

# Rural youth, today and tomorrow

by  
**Ben White**

**48** IFAD  
RESEARCH  
SERIES



The IFAD Research Series has been initiated by the Strategy and Knowledge Department in order to bring together cutting-edge thinking and research on smallholder agriculture, rural development and related themes. As a global organization with an exclusive mandate to promote rural smallholder development, IFAD seeks to present diverse viewpoints from across the development arena in order to stimulate knowledge exchange, innovation, and commitment to investing in rural people.

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of IFAD concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The designations “developed” and “developing” countries are intended for statistical convenience and do not necessarily express a judgement about the stage reached in the development process by a particular country or area.

This publication or any part thereof may be reproduced for non-commercial purposes without prior permission from IFAD, provided that the publication or extract therefrom reproduced is attributed to IFAD and the title of this publication is stated in any publication and that a copy thereof is sent to IFAD.

**Author:**

Ben White

© IFAD 2019

All rights reserved

ISBN 978-92-9072-965-5

Printed December 2019



## Rural youth, today and tomorrow

by  
**Ben White**



**48** IFAD  
RESEARCH  
SERIES

This paper was originally commissioned as a background paper for the 2019 Rural Development Report: *Creating opportunities for rural youth*.

[www.ifad.org/ruraldevelopmentreport](http://www.ifad.org/ruraldevelopmentreport)

## Acknowledgements

My thanks to all those who provided comments on earlier versions of this Working Paper, particularly Roy Huijsmans and Jim Sumberg. This Working Paper was written while I was also engaged in writing a book on the generational problem in agriculture, and various papers for the “Becoming a Young Farmer” project funded by the Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. The Working Paper has both drawn on, and fed into, parts of these other writings.

This background paper was prepared for the Rural Development Report 2019 “Creating Opportunities for Rural Youth”. Its publication in its original draft form is intended to stimulate broader discussion around the topics treated in the report itself. The views and opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author(s) and should not be attributed to IFAD, its Member States or their representatives to its Executive Board. IFAD does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this work. For further information, please contact [ruraldevelopmentreport@ifad.org](mailto:ruraldevelopmentreport@ifad.org). IFAD would like to acknowledge the generous financial support provided by the Governments of Italy and Germany for the development of the background papers of the 2019 Rural Development Report.

## About the author

**Ben White** is Emeritus Professor of Rural Sociology at the International Institute of Social Studies, The Hague. His research and teaching have focused on processes of agrarian change and the anthropology and history of childhood and youth, especially in Indonesia. He is a founder member of the Land Deal Politics Initiative ([www.iss.nl/ldpi](http://www.iss.nl/ldpi)), and the Emancipatory Rural Politics Initiative ([www.iss.nl/erpi](http://www.iss.nl/erpi)). E-mail: [white@iss.nl](mailto:white@iss.nl)

## Table of contents

1.	Introduction: a crisis of rural youth employment?	5
2.	Understanding rural youth today	7
2.1	Youth as generation	7
2.2	The prolongation of youth	8
2.3	Youth as heterogeneous and intersectional	8
2.4	Youth and mobility	9
2.5	Rural youth as actors and citizens	9
3.	Engaging with the future: understanding rural youth aspirations	10
3.1	What are “aspirations”?	10
3.2	Five recent surveys of rural youth aspirations	11
4.	Employment and livelihood prospects for rural youth: pathways into and out of farming	16
4.1	Pathways into and out of farming	16
4.2	Gender barriers	21
4.3	Mobility and pluriactivity	22
5.	Concluding points: rural youth in development policy and practice	24
	References	26

## Abstract

What would it mean to develop a youth-inclusive agricultural and rural development agenda? Agriculture, and particularly smallholder farming, remains the single largest source of youth employment in most low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), but today's young rural men and women express little interest in agricultural futures. However, research on rural youth aspirations suggests that many young people are not averse to agriculture as such, but to agriculture's current neglected condition and the near impossibility of becoming an independent farmer while still young, due to lack of access to land. Rural youth outmigration does not necessarily reflect a permanent, lifetime abandonment of rural life, agriculture or the possibility of a return to farming.

A youth-inclusive agricultural and rural development agenda means: approaching young people not as instruments of development, but as subjects, actors and citizens; mainstreaming young people and their interests in policy dialogues, organizations and social/political movements, both locally and nationally; more effective support for small-scale agriculture and opportunities for young rural men and women to engage in farming, including provision of land and other agrarian resources as a cornerstone of rural youth policy; and investment in infrastructures that make rural places more attractive for young men and women to live and work in.

## 1. Introduction: a crisis of rural youth employment?

It is not easy to be young in the labour market today.

(ILO, 2017, 26)

The ILO's 2017 Global Employment Trends for Youth lays out the present contours of the youth employment problem. Currently, young people's (open) unemployment rates in low- and middle-income countries (LIMCs) are generally around 10-15 per cent, about three times as high as the adult rate, and are rising, even in contexts of economic growth. More education does not solve the problem: youth unemployment generally correlates positively, and not negatively, with years of education. For those young people already in work, the quality of employment remains a major concern. "Working poverty" rates (both moderate and extreme) are around 30 per cent in "emerging" and 70 per cent in "developing" regions; they are higher in all regions for youth than for adults, and in South India and sub-Saharan Africa are over 50 per cent (ILO, 2017, 19). Working youth are also more likely than working adults to be employed in the informal economy; available jobs are increasingly casual and precarious, while all research on young people's aspirations – as we will see later – shows that they aspire, above all, to secure, salaried jobs. Young women represent two thirds of the youth NEET population (those who are not in employment, education or training).<sup>1</sup>

Increasingly, school-to-work transitions are seen as difficult and elusive, particularly as relatively well-educated young men and women face barriers to decent employment. Today's generation of young people are more endowed than any previous generation with "human capital". However, the over-supply of secondary and tertiary graduates on the one hand, and the rapid advance of job-displacing technology in almost all sectors on the other, mean that this is the generation for whom, more than any previous generation, human capital theory most obviously does not work.

This has led some authors to speak of an extended period of "elusive" or "emerging" adulthood (Durham and Solway eds., 2017), between biological youth or adolescence and (social) adulthood, and also to characterize this period as one of "precarity" (Bessant et al., 2017). Given the high rates of youth unemployment worldwide – in most countries around three times the adult rates (ILO, 2017) – some have gone further to declare an emerging and chronic situation of "relative surplus population". "Relative surplus" here is not about too many mouths to feed in the Malthusian sense, but about the failure of the economy, in its present form and with present policies and technological advances, to absorb the labour of the whole available workforce (Li, 2013).

In today's world, there are countless examples of the growing problem of the (relatively) educated unemployed/underemployed. In India, young men from rural farm backgrounds engage in "timepass", enrolling in one degree course after another as they fail to find the employment they seek (Jeffrey, 2010); in northern and sub-Saharan Africa, they are said to be caught in a period of suspension between childhood and adulthood that Alcinda Honwana calls "waithood", until well into their thirties (Honwana, 2012). Access to formal-sector jobs, even with the right qualifications, may require years of "internship", sometimes in conditions approaching servitude. In the Philippines, thousands of graduates of Marine Higher Education Institutions work for free, sometimes for years, as "utility men" (gofers or flunkys) in agencies that provide crew to big shipping companies –or sometimes as servants in the homes of their staff – in the hope of eventually getting a chance to board a ship (Galam, 2018). In Eastern Indonesia, thousands of graduates of teacher-training and nursing

<sup>1</sup> The NEET rate includes those who are "unemployed, unavailable to work due to illness, disability or family responsibilities, discouraged, or voluntarily NEET" (ILO, 2017, 21).

academies – nearly all of them from rural backgrounds – work for years as “honourer” (semi-volunteer) staff in schools and hospitals, without contracts and with minimal and unpredictable monthly earnings, in the hope that after some years they may be appointed to fixed contract positions.<sup>2</sup>

To view these problems as simply a matter of mismatch between education/training and labour demand is overly simplistic. In the coming years, mass youth unemployment (including educated youth unemployment) and under-employment will be a structural, chronic and permanent feature of most economies. And these problems, currently and in the future, disproportionately affect rural youth. Rural young people experience longer delays in their school-to-work transitions, and they are 40 per cent more likely to be in casual work without a contract than their urban counterparts (ILO, 2017, 3, 5).

Thus, young rural people’s actual labour market experience in many countries falls far short of their aspirations, and belies the promise of human capital theory. Why does human capital theory not work for them? Young people are increasingly faced with the reality that while you cannot get a skilled or semi-skilled job without the relevant diploma, in overcrowded labour markets having the relevant diploma does not get you the job unless you have other means to open doors, such as personal or familial networks and contacts, and relevant work experience, which poor and rural youth are less likely to have. For this generation, then, “human capital’s underlying premise – that education increased employability – is not based on credible evidence” (Bessant et al., 2017, Ch. 5).

Looking to the future, young people’s already gloomy employment prospects are made even more uncertain by the rapid pace of technological change, as innovations and cost-saving investments in technology are primarily net labour-saving investments. Mechanization in agriculture and other manual work, and automatization of clerical, communications, sales and service-sector tasks is likely to proceed rapidly in the coming years; some 50 per cent of all currently existing activities already have the potential to be automated with already existing technologies (ILO, 2017b). While labour-saving technologies in theory have the potential to reduce working hours while maintaining employment through work-spreading (as predicted by Keynes, 1930), this does not happen in actually existing economies. And for the new jobs created by technological progress, poor and rural youth are less likely to have the education, skills and networks needed to transition from old to new jobs.

Agriculture, and particularly small-scale farming, is still by far the largest single source of adult and youth employment in LIMCs, accounting for 44 and 35 per cent of all employment in Africa and Asia respectively, and naturally with a much higher share in rural employment (ILO, 2017, 42). It is therefore important not to neglect agriculture in rural youth policy research and policy, and to look in some detail at the prospects for rural youth employment and livelihoods in agriculture and related sectors.

---

<sup>2</sup> Author’s observations in several teacher training and nursing academies and vocational high schools in various parts of Eastern Indonesia.



## 2. Understanding rural youth today

To understand the situation and problems of rural youth today we need to draw on and combine the conceptual underpinnings of both rural/agrarian development, and the interdisciplinary field of youth studies. This section highlights conceptual framings of youth that have guided this analysis.

### 2.1 Youth as generation

Intergenerational power relations may be the key to understanding youth.

(Gill, 2009, 3)

Academic and policy work on rural development issues is now relatively well “gendered”, in rhetoric if not always in practice. But it needs “generating”<sup>3</sup> if we are to take seriously the challenge of understanding young rural men and women and their problems, aspirations and potentials. Just as we cannot understand the problems of rural women by looking at them in isolation from the gendered structures and relationships in which they are involved, we cannot understand rural youth without concepts that help us understand their often troubled relationships with the adult world.

While statistical bureaux and the law have no choice but to define youth (and childhood and adulthood) by biological age,<sup>4</sup> the essence of “youth as generation” is that young people are defined as “youth”, not (or not only) by biological age, but by their relationships with the adult world in society, economy, politics and culture. In plain language: you are a “youth” as long as society considers and treats you as not yet having adult status. In that sense, we could easily find, in the same community, a teenage (social) “adult” who has achieved all the conventional markers of transition to adulthood, and a “youth” over 30 years old who has achieved none of them. An example of the first could be a 19-year old woman who has completed secondary school, married and has a job and a child, and an example of the second, a 31-year old man who is still enrolled in higher education for a second or third master’s degree, still lives at home or in student housing, has never earned money and is financially dependent on his parents.

Intergenerational relations, like gender relations, are relations of unequal power. As Nicola Ansell explains:

This power is not only discursive but also material, shaping people’s economic contributions and access to resources. [...] It shapes people’s identities (intersecting with other relationships including gender and class), is lived by individuals and groups and has material effects. Inevitably, generating is contested: the outcomes of contestations often lead to change – in some cases, arguably, to development (Ansell, 2016, 315).

A part of the generational power imbalance relates to young people’s lack of ownership of physical and financial resources and their consequent dependence on adults. Young rural men and women – at least in the early stages of youth – are both landless and without assets, a situation which can be (but rarely is) corrected by appropriate youth-focused policies. “It is impossible to understand the nature of youth without understanding its relationship to dependence” (Gill, 2009, 141).

<sup>3</sup> On generating development, see particularly Huijsmans (2016).

<sup>4</sup> In international agency reports and statistics, “youth” conventionally spans ages 15-24, while “adolescence” stops at the end of the teen years, and “childhood” stops at age 18. These overlaps can lead to some confusion.

## 2.2 The prolongation of youth

All over the world, “youth” in its social and generational sense (as explained above) is increasingly prolonged, and transition to adulthood postponed. The three key variables conventionally used by researchers and policy makers as markers of the transition to (social and economic) adulthood are: completion of education, marriage and family formation, and entry into employment, which reflects economic independence from the parental generation (Durham, 2017, 3). In nearly all countries, comparison over recent decades shows (1) young people spending more years enrolled in education, (2) the age of first marriage and parenthood rising, and (3) entry into employment, and economic independence from the parental generation, increasingly postponed (whether voluntarily or not).<sup>5</sup>

While young rural men and women may find that their youth is prolonged (or adulthood postponed) in the ways just described, there are other ways in which one could say their transition to adulthood is accelerated. This applies particularly to young people’s digital literacy, an area of extremely rapid change in young people’s lives. In many rural areas, only a generation ago young people’s knowledge of the outside world was gained exclusively through adult filters (parents, teachers, religious leaders, sometimes the occasional adult-produced newspaper or radio broadcast). Nowadays, even children still in primary school can bypass all these adult filters and engage directly with global trends and modernity – and also with new political ideas and movements – through their (owned or borrowed) smartphones and social-media accounts, in ways that the adult generation barely understands.<sup>6</sup>

## 2.3 Youth as heterogeneous and intersectional

Common sense and everyday experience tell us that young people are not only “youth”: they are young men and women (i.e. gendered), they are rural/urban, they are “classed” and also in many cases “raced”, dis/abled, and ascribed ethnicity.<sup>7</sup> The individual’s positioning in a set of cross-cutting (“intersecting”) hierarchical relationships and the multiple identities thus generated, have come to be known (through gender studies) as “intersectionality” (Collins and Bilge, 2016).

The aspect of intersectionality most recognized in youth research and policy discourse is the gender dimension. A less recognized aspect is that based on class (or class-like) differences among rural youth in access to land and other resources. Yet in many regions these differences are key to understanding the differential options and constraints faced by young people located at different levels or points in local agrarian structures. For example, we know – as will be discussed in further detail below – that the prospect of access to land, while still young, is one key factor shaping young people’s ideas about possible farming futures. Yet there are many rural societies in which the majority of young men and women, even if their parents are farmers, have no prospect of acquiring land while still young, or at all, due to the unequal distribution of land. As we will see in a later section, it is not only absolute land scarcity, but also its increasingly unequal distribution in many regions, that bars young people from access (White, 2012).

---

<sup>5</sup> Country-level changes in secondary and tertiary education enrolment rates 1970-2017 can be found in the World Bank Database. For changing singulate age at marriage by country 1970-2017, see United Nations World Marriage Data 2017. Rising age of entering employment (actual, not legal) can be inferred from a combination of ILOSTAT age-specific labour force participation and unemployment rates (which disaggregates rural/urban) and secondary/tertiary education enrolment rates.

<sup>6</sup> There is a large emerging literature on “digital youth” but I have not tried to cover it in the short space available.

<sup>7</sup> Paraphrasing Alanen (2016, 159) on the intersectionality of childhood.

## 2.4 Youth and mobility

Young rural people's spatial mobility now extends to all social classes and (in most countries) genders. The great majority of the world's labour migrants (both domestic and international) are young people, "pushed" by the unavailability of appropriate jobs or farming opportunities at home and "pulled" by the hopes of better opportunities in the usually urban destination regions.<sup>8</sup> It is not surprising that so many young rural people migrate, being reluctant to engage in long years of agrarian "timepass", working for parents or other elder relatives until land and/or other assets for an independent livelihood become available: "who wants to wait until they are 40 or 50 years old to be a farmer?"(White, 2012, 14).

What is more important, and a neglected issue in research, is whether young people's migration away from rural areas and farming is a permanent, or a part lifetime process; we need to explore further the phenomenon of cyclical, part-lifetime migration. This underlines the importance of a life-course perspective in the study of young people's aspirations and their move out of, and perhaps later back into, farming. In any case, young people's outmigration should not automatically be assumed to reflect a permanent, lifetime abandonment of rural life, agriculture or the possibility of a return to farming; it is an open question, a matter for research.

## 2.5 Rural youth as actors and citizens

There is a tendency for policy work, in the "human capital" and "youth bulge/ youth dividend" frame, to treat young people as objects of policy and instruments of development, rather than as active subjects and as citizens with rights. An example is the "demographic dividend" approach to youth and development, where policy work with youth is seen not as an end in itself (or as a right of young people) but as an instrument of economic growth. Instrumentalizing young people in this way parallels the much criticized tendency to instrumentalize women in "economic efficiency" (rather than social justice) arguments for gender equality.<sup>9</sup>

Young people are generally excluded from adult policy processes; their lack of involvement in policy dialogues is one of the key challenges to be addressed. As the FAO-IFAD-CTA 2014 report *Youth and Agriculture: Key Challenges and Concrete Solutions* concluded: "it is crucial for rural youth to organize themselves or to join an existing organisation, providing a sustainable channel to get their voices heard and to actively engage in policy dialogue" (FAO-IFAD-CTA, 2014, 90).

The two alternatives (youth organizing themselves, or joining existing organizations) are not mutually exclusive and it may be suggested that both are necessary. As we have learned from gender-based movements, young people should not be channelled (only) into youth-based organizations, which may result in marginalization, but they and their interests need also to be mainstreamed in adult organizations and social/political movements, from local to national level. Patriarchy and gerontocracy pervade many societies, from family and community to regional and national level. Young people's struggle for political recognition, greater autonomy and a stronger place in agenda-setting is therefore, by necessity a multi-level activity, which must expect opposition from conservative elements in society.

"Listening to young people", if it is to be more than tokenism, means mainstreaming youth in policy processes and recognizing them as a political force. The "waithood generation", as Alcinda Honwana notes, "possesses a tremendous transformative potential, as young people understand that the struggle to attain freedom from want requires radical social and political change" (Honwana, 2014, 28).

<sup>8</sup> The exceptions are mainly involuntary migrations caused by conflicts, natural disasters or forced resettlement.

<sup>9</sup> See Berik ed. (2017).

### 3. Engaging with the future: understanding rural youth aspirations

I think the youth, we have changed. We have seen the hard work of our parents and we don't want to do the same. We want to be professionals, to work in the city.

A 16-year old boy in Pirhuas, Bolivia (Leavy and Hossain, 2014, 37)

What do young rural men and women want, and how do they envisage their futures? This section summarizes relevant outcomes of five recent multi-country surveys that have explored rural young people's aspirations. There is a general pattern to the findings of these studies, but with some interesting variations, which may well be influenced by the manner of questioning: in particular, whether young people are asked to articulate their aspirations in managed social contexts with adults and/or their peers present (as in questionnaire surveys and focus group discussions), or in more individual and anonymous ways.

#### 3.1 What are "aspirations"?

Aspirations may be seen, in general, as ways in which (young) people orient to the future. It is an elusive notion, somewhere on the continuum between vague dreams on the one hand, and more concrete expectations, objectives, goals or plans on the other (Quaglia and Cobb 1996). Policy discourse tends to assume a too-linear relationship between aspiration and action (or inaction). For Arjun Appadurai, poor people's lack of a "capacity to aspire" underlies their inability to "find the resources required to contest and alter the conditions of their own poverty" and to instigate change (Appadurai, 2004, 179). Children and young people in poor households (and/or their parents) are often said to be stuck in "aspiration traps", when "poverty stifles hope" that education will help them out of poverty (World Bank, 2014).

Policy discourse thus tends to see aspirations instrumentally, as something to be manipulated. One prominent example is the World Bank's 2015 World Development Report on Mind, Society and Behaviour. The report argues that new development approaches can be used to improve the "mental models", and in turn the decision-making, of the poor. If we adjust the information provided to the poor and the format in which it is provided, we can change their mental models and induce them to frame problems, opportunities and risks in more positive ways; to invoke more positive identities, raise their aspirations, improve motivation and investment decisions, and thus to break the cycle of poverty. Attention to psychological and social factors involved in poor people's decision-making, in this view, offers 'low-hanging fruit' – policies with relatively large gains at relatively low cost" (World Bank 2015, 20). This echoes ideas popular half a century ago, in the cold war years, about rural poverty as an outcome not of structural constraints but of people's culturally-rooted lack of belief in their ability to change their situation and to strive to achieve better things for themselves. The prominent American anthropologist George Foster argued, for example, that "the primary task in development is ... to try to change the peasant's view of his [sic] social and economic universe, away from an Image of Limited Good toward that of expanding opportunity in an open system, so that he [sic] can feel safe in displaying initiative" (Foster, 1965, 310. Emphasis in original).

The danger of such instrumental discourse around aspirations is that it ignores or downplays structural constraints on individual agency and "casts individuals and social groups as responsible for their own futures, and attributes failure to progress to a 'poverty of aspirations'" (Brunel, 2018: 1). "Failures in relation to work, income or security are seen as young people's own inabilities rather than part of structural political-economic shifts or neglect" (Naafs and Sekelton, 2018, 4). It may seem that young people can never get their aspirations right; besides being said to lack aspiration they are also said to

be prone to too high aspirations, aspiring overwhelmingly to (scarce) salaried civil-service jobs and showing an aversion to more likely futures such as farming and other manual work (World Bank, 2014), as we will see in some of the studies summarized below. These aspirations of young rural men and women to non-farming futures are said to predict a crisis in the world's smallholder agriculture, as sons and daughters of farmers do not want to be farmers. This is basis for current "agriculture in peril" narratives, which make a too-easy logical jump, as if aspirations were a reliable guide to actual or likely futures (Leavy and Hossain, 2014; White, 2012).

What does it actually mean when young rural men and women, asked some version of the "what would you like to do when you grow up?" question, overwhelmingly answer that they hope for a secure salaried white-or blue-collar job (if possible in government service), and equally overwhelmingly put agricultural/farming futures far down on the list, if they are mentioned at all? The main source of evidence on young rural people's aspirations – including their apparent aversion to farming (and/or rural) futures – is interviews with young people (whether sample surveys, orchestrated focus group discussions, or more qualitative and free-ranging conversations) inquiring about their aspirations, and sometimes in addition interviews with older rural residents asking about their hopes (or fears) for their children's futures.

Where do young people's aspirations come from? We know little about how young people's aspirations are generated, but it is clear that they are produced relationally, "in interaction and in the thick of social life" (Appadurai, 2004, 67). When young people are asked by adults, in formal interview contexts, or in the presence of their peers in focus-group discussions, their reported aspirations may be subject to social acceptability filters, and not reflect so much their considered individual visions and hopes, as dominant norms about universally acceptable, "worthy" futures (Zipin et al., 2015, 236). When considering the findings of rural youth aspirations studies therefore, we need to be aware that the context and ways in which young people are asked about their aspirations may influence the imagined engagements with the future that they articulate in their answers.

### 3.2 Five recent surveys of rural youth aspirations

Leavy and Hossain's *Who wants to farm?* (2014) analyzed data from 23 research sites in 10 countries, <sup>10</sup> rural and urban. This longitudinal, four-year study covered nearly 1500 people, "including young people, their parents, and key informants from official and customary positions of authority" (Leavy and Hossain, 2014, 15).<sup>11</sup> Focus group discussions and interview checklists covered young people's views (and those of their parents) on work prospects, their current occupations and the reliability of farming as an occupation, and included the following questions:

What do young people and their parents think about their work prospects?

What are the risks and opportunities associated with different options?

What are young people's hopes and aspirations?

What work are young people taking up these days?

How do these differ compared with their parents'?

<sup>10</sup> Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya, Zambia, Guatemala, Bolivia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Indonesia, Viet Nam.

<sup>11</sup> It is not clear how many individual interviews, and how many focus group discussions were conducted, or how the groups were composed. I have not been able to locate more detailed information on the methodology of this study.

How reliable is farming/agriculture/agrifood work?

What other factors are shaping young people's aspirations, and in turn their expectations?

How might farming be made more attractive to young people? (Leavy and Hossain, 2014, 17)

Unfortunately, no gender breakdowns are given in the published report, although the illustrative cases and quotations are derived in about equal measure from male and female respondents.

The study's main findings were that (1) "farming is not a favoured option for the younger generation in rural areas", (2) there is a "strong and widespread desire to gain and use formal education in respected white collar or professional occupations", and (3) with higher levels of education come greater expectations, both of young people and of their parents (Leavy and Hossain, 2014, 18). New information technologies and associated desires to consume these technologies promote "fairly rapid and deep-seated shifts in the conditions under which decisions about work choice are constructed. Agriculture could acquire status among young people to the extent that it was modern and cash-based rather than subsistence oriented [...] yet opportunities for modern agricultural production were not typically available to poor or small farmers" (Leavy and Hossain, 2014, 39).

Miss S, a 19-year old migrant job-seeker in the industrial area of Bekasi near Jakarta, shares her views:

I never want to be a farmer, ever [...] It is better becoming a factory worker; I don't have to work under the heat, it is not dirty. The wage can be used to buy a cell phone, clothes, cosmetics, bags or other things needed by a teenager. It can be saved for parents, too (Leavy and Hossain, 2014, 25).

Not far away in Cianjur, West Java, a high school graduate currently working as a farm labourer echoed these thoughts, but with an idea that working outside agriculture can be a way to obtain land:

Working in a factory is much better, you get money each month, and the money can be saved for buying land for the parents (Leavy and Hossain, 2014, 25)

For some, "agriculture was considered a desirable activity alongside a formal sector job providing the necessary capital" but in general agriculture was seen as a fall-back position, as "a viable choice only for those who can access land and inputs. For many young people, the lack of access to land, capital and other inputs prevents them from considering agriculture" (Leavy and Hossain, 2014, 38-9). The study notes in conclusion that:

agriculture's lack of appeal to young people reflects i) lack of effective public investment in smallholder farming [...] ii) constrained access to land and uncertain access to inputs among young people [...] and iii) social change resulting from rapid increases in mass education provision but which have often resulted in a perceived decline in the status of agriculture.

It also notes that "agriculture could be made more appealing to young people with the right kinds of measures and support" (Leavy and Hossain, 2014, 40).

A recent OECD study, *Youth aspirations and the reality of jobs in developing countries* (2017), analyzed data from the ILO's school-to-work transition surveys in 32 developing and transition countries in Africa, Asia, the Latin America and Caribbean region and transitional countries.<sup>12</sup> The samples were nationally representative (including their rural: urban ratio), with the exception of two countries where there was no rural sample.<sup>13</sup> The surveys focused on (1) the career aspirations of young people aged 15-29 who are enrolled at any education level, and (2) for working youth aged 15-29, the job facets that raise job satisfaction.

Unfortunately, this study's published results are not disaggregated by rural/urban residence. The study's main findings were:

- (1) that "young people in developing countries enter the labour market with high career aspirations. In many developing countries and at all educational levels, most students aspire to work for the public sector and in highly skilled professions" and
- (2) "existing jobs do not live up to youth aspirations [...] The challenge of unrealistic career aspirations is greatest in Africa and [Latin America/Caribbean] LAC, [and this] gap between youth career aspirations and the reality of the labour market persists for tertiary-educated youth" (OECD, 2017, 9).

The policy conclusions of this study include a cautious recommendation to "guide student learning and career choices" in more realistic directions: "while it is important that young people do not give up their dreams [...] policy makers need to ensure that young people get accurate information about labour market prospects" (OECD, 2017, 14-15). The next main recommendation, following a more general trend in recent policy discourse on youth employment, is to "unlock youth entrepreneurship potential", even though "in many developing countries, only a tiny number of young entrepreneurs with specific characteristics prove to be successful and the majority end up in subsistence activities", thus leaving some doubt about the efficacy of this road as a general or large-scale avenue of youth employment.

The third recommendation is rural-specific: "make agriculture and medium-skilled occupations more attractive [...]the [agricultural] sector has the space to create more jobs for youth, both as entrepreneurs and as wage workers in agriculture and food processing [...] the challenge is to raise job satisfaction in agriculture, where the jobs are tough and the pay is low" (OECD, 2014, 15). This will require better farm incomes, environmentally responsible modernization of agricultural practices, and improvement of rural and market infrastructures.

The remaining recommendations are less clearly linked to the survey results but reflect ILO's "decent work" agenda, focusing on turning informal-sector work into something more formal, with social protection, greater job security, minimum wage policies, and "more formal labour relations" (OECD, 2014, p. 16). It is not clear how this can be achieved in the current context of increasing casualization and precarity in youth employment, which other ILO publications have also documented, as we saw in the introductory section.

<sup>12</sup> In Africa: Benin, Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda and Zambia. In Asia: Bangladesh, Cambodia, Viet Nam, Jordan, West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In Latin America/Caribbean: Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Jamaica, and Peru. In transitional countries: Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Russian Federation, Serbia, Ukraine.

<sup>13</sup> Colombia and El Salvador.

One recent study (Elias et al., 2018) that pays explicit attention to gender differences in rural youth aspirations is based on a sub-set of the CGIAR's GENNOVATE<sup>14</sup> data, and involved 50 gender-segregated focus group discussions with young people in seven countries (India, Malawi, Morocco, Mexico, Nigeria and the Philippines). Participants were purposively selected to reflect the range of educational experiences, socioeconomic groups and marital status prevalent in each community. They were mainly aged between 15 and 24 years, with some exceptions to accommodate (i) younger teenage women who already had children or were in a marital union, and (ii) those over 24 who were "still regarded as youth in their communities". More than two thirds of the young women and men participants were current students or recent graduates of primary, middle or high school; some participants had already had migration experiences and subsequently returned to their village. The focus group discussions centred on gender norms, practices and aspirations surrounding education and future occupations, livelihoods, capacities for innovation, economic opportunities, and family formation, and their interconnections in young people's lives.

The study concludes, first – as we now have come to expect – that young rural men and women aspire predominantly to formal blue- and white-collar jobs, but they experience an aspiration-achievement gap, as the promise of their education in securing the formal employment they seek is unfulfilled, and they continue to help on the family farm. Young women and men alike expressed disillusionment with the opportunity structures that block the realization of their dreams. It also concludes, however, that educated rural youth do not entirely reject agricultural livelihoods: "In fact, aspirations related to agriculture were third most popular among young men. [...] They] considered agriculture a desirable occupation when performed under 'modern' conditions" (Elias et al., 2018, 90).

Although young men's and women's aspirations overlap, they also differ in important ways, including with respect to agriculture. While some young men aspired to knowledge-intensive or "modern" agriculture, young women showed no comparable interest in any of the 25 focus groups; gender norms that discriminate against women in agriculture appear to dissuade young women from aspiring – or better maybe, in light of the discussion on methodologies above, reporting to aspire – for agriculture-related occupations. Thus, "greater attention to intersectionality is needed to anchor young women's and men's interests and opportunities in agriculture, or lack thereof, within gerontocratic and patriarchal relations that offer young women, and to a lesser extent young men, little autonomy and opportunity in most agricultural pursuits" (Elias et al., 2018, 101). This in turn points to the need for more attention to the social norms that (re)produce inequalities, and the normative framings that limit young women's interest in what they perceive as a male occupation; however, while gender norms do shape people's lives, young men and women do not accept them passively but actively engage with them (endorsing, resisting and/or reshaping them). Opening up pathways for young women in agriculture, then, requires addressing the intersecting inequalities they face on the basis of age and gender, and recognizing that young people's aspirations may involve moving both in and out of agriculture over their life course, combining it with other activities, in parallel or sequentially (Elias et al., 2018, 103).

---

<sup>14</sup> GENNOVATE is a global comparative research initiative of the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research, which addresses the question of how gender norms and agency influence men, women and youth to adopt innovation in agriculture and natural resource management. Carried out across 137 rural communities in 26 countries, this qualitative comparative study aims to provide authoritative "bottom-up" research to advance gender-transformative approaches and catalyze change in international agricultural and NRM research for development ([www.gender.cgiar.org/themes/gennovate/](http://www.gender.cgiar.org/themes/gennovate/)).



The Overseas Development Institute's multi-country GAGE (Gender and Adolescence Global Evidence) study<sup>15</sup> covers 18,000 adolescent boys and girls in six countries, with smaller samples for qualitative research. In Bangladesh and Ethiopia, the study found – like the studies already summarized – that young men and women have high educational aspirations and hope that education can open the door to white-collar professional jobs; parents seem to foster even higher aspirations for their children than the children themselves. This study also underlines – more than those we have summarized so far – the relational dimension of youthful aspirations: we cannot fully understand what young people want for themselves without understanding what they want for their families and communities. Young people in this study aspire to a better future for all, to have the ability to make choices, and to create “a better today” in their own communities (even if their individual higher aspirations are not fulfilled) – starting a small business, developing horticulture or poultry farming for the market, and irrigation to make this possible.

Finally, some interesting and partly contrasting results emerged from a recent SMS survey of young Africans in rural regions (BMZ, 2017; Melchers and Büchler, 2017). The survey covered 10,000 young people between the ages of 18 and 35 in 21 African countries; anonymity was assured. Asked in which sector they would like to become occupied, surprisingly – and in contrast to the studies we have summarized above – only 26 per cent replied “government”, closely followed by 23 per cent who claimed they opted for a more secure rural/agricultural life. Only 14 per cent mentioned communications and 13 per cent the service sector. Almost half (45 per cent) of the respondents were already moving (alternating) between village and city. The great majority (76 per cent), as one would expect, agreed that “it is not easy to find employment in the rural region”. Asked “where would you like to live in 5 years' time?”, 41 per cent opted for the city and only 7 per cent for rural areas, but 52 per cent were undecided, saying that “it depends on the conditions”. When asked what improvements were most needed to make rural spaces attractive for youth, the most frequent responses were job opportunities (37 per cent) and better education (35 per cent), followed at some distance by infrastructure development (18 per cent) and better support for agriculture (15 per cent). Asked what could make agriculture more attractive to young people, only 3 per cent said that agriculture was not attractive at all, with the others saying: it could be attractive provided that it uses technology (21 per cent), if “I can invest” (18 per cent), if it pays well (17 per cent), if there's training (16 per cent), if “I can get land” (14 per cent) and if its reputation improves (12 per cent).

These results support the suggestion that agricultural/rural futures fare better in aspirations surveys when young men and women can give their individual opinions anonymously, compared with the focus group context where the aspirations articulated are more likely to reflect relationally produced, dominant norms (among one's young peers or in the adult world) about worthy or desirable futures.

While many consider that the apparent aversion of young rural men and women to farming and to rural futures as explored in these surveys is something new, we should be careful about such assumptions. Today's rural youth undoubtedly have wider horizons than their parents and grandparents did, but it is reasonable to suppose – though difficult if not impossible to prove, given the lack of such research in previous generations of rural youth – that current and previous generations of adult farmers and farm workers in majority-world countries – at least since the availability of formal education in rural areas – also had some idea of a better, non-farming future when they were young. This was certainly the case

<sup>15</sup> Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence (GAGE) is a nine-year (2015-2024) mixed-methods longitudinal research programme exploring the gendered experiences of young people aged 10-19 years. It follows the lives of 18,000 adolescents in six focal countries, two each in Africa (Ethiopia, Rwanda), Asia (Bangladesh, Nepal) and the Middle East (Jordan, Lebanon) (<http://www.gage.odi.org>). Information on the emerging results on aspirations is from Nicola Jone's (ODI) presentation on Bangladesh and Ethiopia at the Brunel conference “Theorising young people's aspirations in a global context”, 26-27 March 2018.

with the young rural men and women I studied in a Javanese village in the early 1970s, many of whom then became farmers and are now the parents and grandparents of the young people whom we are currently studying in the same village as part of the “Becoming a young farmer” project (White and Wijaya, 2017).<sup>16</sup>

In summary, we can conclude from these studies that young rural people overwhelmingly express an aspiration for secure, formal-sector jobs. For the majority of those already working, there is a clear “aspiration-achievement gap”, as they continue to work on their family farms or in other informal occupations. When gender differences were explored, young women expressed an even stronger aversion to agricultural futures; but the aversion of both young men and women to farming/rural futures is more strongly expressed in (peer-influenced) focus group discussion contexts than when individuals can anonymously express their views (as in the African SMS survey). Farming emerges in these studies as a possible option if land and inputs are available, if commercially-oriented, and if combined with other income sources, and young people express a clear understanding of the generational and other constraints which make access to land and to successful farming difficult or impossible, at least while still young. Finally, young people express little interest in entrepreneurial futures. These findings have clear policy implications, which we will consider further in the next section.

## 4. Employment and livelihood prospects for rural youth: pathways into and out of farming

### 4.1 Pathways into and out of farming

Small-scale agriculture is central to our development model.

(<http://www.ifad.org/aboutIFAD>)

The agrifood sector is and will remain the single largest employer of the labour force and young people [...] given its capacity to absorb labour and the sheer number of young people engaged in this sector, [it] provides the most likely entry point for creating inclusive economic growth and improving youth livelihoods (Chicago Council, 2018, 44).

Despite predictions that they are destined to disappear, smallholder farms or family farms are still estimated to number more than 500 million worldwide, and 98 per cent of all the world’s farm units. Depending on how they are defined, they farm 50-75 per cent of the world’s farm land, while the other 2 per cent of farming units (corporate farms and large private farms) occupy the other 25-50 per cent (Graeub et al., 2016; Lowder et al., 2016). At least 475 million of these farms are smaller than 2 hectares (Lowder et al., 2016, 27).

Will this pattern of smallholder farming continue? For various reasons smallholder farming is under pressure. The reorientation of agricultural policies away from the provision of state-led, pro-poor support for family farming is one factor; another is the concentration of market power in corporate entities up-and downstream of farming, which has shifted added value in agrifood commodity chains away from primary production units, while in many areas the squeeze on smallholder farming is accelerated by the industrialization of agriculture itself (Hebinck, 2018).

---

<sup>16</sup> The research project Becoming a young farmer: young people’s pathways into farming in four countries (China, Canada, India and Indonesia) is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), Canada 2017-2020).

And finally – and most relevant to the focus of this overview – all over the world farming populations are ageing and many farmers appear to have no successor. In many Asian countries, the average age of farmers<sup>17</sup> is now in the mid-50s; <sup>18</sup> in Africa it is reportedly around 60 (FAO, 2014, 2). This trend is generally assumed to be linked to young people’s aversion to farming. However, there are other plausible explanations, which have not been explored in research. For example, Table 1 shows the shifting age structure of Indonesian farmers over a thirty-year period. In one generation there has been a marked decline in farm heads under 35 years of age, and a corresponding increase in those over 55. This shift might be the outcome of either (a) the reluctance of farmers’ sons and daughters to take over the farm, so that farmers continue farming into old age – the most commonly assumed explanation, or (b) the fact that farmers are now living and staying healthier longer, and not yet ready to hand over the farm to the next generation, so that the next generation have to wait longer and longer before getting their share of the property. In other words: are average ages of farmers rising because the young are unwilling to start, or because the old are unwilling to stop? We might add a third interpretation which combines elements of the first two: (c) that farming parents are both physically able to continue longer, and willing or eager to see their sons or daughters find employment outside agriculture, whether temporary or permanent. The three interpretations may have different relevance in different countries and regions, and their policy implications are quite different.

**Table 1.** Changing age of farm heads, Indonesia 1983-2013<sup>19</sup>

Year	1983	2013
<b>Age</b>		
Under 35	25%	13%
35-54	57%	54%
55 and above	18%	33%

To see how young people are included in or excluded from entry into farming, we need to understand the widely differing ways in which access to agrarian resources (both “ownership” and “access”) is structured in different societies, and also the different ways in which the intergenerational transfer or “devolution” of these resources is regulated, with or without contestation.

“Generation”, as we have seen, is – like gender, and class – a social relationship rather than a “thing”. The ways in which resources are transmitted between generations are a key factor in the social reproduction of rural communities. One aspect of the problem is young rural people’s apparent aversion to farming futures, which we have seen in the various surveys summarized in the previous section. This apparent crisis of succession in smallholder farming is widely assumed, but empirically unsubstantiated in most countries; young rural people’s reported aspirations, and/or older farmers’ hopes and fears about succession, are not reliable indicators of actual futures (Chiswell, 2014).

<sup>17</sup> “Farmer” here means the principal farmer, not the entire farming labour force

<sup>18</sup> With some exceptions at both ends: Viet Nam 37, India 48, Japan 70 (Rigg et al., 2016).

<sup>19</sup> Sources: Central Bureau of Statistics (1983 and 2013). “Farmer” (for this table) is defined as “the farm holder who represents the [farm] household. The farm holder selected was the highest income earner from agricultural undertaking amongst the farm holders within the household” (BPS, 2013, xxxix).

Another, less recognized set of issues is more about how and why so many rural young men and women, even if interested in farming, are confronted by the increased narrowing and sometimes complete closure of access to land, and/or other barriers to their entry into farming. The inter-generational transmission of land is coming under stress, for various reasons, not only due to absolute scarcity of land.

One source of the land squeeze is large-scale corporate land acquisitions, which may altogether cut off young people's options for farming futures, while at the same time providing only limited employment options, mainly in low-quality jobs. As Tania Li observes in her study of Indonesia's extensive oil-palm zones, "the experience of a generation born into conditions of land scarcity is different from that of a generation living on a plantation frontier when new opportunities open up". While smallholder dispossession for plantation agriculture or contract farming schemes may make some provision for existing smallholders in terms of (reduced) land allocation, there is no provision for the next generation. Plantation expansion may leave the original landholders in place, tucked into enclaves on which farmers may be able to continue farming; the real squeeze begins a generation later, when land in the enclave proves insufficient for the needs of young (would-be) farmers (Li, 2018; Park and White, 2018).

If there is still primary forestland in the vicinity, villagers may imagine the possibility of clearing new land in future, as the population expands and a new generation needs land to farm. Accustomed to living on a forest frontier, they may not perceive land as scarce. It is only later, when the enclaves prove too small to accommodate the needs of the new generation, and surrounding forestland is full of plantations, that customary landholders experience the 'grab' as a permanent and complete loss of access to the possibility of farming.

As one elder in my research site in Kalimantan explained, "when the company came we thought our land was a big as the sea". But more companies came. Now his children and grandchildren are landless. They are marooned in a sea of oil palms in which they have no share, and no means of gaining a share, since the price of land in the enclaves and residual pockets of non-plantation land is far beyond their means (Li, 2018, 59).

A "youth" perspective thus adds another powerful reason to the argument put forward by Olivier De Schutter, former United Nations Rapporteur on the Right to Food, that large-scale land deals (whether for purchase or long lease) should be seen as "the last and least desirable option"; they close off the smallholder option, not only for today's farmers but also for members of the next generation who face permanent alienation from land on which they, or their children, might want to farm, and in the absence of livelihood opportunities elsewhere (De Schutter, 2011).

Another and more widespread factor in the land squeeze on youth is what Hall et al. (2011) call "intimate exclusions"; those that arise from local processes of agrarian differentiation, which accompany the emergence of commodity economy where land is privately owned, as can be seen in the illustration below from densely-populated rice-growing villages of Indonesia.

In most of the 12 rice-growing villages studied in Java and South Sulawesi, most young people have no realistic prospect of becoming farmers, or at least not while they are still young. Landlessness is widespread and less than half of farmers own the land they cultivate. The only people who have a possibility of getting some land while they are still young are from the small minority of wealthy landowning households. But they typically go to university or some other form of tertiary education and aim for a future in a secure, salaried job; their parents also have the resources to get them into these jobs. They may look forward to inheriting and owning land, but only as a source of income through rent; they have no interest in farming it.

Meanwhile, young people growing up in smallholder farming families may eventually inherit a piece of land, but their parents have too little land to hand over a part of it to their children while they are still young. They may have to wait until their 40s or 50s to finally receive land from their parents. And for the many young people whose parents are landless there is only the prospect of becoming a sharecropper or farm labourer, unless they can find another way to access land. For these young people, the only possible way to become a farmer is to find work first outside agriculture (and often outside the village), hoping to save enough money to buy or rent some land.

But buying land is becoming an increasingly unrealistic option, due to speculative investment in land (by non-farmers) and rising land prices. If migrant workers in factories or Malaysian oil palm plantations manage to save \$50 per month, they would have to work for up to 100 years to buy a rice farm of only 0.4 ha in Central Java (Akatiga and White, 2015).

Another factor is changes in intra-familial relations, which make it no longer obvious that land will be transferred to younger generations as they attain adulthood and are ready to farm. This is one reason behind young people's apparent lack of interest in farming, as Quan noted a decade ago for sub-Saharan Africa:

The position of youth is widely believed to be one of disinterest in land-based livelihoods [...] However, limitation of young people's access to land, land concentration, and land sales and allocations outside the kin group by older generations can become highly problematic where alternative livelihoods are not available, and can trigger wide social conflicts (Quan, 2007, 57).

In Malawi, the combination of a stalled land reform process and the Green Belt Initiative (in which 1 million hectares of irrigated land are made available to large-scale investors, most of it alienated from smallholders) has left young people marginalized because they are neglected by government programmes for smallholder farm support:

It is only the elders and married people who have land of their own to cultivate, and not us the youth [...] We are told that we are fit enough to work to obtain improved inputs on our own; moreover most of us are not married and not supposed to need inputs as we are fed by our families.

They stressed that because of the challenges faced by the agricultural sector coupled with the processes of land alienation, "we end up working for others at very exploitative wages which just locks us into a vicious cycle of poverty" (Chinsinga and Chasukwa, 2012, 72).

Krijn Peters, describing young rural people's vulnerability to local elders in the gerontocratic society of post-war Sierra Leone, argues that "the dislike of rural youth [for agriculture] is not focused on agriculture as such, but on their vulnerability, in village conditions, to exploitation by local elites and gerontocrats" (Peters, 2011, 203).

In rural Burundi, in a village where one third of young men and more than half of all young women do not expect to inherit land, the young look for non-farm opportunities, not to replace but to complement farming, and indeed to make farming a possible future (see box).

We want a future as farmers, but if we would have other activities to help, that would be better because farming is not enough. It is possible you are with seven boys in one family, they will all have to share the same plot of land. So if you are a boy without a profession you cannot find money to buy land.

If there was an organization to help us learn a vocation, we could work and have money to buy land before the others do so and there is no more land (Berckmoes and White, 2014, 195-6).

In other situations rural youth see possibilities for themselves in a revitalized, modern smallholder agriculture but run up against parental conservatism. In the Saiss plain of Morocco, a region where tube wells and drip irrigation have opened up new opportunities for export production of fruits and vegetables, 29-year old Driss explains his aspirations and frustrations, which encapsulate the experience of many young rural people who aspire to a modern rural farming life (see box).

Driss sees his future self as an independent farmer, responsible for his own farming project and up-to-date with the newest crops and technologies. But currently he farms with his brothers on his father's land and under his authority. They cultivate three hectares of irrigated onions and potatoes, and the remaining ten hectares are cropped with rain fed cereals. "If my father says that we have to cultivate four hectares of onions, I cannot refuse or contradict him."

In 2009, hoping to start a commercial fruit farm, he succeeded in convincing his father to install drip irrigation: "I rented one hectare from my father and also paid him for the water to irrigate the tree seedlings." Driss had hoped to transplant the 9,000 seedlings to the rest of the land. But he was not able to convince his father of this and was forced to sell the seedlings. He had thus run up against the will and authority of his father. This situation deeply frustrates him: "I want to go to another region. (. . .) I'm so fed up with this situation. I just want something for myself, something I can rely on. My own project, my own money" (Bossenbroek et al., 2016, 344-345, 347).

These examples, and more that could be given, suggest that we need to be cautious about prevailing narratives that "rural youth today are not interested in farming futures", and focus instead on what are the main barriers to independent farming livelihoods for today's rural youth, and how they can be overcome.

In confronting the potential generational crisis in smallholder farming, it is important to seek ways to overcome tensions and rigidities in the inter-generational transfer of agrarian resources, particularly access to farmland while still young. We have seen that many/most young rural men and women have no prospect of access to land while still young, unless policies are brought to bear. There are scattered examples of government and NGO programmes aiming to promote the transfer of land between generations (not necessarily between parents and children), and to provide young would-be farmers with access to unused or public land at low cost. In Burkina Faso, the organization Songtaab-Yelgre negotiates with village chiefs and elders to provide women with access to land for shea butter production, and has managed to acquire land rights for 800 young women. In Ethiopia's northern Tigray region, the NGO REST rehabilitates barren hillside lands with soil and water conservation infrastructure, so that these lands can be allocated to landless youth. In Mexico, the government's "Rural Entrepreneur and Land Fund" programme assists young people to acquire underutilized former common lands, and also provides incentives to older farmers to transfer land to the younger generation, providing welfare schemes for their retirement. The Egyptian government makes

reclaimed desert land available to young graduates, and several thousand young people have obtained land in this way. They are not allowed to sell their farms, and many have become successful in vegetable production for agribusiness, tourist resorts and export. The Taiwan Council of Agriculture launched a “Small Landlords, Large Tenants” programme in 2008, aiming to encourage elderly farmers to lease their land on a long-term basis to young farmers and to farmers’ organizations; within two years, 8,000 elderly owners of small plots had been matched with about 700 young generation tenants, who now farm an average of 8 ha each, about seven times the national average farm size. In South-West Uganda the agro-trading company RUL signs short-term lease agreements with elderly landowners who have no plans to use their land in the coming 12 months, and communicates the availability of the land to current or prospective young farmer groups; these groups should have at least eight members aged 18-35, three of whom must be female, to be able to apply for the lease (FAO-IFAD-CTA, 2014).

## 4.2 Gender barriers

The Chicago Council’s 2011 report, *Girls Grow*, made powerful arguments for special attention to adolescent girls, “the backbone of rural families”. Despite the need for more and better quality data, based on available data the report notes that girls have the power to transform rural economies, and should be seen as future farmers and major stakeholders in agriculture and resource management. This requires, among other things, ensuring equitable inheritance and land rights for rural girls and women (Chicago Council on Global Affairs, 2011).

More than thirty years ago the UN CEDAW Convention established clearly that women must have equal access to agricultural credits and loans, marketing facilities, appropriate technology, equal treatment in land and agrarian reform [Article 14] and equal rights in intra-family property transfers through inheritance [Article 16]. But today it is estimated that women comprise only 20 per cent of all landholders in developing countries, and when they do control land, they tend to have smaller plots and lower-quality land (FAO, 2011). FAO-IFAD-ILO’s *Gender dimensions of agricultural and rural employment* (FAO, IFAD and ILO, 2010) documents the systemic gender inequalities faced by rural women in employment, work conditions and earnings. UNICEF’s recent state-of-the-art survey of gender socialization in adolescence concludes that adolescence is a crucial period for “investment and intervention towards achieving more equitable outcomes for girls and boys...”:

... adolescence is a critical period in which gendered attitudes and behaviours intensify and new gender roles and responsibilities appear. This period of rapid change within and around the individual is a key time for investment and intervention towards achieving more equitable outcomes for girls and boys, and later in life for women and men. Furthermore, today’s adolescents will play a lead role in achieving development targets, including the Sustainable Development Goals; the ways in which the gender socialization process is shaped by this cohort will influence future generations (John et al., 2017, 36).

### 4.3 Mobility and pluriactivity

One key distinction among today's young farmers which needs to be further explored is that between (a) "continuers" (those who take over their parents' or other relative's farm) and (b) "newcomers" (those not from farm backgrounds who find a pathway into farming – thus "voting with their feet" in the reverse direction). There is a strong supposition that "newcomer" farmers are more likely to be innovators and more critical of mainstream earth-warming farming practices. We should also make a distinction between (a.1) "early continuers" and (a.2) "late continuers", the latter being those who first leave the parental farm to engage in other work (whether inside or beyond the village) and return to farming later in life as land becomes available.

In many countries today, the "late continuer" farmers – those who return to farming after a period of outmigration or local non-farm employment – outnumber the "early continuers". For young rural men and women, "village" (and "farm") can become the place where you grow up, which you will leave in search of urban employment, but where you may later leave your children in the care of their grandparents, and where you may later return to be a farmer yourself, when land becomes available and urban work has provided some capital for improvements (see for example for Java, Koning, 2004 and 2005).

In the Philippine provinces of Aurora and Albay – both regions of widespread rural youth outmigration – despite the universal desire of young people to acquire a college degree and the expectation that most of them will migrate, permanent migration is not the preferred option; the great majority have positive perceptions of farming and expect to return and acquire land, whether to farm themselves or to provide farming opportunities for their poorer relatives (Manalo and van der Vliert, 2013).

In one Javanese village studied recently by the author, the typical "young farmer" is in his (or her) 30s or early 40s and has a history of prior non-farm employment (usually involving a period of migration) before turning to farming [...] Young farmers' livelihood pattern – like that of their parents – is one of pluriactivity, living from a smallholding plus other sources (livestock, wage work, petty trade, services etc.) (White and Wijaya, 2017).

Illustrations of this pattern of young people's movements out of, and then back into, farming, from the "Becoming a young farmer" study in China and Indonesia are given in the two boxes that follow.



Forty-three year old Zhang Changchun is the youngest farmer in Sanggang, a village in China's Hebei province. What made him take up farming at age 37 when most youth have migrated to urban areas, leaving only the older generation and some of their grandchildren in the village?

Before Zhang started his organic apple farm - he is the only apple farmer in this and the surrounding villages - he worked as a transporter for a local mine company, and for some time as an urban migrant worker. Born in the countryside, he always cherished the freedom and autonomy to manage his own production and life as a farmer.

Six years ago, Zhang exchanged the land allocated to his household and the land he rented for one single plot of land (4 mu= 0.27 hectares), and planted the first apple trees. He bought a computer and spent a lot of time learning from the internet and also visited other apple farms to learn about apple growing.

Last year was the first harvest, yielding an income of only 1000 Yuan (Can \$ 200). This year the income rose to 9000 Yuan. "Everybody kept saying that it was impossible to grow apples. I took it up as a challenge". He and his wife continue to grow vegetables for home consumption between the apple trees, and he has also leased in 100 mu (6 hectares) of the adjacent hillside to plant chestnut and walnut trees.

"It's not easy for young people to do this. In the first few years the apple farm needs a lot of capital and there is no income. This is difficult for the young who do not have much capital and also have to support their elderly parents". With his part-time job in the mining company, Zhang was able to get moderate income for his family and also for apple farm investment. The first two years he invested about 30,000 Yuan.

Initially he was unsure about organic farming but has now grown confident about its potential and is very optimistic about the future. Marketing has not been a problem; Zhang relies mainly on informal networks to get the word out to middle class consumers about his tasty organic apples.

He now plans to return part-time to the transporting work while his wife takes care of the farm. He hopes that when he is old his daughter who now works in a nearby town will take care of him and the farm.<sup>20</sup>

These examples all underline the importance of a life-course perspective in the study of young people's aspirations and their move out of, and perhaps later back into, farming. As Gaibazzi (2013) reminds us in his study of Sominke migration (Upper Gambia), pitting "movement" against "stasis" is a gross over-simplification. In any case, young people's outmigration not should automatically be assumed to reflect a permanent, lifetime abandonment of rural life, agriculture or the possibility of a return to farming; it is an open question, a matter for research.

In summary, the question of farm vs. non-farm, and rural vs. non-rural futures for today's generation of young men and women is not an either-or issue. Seen in a life-course perspective, young rural lives are characterized by pluriactivity in the rural economy, and two-directional rural-urban-rural mobility.

---

<sup>20</sup> Abridged version of an unpublished case study, written by Sharada Srinivasan, Pan Lu and Ben White, from the "Becoming a young farmer" study.

Watinah and Santoso come from small-farmer families in Kali Loro village (Yogyakarta, Java). They both completed secondary school and frequently helped their parents in the fields. Watinah's parents owned 600 m<sup>2</sup> (0.06 ha) of *sawah* [irrigated rice terrace] while Santoso's parents were share tenants. While still young, they both migrated for work. As soon as she left school Watinah worked in a shoe factory in Tangerang [West Java] for eight years until she returned to the village to marry. Santoso first stayed in the village, helping his father on the farm and working as a casual labourer, before becoming a travelling salesman in Jakarta. Before marrying, he bought a very small plot of *sawah* (300m<sup>2</sup>, = 0.03 ha) with the help of a bank loan. Returning to the village, they say, was the natural decision to make when they wanted to form a family: "life in the city is very expensive, our earnings were hardly enough to live on, and certainly not if we have children" (they now have one daughter, in junior secondary school).

Santoso's father had obtained a large (1.0 ha) share tenancy from an absentee owner. As soon as they returned to Kaliloro they began to farm their tiny plot of *sawah* and help Santoso's father on the larger tenanted farm. At first, the work was evenly divided between father and son, and the father often divided the harvest (paddy and/or cash) with him, after delivering the landlord's 50 per cent share. Since 2010, however, Santoso has completely taken over the cultivation, as his father is too old to work. Watinah helps with planting, weeding and harvesting. They still give their parents a share of the harvest, in kind or cash. Watinah meanwhile has been given 300 m<sup>2</sup> of *sawah* by her parents, who are over 75 years old and have divided the land among their children. Watinah then rented this land out, receiving Rp. 2 million [about US\$150] for a four-year lease, and gave all this money to her mother.

Having a relatively large farm to cultivate, Santoso and his wife are one of the few couples in the village with no other (non-farm) source of income, besides their one cow and three goats. They both say they intend to continue farming as they now have some land of their own and also a sizable tenanted area. But they don't expect their daughter to become a farmer, as she has never helped in the fields and knows nothing about farming; a steady job in the city, they say, would be better for her.<sup>21</sup>

## 5. Concluding points: rural youth in development policy and practice

Given what we know about the changing situation of rural youth today, and the future challenges they will face, what would it mean to mainstream youth/generational issues in rural development policy discourse and practice? And to develop a "youth-inclusive" agricultural and rural development agenda (Chicago Council, 2018)?

To confront the potential coming crisis in rural youth employment and livelihoods, the current focus on supply side policies (vocational education and technical training, entrepreneurship training and finance, etc.) is not sufficient.

It is important for policy to recognize the limitations and failures of human capital theory in the real world of rural youth today. The efficacy of technical/vocational schools and training programmes in opening doors to employment has often been disappointing, and it may be argued that education can more usefully equip young people with the more general twenty-first century" skills of flexible, creative, critical and lateral thinking. Some cautions should also be expressed on programmes aiming at direct "school-to-entrepreneur" transitions. These are not a realistic option for the majority of rural youth, and also figure very low in young people's aspirations.

<sup>21</sup> Unpublished case study, written by Ben White and Hanny Wijaya, from the "Becoming a young farmer" study.

More important is the provision of apprenticeships and meaningful work experience (both in and outside the agri-food sector). Various recent studies in Asia have shown how young people learn through experience that “predetermined ideas about learning, productive personhood and success do not match with complex local realities”. In such conditions, “young people define their own conditions and explore possibilities for meaningful education, jobs and income through social relations with peers and adults around them” (Naafs and Skelton, 2018, 4).

In promoting rural wage employment within and outside the agrifood sector, governments also need to become more active on the demand side. This can include, for example:

- (1) where farm wages and other unskilled wages are important sources of income for the poor, regulating technological change especially in areas where labour-displacing investments do not increase yields but simply transfer production outlays from the pockets of wage workers to investors, and
- (2) active youth labour market programmes, such as provision of public sector jobs in “socially useful work”, wage subsidies to private-sector employers, and meaningful apprenticeship or other work-experience programmes.

Policies aiming to support young would-be farmers should include both “continuer” and “newcomer” farmers (as explained above), both male and female, and should take into account the characteristic patterns of youth trajectories today, especially their multidirectional mobility between places and sectors, and pluriactive livelihoods combining farm and non-farm incomes.

Almost a decade ago, IFAD’s Rural Poverty Report (IFAD, 2010), which had a special focus on rural youth, highlighted the need to turn rural areas from backwaters into places where people have access to quality services and profitable opportunities, and where innovation takes place.

Making rural spaces attractive places for young people to live and work requires a creative imagining of rural futures and the place that young men and women can find in these futures.

In summary, then, a youth-inclusive agricultural and rural development agenda means:

- approaching young people not as instruments of development and growth, but as subjects, actors and citizens
- mainstreaming young people and their interests in policy dialogues, adult organizations and social/political movements, both locally and nationally
- more effective support for small-scale agriculture and for opportunities for young rural men and women to engage in farming, as a cornerstone of rural youth policy
- provision of land and other agrarian resources to young men and women would-be farmers
- where necessary to safeguard wage incomes, regulating technological change in the agrifood sector
- providing active youth labour market programmes such as public sector jobs in “socially useful work”, wage subsidies to private-sector employers, and meaningful work-experience programmes
- investment in infrastructures that make rural places more attractive for young men and women to live and work in.

## References

- AKATIGA and B. White. 2015. Would I like to be a farmer? *Inside Indonesia* 120 (April-June).
- Alanen, Leena (2016) Editorial: intersectionality and other challenges to theorizing childhood. *Childhood* 23(2), pp. 157-161.
- Ansell, Nicola. 2016. Age and generation in the service of development? In R. Huijsmans ed., *Generational Development: A Relational Approach to Children, Youth and Development*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 315-330.
- Appadurai A. 2004. The capacity to aspire: culture and the terms of recognition. In A. Appadurai, *Culture and Public Action*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, pp. 59-84.
- Berckmoes, L. and B. White. 2016. Youth, farming and precarity in rural Burundi. In R. Huijsmans ed., *Generational Development: A Relational Approach to Children, Youth and Development*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.291-312.
- Berik, Günseli ed. 2017. Special section: Making the case for gender equality: efficiency and social justice arguments. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 38 (4), pp. 542-581.
- Bessant, Judith, Rys Farthing and Rob Watts. 2017. *The Precarious Generation: A Political Economy of Young People*. London: Routledge.
- BMZ. 2017. The voice of youth at the G20 conference: the rural future lab, and Rural future in figures: results of the SMS-based survey of 10,000 young people in Africa. In *One World – No Hunger: Future of the Rural World*. International G20 Conference, Berlin 27-28 April 2017. Bonn: Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.
- Bossenbroek, Lisa, Jan Douwe van der Ploeg, and Margreet Zwarteveen. 2015. Broken dreams? Youth experiences of agrarian change in Morocco's Saïss region. *Cahiers Agricultures* 24, pp. 342-348.
- Brunel. 2018. Concept note for the Conference 'Theorizing young people's aspirations in a global context', Brunel University 26-27 March 2018.
- Chicago Council. 2011. *Girls grow: a vital force in rural economies*. Chicago: The Chicago Council on Global Affairs.
- Chicago Council. 2018. *Youth for growth: transforming economies through agriculture*. Chicago: The Chicago Council on Global Affairs.
- Chinsinga, B. and M. Chasukwa. 2012. Youth, agriculture and land grabs in Malawi. *IDS Bulletin* 43 (6), pp. 67-77.
- Chiswell, H. 2014. The importance of next generation farmers: a conceptual framework to bring the potential successor into focus. *Geography Compass* 8, pp. 300-312.
- Collins, Patricia and Sirma Bilge. 2016. *Intersectionality*. Cambridge: Polity Press
- De Schutter, O. 2011. How not to think of land-grabbing: three critiques of large scale investments in farmland. *Journal of Peasant Studies* 38 (2), pp. 249–7.
- Durham, Deborah. 2017. Elusive adulthoods: introduction. In D. Dunham and J. Solway eds. *Elusive Adulthoods: the Anthropology of New Maturities*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, pp. 1-38.

- Dunham, FD. and J. Solway eds. *Elusive Adulthoods: the Anthropology of New Maturities*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Elias, Marlène, Netsayi Mudege, Diana E. Lopez, Dina Najjar, Vongai Kandiwa, Joyce Luis, Jummai Yila with Amare Tegbaru, Gaya Ibrahim, Lone Badstue, Esther Njuguna-Mungai, and Abderahim Bentaibi. 2018. Gendered aspirations and occupations among rural youth, in agriculture and beyond: A cross-regional perspective. *Journal of Gender, Agriculture and Food Security* 3 (1), pp. 82-107.
- FAO. 2011. *The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-2011. Women in Agriculture – Closing the Gender Gap in Development*. Rome: FAO.
- FAO. 2014. *Contribution to the 2014 United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Integration Segment*. Rome: FAO.
- FAO-IFAD-CTA. 2014. *Youth and Agriculture: Key Challenges and Concrete Solutions*. Rome: FAO.
- Fanthorpe, R. and R. Maconachie. 2012. Beyond the 'crisis of youth'? Mining, farming and civil society in post-war Sierra Leone. *African Affairs* 109/435, pp. 251-272.
- Foster, George M. 1965. Peasant society and the image of limited good. *American Anthropologist* 67 (2), pp. 293-315.
- Gaibazzi, P. 2013. Cultivating hustlers: the agrarian ethos of Sominke migration. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 39 (2), pp. 259-275.
- Roderick G. Galam. 2018. An exercise in futurity: servitude as pathway to young Filipino men's education- to-work transition. *Journal of Youth Studies* 21 (8), pp. 1045-1060.
- Graeb, Benjamin, Jahi Chappell, Hannah Wittman et al. 2016. The state of family farms in the world. *World Development* 87, pp. 1-15.
- Hebinck, P. 2018. De-/re-agrarianisation: global perspectives. *Journal of Rural Studies* 61, pp. 227-235.
- Hall, Derek, Philip Hirsch and Tania M. Li. 2011. *Powers of Exclusion: Land Dilemmas in Southeast Asia*. Singapore: NUS Press.
- Honwana, L. 2014. "Waithood": youth transitions and social change. In D. Foeker, T. Dietz, L. Haan and L. Johnson eds. *Development and Equity: An Interdisciplinary Exploration by 10 Scholars from Africa, Asia and Latin America*. Leiden: Brill, pp. 28-40.
- Huijsmans, Roy. 2016. Generationing development: an introduction. In R. Huijsmans ed., *Generationing Development: A Relational Approach to Children, Youth and Development*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 1-31.
- IFAD. 2010. *Rural Poverty Report 2011*. Rome: International Fund for Agricultural Development.
- ILO. 2012. *The Youth Employment Crisis: A Call to Action*. Geneva: ILO.
- ILO. 2017. *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2017: Paths to a Better Working Future*. Geneva: ILO.
- ILO. 2017b. *Employment Policy Brief: New Automation Technologies and Job Creation and Destruction Dynamics*. Geneva: ILO.

- Jeffrey, C. 2010. *Timepass: youth, class and the politics of waiting in India*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- John, N.A., Stoebenau, K., Ritter, S., Edmeades, J., and Balvin, N. (2017) *Gender socialization during adolescence in low- and middle-income countries: conceptualization, influences and outcomes*. Innocenti Discussion Paper no. 2017-01. Florence: UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti.
- Jones, G. 2009. *Youth*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Keynes, J. M. 1963 [1930]. *Economic possibilities for our grandchildren*. In J.M. Keynes, *Essays in Persuasion*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., pp. 358-373 [orig. 1930].
- Koning, Juliette. 2004. *Generations of Change: Migration, Family Life and identity Formation in a Javanese Village During the New Order*. Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press.
- Koning, Juliette. 2005. *The impossible return? The post-migration narratives of young women in rural Java*. *Asian Journal of Social Science* 33, pp. 165 -185.
- Leavy, Jennifer & Naomi Hossain. 2014. *Who wants to farm? Youth aspirations, opportunities and rising food prices*. IDS Working Paper 439. Falmer: Institute of Development Studies.
- Li, Tania M. 2013. *Jobless growth and relative surplus populations*. *Anthropology Today* 29 (3), pp. 1-2.
- Li, Tania M. 2018. *Intergenerational displacement in Indonesia's oil palm plantation zone*. In Clara M.Y. Park and Ben White eds. *Gender and Generation in Southeast Asian Agrarian Transformations*. London: Routledge, pp. 56-74. (Also in *Journal of Peasant Studies* 44 (6), 2017)
- Lowder, Sarah, Jakob Skoet and Terri Raney. 2016. *The number, size, and distribution of farms, smallholder farms and family farms worldwide*. *World Development* 87, pp. 16-29.
- Manalo, J. and E. van de Vliert. 2013. *Push and pull factors in Philippine rural youth migration*. *Asian Journal of Agricultural and Rural Development* 10 (2), pp. 59-73.
- Melchers, I. and B. Büchler. 2017. *Africa's rural youth speak out*. *Rural* 21 51(3).
- Naafs, Suzanne and Tracey Skelton. 2018. *Youthful futures: education, aspirations and employment in Asia*. *Children's Geographies* 16 (1), pp. 1-14.
- OECD. 2017. *Youth aspirations and the reality of jobs in developing countries: mind the gap*. Development Centre Studies, Paris: OECD Publishing.
- Park, Clara M. and B. White. 2018. *Gender and generation in Southeast Asian agrarian transformations*. In Clara M.Y. Park and Ben White eds. *Gender and Generation in Southeast Asian Agrarian Transformations*. London: Routledge, pp. 1-8. (Also in *Journal of Peasant Studies* 44 (6), 2017)
- Peters, Krijn. 2011. *War and the Crisis of Youth in Sierra Leone*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Proctor, F. and Lucchesi, V. 2012. *Small-scale farming and youth in an era of rapid rural change*. London: IIED.
- Quaglia, R.J. and C.D. Cobb. 1996. *Toward a theory of student aspirations*, *Journal of Research in Rural Education* 12 (3), pp. 127-132.

- Quan, Julius. 2007. Changes in Intra-family Land Relations. In Lorenzo Cotula (ed.), *Changes in 'Customary' Land Tenure Systems in Africa*, London: International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), pp. 51–63.
- Rigg, J., A. Salamanca and E.C. Thompson. 2016. The puzzle of East and Southeast Asia's persistent smallholder. *Journal of Rural Studies* 43, pp. 118-133.
- United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2017). *World Marriage Data 2017 (POP/DB/Marr/Rev2017)*.
- White, Ben. 2012 . Agriculture and the generation problem: rural youth, employment and the future of farming, *IDS Bulletin* 43 (6), pp. 9-19.
- White, Ben and Hanny Wijaya. 2017. Young people's movement out of and into farming: a life-course perspective from Kulonprogo (Yogyakarta). Paper for the 24th International Agrifood Conference, Bandung, December 2017.
- World Bank. 2014. Aspiration traps: when poverty stifles hope. *Inequality in Focus* 2(4), pp. 1-4.
- World Bank. 2015. *World Development Report 2015: Mind, Society, and Behavior*. Washington, DC: World Bank.
- Zipin L, Sellar S, Brennan M and Gale T. 2015. Educating for futures in marginalized regions: a sociological framework for rethinking and researching aspirations'. *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 47(3), pp. 227-46.

## List of RDR 2019 Background Papers published in IFAD Research Series

- **The demography of rural youth in developing countries**  
By Guy Stecklov, Ashira Menashe-Oren
- **What drives rural youth welfare? The role of spatial, economic, and household factors**  
By Aslihan Arslan, David Tschirley, Eva-Maria Egger
- **Youth agrifood system employment in developing countries: a gender-differentiated spatial approach**  
By Michael Dolislager, Thomas Reardon, Aslihan Arslan, Louise Fox, Saweda Liverpool-Tasie, Christine Sauer, David Tschirley
- **Gender, rural youth and structural transformation: Evidence to inform innovative youth programming**  
By Cheryl Doss, Jessica Heckert, Emily Myers, Audrey Pereira, Agnes Quisumbing
- **Rural outh inclusion, empowerment and participation**  
By Carolina Trivelli, Jorge Morel
- **Economic participation of rural youth: what matters?**  
By Louise Fox
- **Landscapes of rural youth opportunity**  
By James Sumberg, Jordan Chamberlin, Justin Flynn, Dominic Glover and Vicky Johnson
- **Rural youth, today and tomorrow**  
By Ben White
- **Climate and jobs for rural young people**  
By Karen Brooks, Shahnala Dunston, Keith Wiebe, Channing Arndt, Faaiga Hartley and Richard Robertson
- **Rural transformation and the double burden of malnutrition among rural youth in developing countries**  
By Suneetha Kadiyala, Elisabetta Aurino, Cristina Cirillo, Chittur S. Srinivasan and Giacomo Zanello
- **Inclusive finance and rural youth**  
By Arianna Gasparri, Laura Munoz
- **Information and communication technologies and rural youth**  
By Jenny Aker
- **Youth access to land, migration and employment opportunities: evidence from sub-Saharan Africa**  
By Felix Kwame Yeboah, Thomas S. Jayne, Milu Muyanga and Jordan Chamberlin
- **Rural youth in the context of fragility and conflict**  
By Ghassan Baliki, Tilman Brück (Team Leader), Neil T. N. Ferguson and Wolfgang Stojetz
- **Rural youth: determinants of migration throughout the world**  
By Alan de Brauw
- **The Impact of Migrants' Remittances and Investment on Rural Youth**  
By Manuel Orozco, Mariellen Jewers
- **Unlocking the potential of rural youth: the role of policies and institutions**  
By Lauren Phillips, Paola Perezniето
- **Investing in rural youth in the Asia and the Pacific region**  
By Roehlano Briones



- **The rural youth situation in Latin America and the Caribbean**  
By Maia Guiskin, Pablo Yanes, Miguel del Castillo Negrete
- **Investing in rural youth in the Near East, North Africa, Europe and Central Asia**  
By Nader Kabbani
- **The narrative on rural youth and economic opportunities in Africa: Facts, myths and gaps**  
By Athur Mabiso, Rui Benfica

**[All publications in the IFAD Research Series can be found at:](https://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/series?mode=search&catSeries=39130673)**

*<https://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/series?mode=search&catSeries=39130673>*





International Fund for Agricultural Development

Via Paolo di Dono, 44 - 00142 Rome, Italy

Tel: +39 06 54591 - Fax: +39 06 5043463

Email: [ifad@ifad.org](mailto:ifad@ifad.org)

[www.ifad.org](http://www.ifad.org)

 [facebook.com/ifad](https://facebook.com/ifad)

 [instagram.com/ifadnews](https://instagram.com/ifadnews)

 [linkedin.com/company/ifad](https://linkedin.com/company/ifad)

 [twitter.com/ifad](https://twitter.com/ifad)

 [youtube.com/user/ifadTV](https://youtube.com/user/ifadTV)

ISBN 978-92-9072-965-5



9 789290 729655

