulnerabilities.



Julpiter Herry Pakpahan

Huria Kristen Indonesia (HKI), The Missional Church

Organic Farming Coordinator

Piter

I am a community leader and trainer from North Sumatra, where I serve a congregation primarily composed of small-scale farmers. I am eager to be part of a learning community that shares my commitment to serving rural people, caring for the earth, and living faithfully with others.

Myanmar



Naing Lwin Moe

Paungsee Arr Institute (PAI)

Director of Livelihood Department

Naing

I grew up growing vegetables and mushrooms, and have raised livestock as an adult for income generation. At PAI, I manage essential food sharing and clean drinking water projects, including building necessary infrastructure such as earthen dams. Sharing my experience with the villagers who really need it is a credit to my work.



Ja Nu Mai

Kachin Baptist Church (KBC)

Livelihood Project Officer

Nu

I worked at a community development learning center as a farm demonstrator and livelihood project officer in the KBC. My community has beautiful nature and rich soils, but we are challenged by the political conflict. After ARI, I plan to focus on implementing appropriate technologies to support returning displaced people.



Na She Rah

Practical Field Study Farm

Farm staff

She Rah

My organization tackles many local social issues such as poverty, early marriage, drug addiction, and truancy through training on livelihood support skills such as farming and livestock rearing. Despite the political conflict, we continue reaching out to many tribal communities. At ARI, I hope to learn courage and determination with my diverse cohort.

Cambodia



Oun Sichan

Lutheran Hope Cambodia
Organization (LHCO)

Project Volunteer

Sichan

I have worked for a long time with cattle and chickens, as well as my rice and vegetable farm. Now at LHCO, I assist in trainings for landless and poor farmers in my region. At ARI, I will gain practical skills in agriculture and broaden my leadership in order to advocate in my community to be a better one.

Cameroon



**Atomba Justice
Nwachan**

Northwest Pig Farmers Coop-
erative Society (NOWEPFA)

Animal Health Specialist

Atomba

Raising pigs is a pillar of my community, but we struggle with swine fever outbreaks. I help to organize projects such as training pig farmers to provide them with essential knowledge to aid them in their work. With my training from ARI, putting smiles on my community's faces is my priority.

Nepal



Krishna Hari Dulal

Ashabhumi Nepal

Founder

Krishna

My colleague and I founded Ashabhumi Nepal to help farmers blend traditional knowledge with sustainable agricultural practices. I live simply and work the land alongside local farmers, building trust while I develop my technical knowledge. I'm very eager to join ARI to strengthen my knowledge to better support communities.

Sierra Leone



George Bangalie

IFGF Canyon Hills

Community Development
Agent

George

I work in a resource-poor community still recovering from the 1991-2002 civil war. Besides church activities, I work with children to ensure they stay in school, and I help on our community demonstration farm. Upon returning from ARI, I will expand agricultural training to improve economic opportunities for the community.

Sri Lanka



**Sujana Fatima
Sumanaratna**

Social Equality Development
Organization (SEDO)

Community Organizer

Sujana

I am from a supportive community with big hearts, who face challenges of economic hardship, unemployment, and ethnic tensions. Seeing others grow through the support we provide gives me purpose and motivation. I believe that small, consistent actions rooted in love and care can bring big change to both individuals and communities.



**Thilini Piumika
Ranaraja**

Lanka Organic Agriculture
Movement (LOAM)

Field Assistant

Thilini

I work in organic agriculture with LOAM, where I coordinate farmers and conduct programs for them. In my community, we face economic inequality leading to competition for resources and changing rain patterns due to climate change. At ARI, I want to learn about small-scale irrigation and water conservation, as well as organic & sustainable farming practices.

Rwanda



Claudine Nibagwire

Dufatanye Organization

Field Officer

Claudine

My community in Nyaruguru District is poor; they have small landholdings, limited farming knowledge, and many children do not attend school. At ARI, I hope to learn more about organic farming and leadership, so I can help manage a training center for 8 villages in my home region.

Thailand



Narin Chanasai

Ban Nong Tao Organic Coffee
Community Enterprise

Village Representative

Rin

My community is involved in agriculture, tourism, and hosting student groups, and there are many income sources and religions. At ARI, I hope to learn about how to develop efficient agriculture systems and the balance between economic development and eco-friendly farming. I want to use these skills to encourage people and to educate them on sustainable farming.

Uganda



Reagan Lojuan

Kasenge Riverford Organic
Agricultural Center (KROAC)

Farm Manager

Reagan

As farm manager, I love to learn and practice good farming techniques based on organic farming. It is important to improve our area's poor soils with organic-based enrichment so we can eliminate use of inorganic chemicals and raise the standard of living of our community.

Advanced Training Program

Training Assistant (TA):

ARI invites graduates who have demonstrated at least five years of outstanding leadership and accomplishment in their communities to return to ARI for a year of advanced studies.

Cambodia



Daneth Him

General Board of Global Ministries, United Methodist Church (GBGM-UMC)

Program Coordinator

Daneth, 2010

At GBGM, my work ranges from coordinating programs for street children in urban slums, natural farming and church ministry in rural provinces, and advising on women's empowerment and livelihood programmes. As a TA, I am eager to share my 15 years of practical experience in social work while continuing to learn how the "ARI spirit" motivates leaders to serve the world.

Ghana



Joshua Ofori Suttah

Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Abokobi District

Farmer and Community Mobilizer

Joshua, 2020

After graduating, I converted my farm to fully organic methods, and used PLA to help youth analyze the causes of migration, which led to the creation of workshops to promote farming as a viable career. As a TA, I'm eager to deepen my knowledge of pig management and servant leadership, through serving as a dorm coordinator and in the farm helping new participants navigate cultural differences.

Graduates around the world



1,472 graduates from 63 countries

Donate today!

>>> **It's Time to Invest in Rural Community Leadership!**

The costs needed for Rural Leaders to participate in our training are mainly financed by donations. Tuition and board amount to US\$ 17,840, and the average airfare is around US\$ 2,500. We provide financial assistance for these leaders to take part. It is an investment in lasting community change, and the people who put it into action.

For detailed information, please visit our website or call our office.

Visit <https://ari.ac.jp/en/donate-and-support/> to contribute to our cause!

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