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Why student competitions?

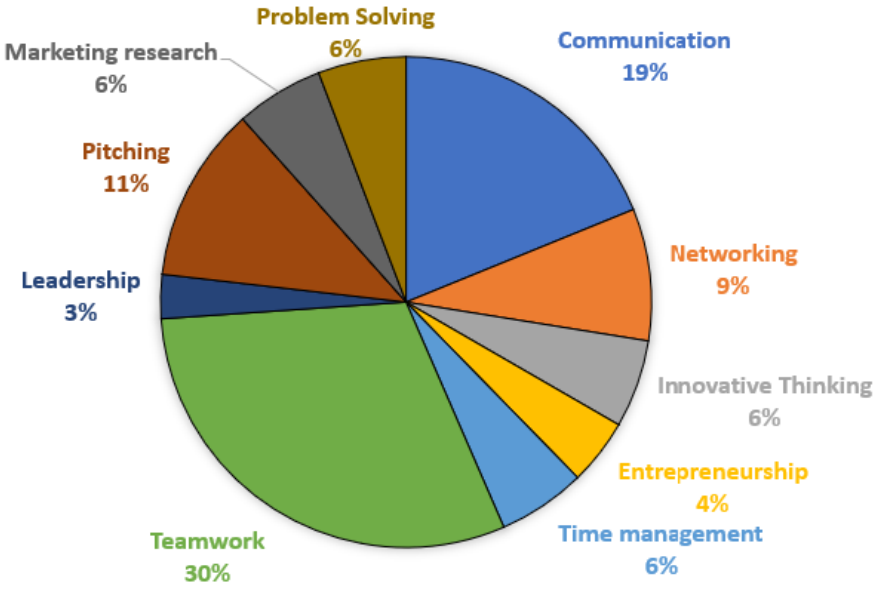
- **Global challenges** require a new generation of professionals.
- Present generation demands **different approach to learning.**
- **Classroom education & lab research** didn't prepare students to become effective professionals and leaders of change.
- **Skills and competencies don't match** what is needed to address global challenges.
- **Performance gap**: highly controlled environment in research vs variability in the field.
- **Lagging interest** in agriculture.

Challenge-Based Learning (CBL)

- **Real-world**, complex **challenge.**
- **Multi-disciplinary** student teams.
- Together with **teachers, experts, stakeholders**.
- Provides students with **skills + mindset** to become **changemakers** for a better world.
- Contributes to **holistic, out-of-the-box solutions** for global challenges and transitions.

Key Results

- Nearly 50% continued after the Challenge
- Skills & competencies gained
- Greater awareness of need for interdisciplenairy approach
- Partner universities start to embed CBL



Results

*"The Student Challenge changed our lives and **expanded all horizons** which will allow us to do great things for the **betterment of our country**."*

Samara Polwatta - winner 2022 Challenge

*"This experience has been an **incredible journey of learning, collaboration, and innovation** all centered on building sustainable and resilient food systems."*

Auma Metrine – former participant

Bright minds + commitment + targeted facilitation = CHANGE

How do we sustain the Challenges

- First of all: **education needs investment**
- CBL:
  - as **effective** as traditional models for learning **foundational knowledge***)
  - may offer a higher return in developing critical **21st-century skills**. *)
  - shows **higher engagement** and motivation**)

How do we sustain the Challenges

- **Joint learning** & exchanging good practices between universities
- Lobby for formal **inclusion in curriculum**
- Involve **private sector** (financially & expertise)
- Offer **aftercare** (locally & globally)

Winner

More info

SPARK THE FUTURE,
JOIN THE CHALLENGE!

More about WUR Student Challenges

wur.eu/studentchallenges

Intro video WUR Student Challenges

Examples of our Challenges

Food Systems Innovation Challenge 2025

Food Systems Innovation Challenge 2024

Nature-based Solutions Challenge 2023

Nature-based Future Challenge 2023

Questions?

Contact Rio Pals

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WUR Student Challenges

Empowering changemakers for a better future

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Is tech-savvy youth interested in learning agriculture?

What motivates people to learn?

- Relevance
- Purpose
- Sense of competence
- Autonomy
- Interest

How about tech-savvy youth and learning agriculture?

Relevance	Agriculture is essential for survival, but we face many challenges
Purpose	I can contribute to solutions for e.g. climate change, pests, etc
Competence	Which knowledge & skills do I have
Autonomy	Students take the lead
Interest	• offer something exiting • showing added value of students' skills • framing agriculture as an opportunity

So concretely: student competitions

- **Food Systems Innovation Challenge**
- With **partner universities** in the Global South
  - Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nepal, Vietnam
- Multi-disciplinary student teams develop concrete **innovations for local context**
- **5C Support framework**
  - Capacity development, coach, cash, contacts, confidence

Challenge-based Learning & Student competitions

- Because **Global challenges** require a new generation of professionals.
- Inspires students to become **changemakers** for a better world.
- Provides students with **skills + mindset**.
- Contributes to **out-of-the-box solutions** for global challenges and transitions.

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