

WORKING PAPER

Approaching rural young people

**Background report for the CGIAR Research Program
on Forests, Trees and Agroforestry's Gender Equality
and Social Inclusion Strategy**

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RESEARCH
PROGRAM ON
Forests, Trees and
Agroforestry

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Working Paper 1

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Executive summary

Representing nearly 20 per cent of the Global South's population, rural young people are a diverse and significant demographic. The growing problem is that today, many young people face difficulties in finding secure and stable employment, a trend which is expected to continue in the coming decades. Governments and international organizations have expressed concern over these employment, livelihood and demographic trends, as they not only affect young people, but also their families and regional and national economies. These trends are also significant for agricultural and development research and for programs such as the CGIAR Research Program on Forests, Trees and Agroforestry (FTA). However, little is known about rural youth's current contexts and work positions in tree to forest landscapes. This report is one attempt to move beyond this knowledge gap by suggesting ways FTA might engage and research with young people to learn about their needs and interests in rural environments.

'Rural youth' is a new focus area within the CGIAR (and in the wider literature), and there are few studies which examine young people's roles and relationships to trees, forests and agroforests. For FTA, understanding how rural youth trends evolve in employment, education and migration matters as they affect changes in rural land use and management. They also matter because as more of the 'youth bulge' transition into work, a large question – for FTA and others – is how to create and maintain productive rural employment in the Global South. Although the importance of the agriculture and forestry sectors is declining across the economies of the Global South, they remain of major importance to the lives

and livelihoods of the population (HLPE 2013, ch. 2; Rigg et al. 2016, 2018; Bryceson 2019).

Just as rural young people's lives are diverse and heterogenous, so too should be the perspectives with which they are studied. Identity, transitions, inequality, dependence and age or generation all refer to different entry points through which to study youth lives. As a result, this report suggests examining young people relationally, as it recognizes how rural young people are produced in relation to their local social, economic and cultural contexts. The report also suggests drawing on relevant research activities within the CGIAR, namely the 'youth responsive' methods and the intersectional approach described in the CGIAR Research Program on Drylands Youth Strategy; and as outlined in the CGIAR Research Program on Water, Land and Ecosystem's (WLE) gender strategy, which approaches 'youth' as a cross-cutting research theme.

As FTA moves its Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy forward, the FTA Flagships will need to engage new conceptual approaches, field methods and field practices. In large part, this means placing more effort in four key areas, which are outlined in this report:

1. Engaging the heterogeneity of rural youth through a relational approach;
2. Adapting field methods and practice for research with young people;
3. Supporting local and regional rural development activities with a youth lens; and
4. Engaging local to national level partnerships to advocate and support rural young men and women.

Introduction

The CGIAR Research Program on Forests, Trees and Agroforestry (FTA) aims to unlock the potential forests, trees and agroforestry have to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including poverty reduction, food security and nutrition, and reduced gender and other inequalities. To achieve this, FTA develops innovations – technical options, management approaches, governance arrangements, and policies – to enhance the roles trees play in improving production systems, securing people’s livelihoods, and enhancing resilience and food security, including for young and marginalized people.¹ The aim of this background report is to identify key issues and approaches for engaging with young people in forestry and agroforestry systems in the Global South, and inform the revision of FTA’s Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy to more explicitly engage with intergenerational relations and issues of significance to rural youth, among other important social analyses, such as those pertaining to gender.

The report’s main focus is on young people and their various contexts, constraints and opportunities in rural environments of the Global South. In this sense, the report’s scope is broad, as it covers diverse geographies, peoples and cultures. It is not meant to, and cannot, cover in detail all the areas where FTA works. Rather, it aims to shed light on some of the key drivers of change and social dynamics which inform the lives of rural young people in the Global South. Although it draws out general trends, it recognizes that the processes and changes affecting young people in rural landscapes are

context-specific and uneven. The report also considers how some influential international development organizations understand and engage with young people. In doing so, it draws some insights for how FTA can include young people into its research and action.

The report’s objectives, then, are to give an overview of the trends affecting rural households and young people in the Global South. Although there is great local specificity and variation across and within regions, some of these trends include rising youth unemployment and underemployment in Asia and Africa (Jeffrey 2008, 2010; Honwana and DeBoeck 2005; Morrow 2013; ILO 2017); demographic change in rural areas reflected in older, smaller and more multi-sited households, more off-farm work, and in some places, the ‘feminization of agriculture’ (Rigg 2006; UNDP 2009; Tamang et al. 2014; Okali and Keats 2015; Bergstedt 2016); and greater numbers of young people and families viewing rural work as a last resort (White 2012a, 2012b; Tadele and Gella 2012; Sumberg et al. 2015; Sugden 2017). These contexts have caused scholars and practitioners to ask what these changing conditions mean for the resilience and reproduction of rural and resource dependent communities in the Global South (Katz 2004; World Bank 2006; USAID 2012; White 2012b). These same contexts pose critical questions for FTA’s work in forestry and agroforestry systems, such as who will produce and manage food, fiber and other tree and forest products in the future as many young people leave rural areas.²

1 CGIAR Research Program on Forests, Trees and Agroforestry (FTA) (2017a).

2 Clendening et al. (2019) FTA Brief 1: At the intersection of gender and generation: Engaging with ‘youth’ in the CGIAR Research Program on Forests, Trees and Agroforestry.

The report's audience is primarily professionals working in agricultural and forestry research, or related policy and development programs. The intent is to engage with the issues facing young, working-age people in forestry and agroforestry systems, or young people living or working between rural to urban environments. The report is organized as follows.

The first section reviews the broader issues and debates concerning rural youth in the Global South. The second section considers how youth are often studied and conceptualized in the academic literature. The third section examines how several main players in the rural development field, such as aid organizations and UN agencies, approach and engage young people, and identifies elements that are relevant to FTA's work.³ The fourth section takes a similar approach, and reviews how other CGIAR Research Programs' strategies aim to engage with young people, and the elements which are relevant to FTA.⁴ The final section synthesizes these issues and offers ways forward for how FTA can integrate the interests of rural young people into its research for development.

Why 'youth'?

Increasingly, development reports and media cite the so-called global 'youth bulge': the 1.1 billion people between the ages of 15 and 24, or, the 1.8 billion people between the ages of 10 and 24 years old, marking it the most 'youthful' world population to date (UNDP 2014; UNFPA 2014a; Sengupta 2016; UNDESA 2017). Defined in various ways by age (see Table 1), most of these young people – or roughly 90 per cent – are found in the developing world, and the majority are in

3 These agencies include the World Bank (WB); Department for International Development (DFID); and United Nations (UN) institutions (i.e., International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); UN Women; and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); and Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation. How and why these reports were chosen is explained in Section 2.

4 The Youth Strategy on Drylands Systems is reviewed. Other CGIAR Research Programs either have an integrated gender and youth strategy (e.g. WLE; A4NH), or are considering and/or developing a youth strategy (e.g., MAIZE and WHEAT).

rural areas (World Bank 2006; UNFPA 2014a). Asia alone holds the majority of the world's young people with India, China and Indonesia having the largest share of 10- to 24-year-olds (UNFPA 2014b). Africa represents the world's youngest region: half the population in Sub-Saharan Africa is under the age of 18, and the entire continent has a median age of 25 (UNFPA 2014b; AfDB 2016). Crucial is that these demographic trends are expected to continue, and that the majority of these young people in rural areas are chronically unemployed or in vulnerable work positions (AfDB 2016; Castaneda et al. 2018; see Figure 1). In this context, development discourse and economic outlooks often portray youth as having the potential to be 'agents' and 'makers' of the future, or as 'threats' and 'breakers' of economic downturns and political unrest (Honwana and de Boeck 2005; World Bank 2006; DFID 2016). Either way, these figures suggest the Global South will experience unprecedented challenges in governing and providing for its rising younger population in a substantive and meaningful manner.

Table 1. Common age frames for defining youth⁵

Organization	How Youth is defined
OECD	Ages 15-24
DFID*	Ages 10-24
UNDP*	Ages 15-24
USAID	Ages 10 to 29
UN Secretariat/UNESCO/ ILO	Ages 15 to 24
UN Habitat (Youth Fund)	Ages 15 to 32
UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA	Youth: 15 to 24
UNICEF/Convention on Rights of the Child	A child is between 0-17
African Youth Charter	Ages 15 to 35
Some Pacific countries**	Ages 15 to 34
World Bank	Ages 12 to 24

Source: World Bank 2006; UNICEF Pacific 2011; UNFPA 2014a; UN Women 2017.

*Considers young people outside of this age range depending on contexts.

**Includes the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Niue and Palau.

5 Many policy documents use the age frame of 15 to 24 years old to identify and define young people, however these 'youth' age frames vary across countries and organizations, as shown in Table 1. These age frames are discussed further in Section 2.

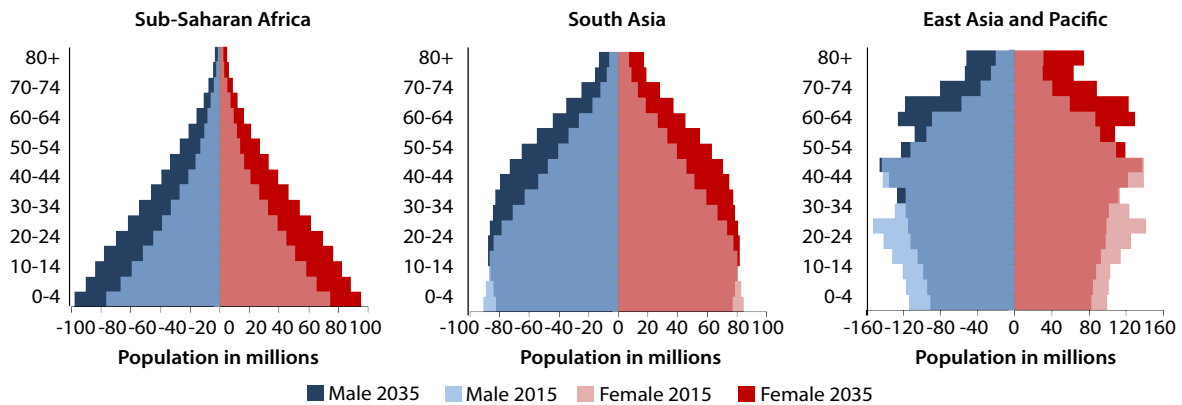


Figure 1. Demographic trends for youth in three developing regions of the world

Source: Filmer and Fox, 2014.

In light of these demographic and economic trends, rural young people play a unique and significant role in the future of rural livelihoods and tree and forest landscapes. Although the literature on how youth live and work in forest environments today is limited, there are several studies which show the diversity of experiences and rural contexts. In eastern Cameroon, for instance, MacNeil et al. (2017) found that young people continued to derive a large proportion of their livelihood from agroforestry resources. For agriculture, however, the story is mixed. Studies from Africa and Asia show that many young people are not interested in labor-intensive forms of farming, but are interested in acquiring skills for more ‘modern’ and knowledge-based agricultural enterprises (Anyidoho et al. 2012; White 2012; Kristensen and Birch-Thomson 2013; Leavy and Hossain 2014; Elias et al. 2018). A study of young men in Morocco’s Saïss region, for example, found that after time away for studies and work, many returned to natal lands to build agricultural enterprises.

Other young people face different realities in rural areas. Many, for instance, are limited in their ability to access and use land, resources and information. These are some of the factors which lead rural young people in Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia to migrate in search of paid, off-farm work (Bryceson 2002; Rigg 2006). Other youth who do not migrate from rural areas may be part of the ‘hidden’ and gendered work of household

maintenance. This can include daily activities such as collecting firewood or water, and helping in seasonal farm (and gendered) work of managing tree and agricultural fields (Awono et al. 2009, Sunderland et al. 2014, Ingram et al. 2016). Being a young man or woman also defines the types of work, access and power rural young people have. In oil palm plantations in Indonesia, for instance, Li (2017) and Elmhirst (2017) note how rural young people are included in daily labor, such as young men who harvest the heavy fruits from oil palms. In other spaces, however, youth and women are excluded, such as in conversations concerning land arrangements and pay. These exclusions coincide with studies noting that rural youth lack access to agricultural information and power in decision-making and policy spaces – spaces which are often dominated by older (male) adults (Chant and Jones 2005; Elmhirst 2017; MacNeil 2017; Elias et al. 2018).

The limited literature on rural young people’s contexts in the Global South means that they are often understood from Western or Eurocentric perspectives, and overlooked in research compared to studies of more ‘visible’ social groups and urban centers (Jeffrey 2008; Farrugia 2014). These Western frames often assume more individual and autonomous transitions for young people in the Global South, and misunderstand the heterogenous cultures and contexts, or differing roles and responsibilities young people may have in their households and

societies (as compared to the Global North). Within the CGIAR, too, research on rural youth in relation to forest and agricultural production systems is often lacking (see section 3; CGIAR Research Program on Drylands Youth Strategy 2015). For FTA, there is a clear need to address these research gaps, as dominant (Northern) youth narratives can misrepresent how processes of class, politics and geographical divides can create different options, aspirations, and vulnerabilities for rural young people in forest, tree and agroforestry settings (Jeffrey 2008).

In broader terms, then, this report engages with debates concerning the current and future directions of young peoples' roles

and relationships in agrarian transitions across the Global South, and why these are important for FTA. It discusses how young people's voices (as one of many social groups) have been marginalized in academic, policy and state development programs, which at times portray youth as an undifferentiated group by prescribing one-size-fits all approaches in agricultural policies. Studying and understanding young peoples' rural lives and movements can offer and identify insights for FTA's research and action, enable inclusivity in rural development outreach, and support policy frameworks that address the underlying challenges affecting young people and rural communities.

1 Agrarian change, development and rural young people

The central question this section considers is: *how are young people's roles and relationships to rural land and resources changing, and why is this significant for FTA?* To answer this question, this section reviews how broad processes of global to local economic restructuring have influenced the transformation of agriculture and forestry sectors and the lives and livelihoods of young people. The approach is broad in scale and intends to indicate, with some examples, the major processes of change affecting rural households and landscapes in the Global South. The limitations of this approach, however, are that many local contexts and differences found within and between the countries of Latin America, Africa and Asia are missed.

1.1 Processes of rural livelihood change in the Global South

In 2009, UNDESA noted how the world's population had shifted from globally rural to globally urban. More recent reports, such as the UN's "The World's Cities in 2018" note how most of the world's megacities (i.e., cities with a population greater than 10 million) are in the Global South (UNDESA 2018b). For FTA, an important question is how these economic and demographic shifts that have been occurring over the last half century affect rural environments and people. For many rural households in Africa, Asia and Latin America, these changes have meant that off-farm work has played a greater role in family income, as younger generations have successively sought out seasonal, temporary, and in some cases, permanent moves to cities (Bryceson 2002: 725; Rigg 2006; Wiggins 2016). These changes have also affected forests and food

production, as urban areas (and global markets) have demanded more land and natural resources (Wiggins 2016).

The drivers and causes of rural land use and land cover change are theorized in a variety of ways (Meyfroidt et al. 2018). For the purposes of this report, however, the focus is on smallholders' relations to land use change. This is for several reasons. First, globally, family farms account for 98 per cent of the world's farms, use 53 per cent of the world's agricultural land, and produce 53 per cent of the world's food (Graeub et al. 2016). This sector is thus important to many countries' economic growth and development (HLPE 2013), and to FTA. Second, smallholders have historically been a part of 'deagrarianization' processes, or the structural (and rural) transformations of land and livelihoods, for a long time. These processes, which involve smallholders reorienting their livelihoods, work and social occupations, and engaging in new mobility patterns, are reflected in increased rates of the non-self-employed agricultural labor force (i.e., including wage, contract, plantation or sharecropping work, or other off-farm work altogether) as compared to the self-employed agricultural labor force (i.e., smallholder commodity production) (Figure 2; Bryceson 2019, p. 61). What is new about these processes, and what contemporary studies on agrarian change show, is that each family's historical path to new relations of production (land and labor) will most likely be different than that of the generation before (Vandergeest and Rigg 2012). Furthermore, what is different now for deagrarianization processes are the rate and extent of change among younger generations. As noted previously, there are many theories as to why land use and cover changes occur and affect smallholders, but many of the factors include:

- declining returns from jobs in the forestry and agriculture sectors, especially as compared to other jobs (HLPE 2013);
- greater supply of non-farm opportunities in urban areas;
- increased pressures on land (i.e., increasing population and land prices);
- global to local economic development, and greater influence of markets and socio-cultural changes (i.e., in education, infrastructure development, mobility and technology);
- greater environmental degradation (deforestation; over-cropping, etc.) (Bryceson 1996; Rigg 2006; Meyfroidt et al. 2013; Keats and Wiggins 2016).

These era-defining development changes have meant that global and regional urban markets have changed in extent and scale, along with their need for land, forests and other resources (Seto et al. 2012; Meyfroidt et al. 2013). How national governments have governed their land and forest resources in relation to global demands have differed, but some major changes are evident across the Global South, particularly in terms of tropical forest cover. In Southeast Asia and Latin America, for example, the last several decades have seen large-scale deforestation of tropical forests for oil palm plantations

in Indonesia and for soy bean plantations in Brazil (Carlson et al. 2012; Macedo et al. 2012). Agricultural intensification has also affected many land areas of the Global South, largely due to the influence of technology, infrastructure and mechanization, as well as local and global demands for food, fiber and fuel (Turner and Ali 1996).

1.2 Rural livelihood changes for households and youth

How these development changes have unfolded in Africa, Latin America and Asia have varied. Common ground is found, however, in how rural households' social relations to land and natural resources are increasingly commodified, and purely subsistence farming systems are now rare (Meyfroidt et al. 2013). These changes also affect the internal dynamics of villages and households, such as family decision-making (including roles and responsibilities in labor relations), along with customary norms and economic expectations. All of these societal and economic changes, seen alongside greater access to technology, education and mobility for younger generations, play a role in the formation of future aspirations that often involve education or more formal office jobs (White 2012; Elias et al. 2018).

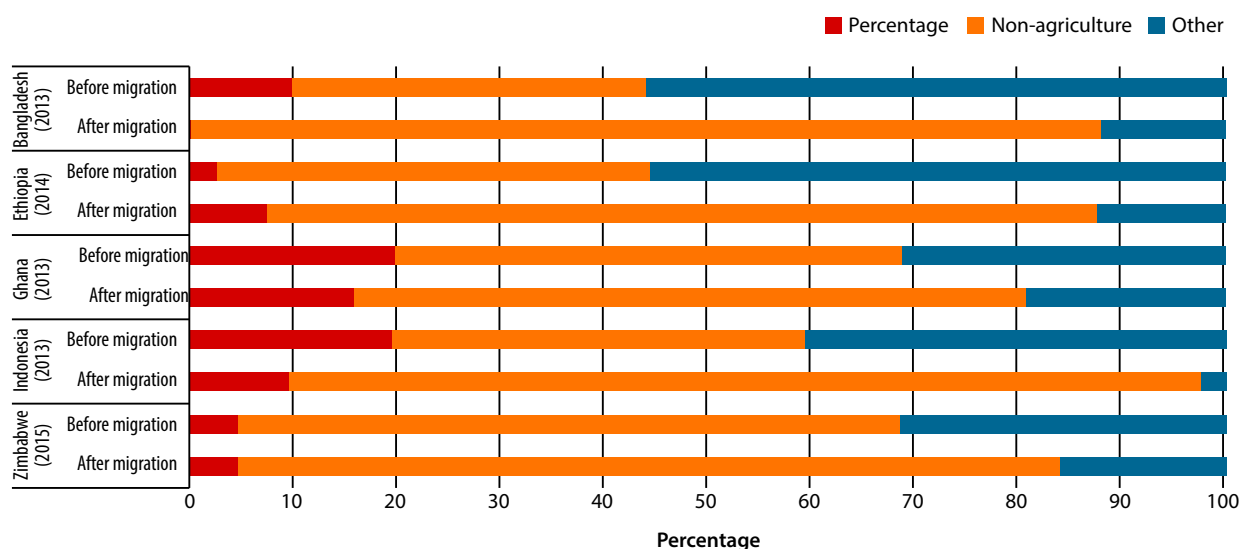


Figure 2. Occupation sector of rural internal migrants before and after migration

Source: FAO 2018, p. 3, based on data from Poggi (2018) and the Migrating out of Poverty Research Programme Consortium. Other represents migrants who are unemployed, economically inactive, retired or in school.

In Africa, economic liberalization has largely consolidated land and benefited middle to larger-scale farmers close to cities who have low transport costs and favorable climate conditions. Those farmers who live in more marginal locations have often been forced to sell or rent land and to engage in non-farm or waged agricultural labor and circular migration. Both of these trends have led to greater economic differentiation in rural and urban areas and have affected youth in a variety of ways (Bryceson 2002, 2019; Potts 2010). Studies among Kenya's indigenous Maasai, for example, show that younger generations' rights to land have decreased dramatically as once commonly held rangelands have become privatized (Archambault 2014). Other studies show that in Ghana, South Africa and Ethiopia, young people are no longer guaranteed land inheritance for their labor contributions as population pressure and land sales have caused land scarcity. These processes are a major factor in youth's (often permanent) rural to urban migration (Amanor 2010; Hull 2014; Kosec et al. 2017). Youth who are disadvantaged by their gender, class or ethnicity, and relatedly marginalized by lack of access to resources or capital (e.g., education, employment or natural resources), thus face limited livelihood or work opportunities (McDowell 2012; Morrow 2013; Moraji 2016; Wiggins 2016; Bryceson 2019).

In Latin America, neoliberal changes in trade and land policies have resulted in an increase in migration practices and non-farm activities (Wiggins 2016). In Mexico, for instance, the passing of neoliberal reforms (e.g. the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement [NAFTA]) triggered the dismantling of subsistence farming. As changes were felt in crop production, earnings and labor, more youth migrated from rural to urban areas, and to the United States. Remittance income and migration, therefore, have affected rural households in two major ways: first, there is a greater disconnect between older and younger generations, as youth are more likely to migrate transnationally; and second, remittance income has led to increased socio-economic stratification in rural villages (Carpena-Méndez 2007). Other examples illustrate how young people's livelihood contexts in the Global South are often different from the North. In studying rural youth migration in Bolivia, for example, Punch (2002, 2015) found that many factors, such as limited education and employment opportunities in their natal area, personal desires, birth order, gender, social networks, and responsibilities to the family, all informed young people's reasons for migration. Likewise, Carpena-Méndez explained that she found modern rural youth as navigating in between "deteriorating agricultural possibilities and increasing desires for access to cash and the global consumer market" (2007, p. 54; see also Katz 2004). These examples demonstrate how many rural youths in the Global South may feel that they must migrate for better opportunities.

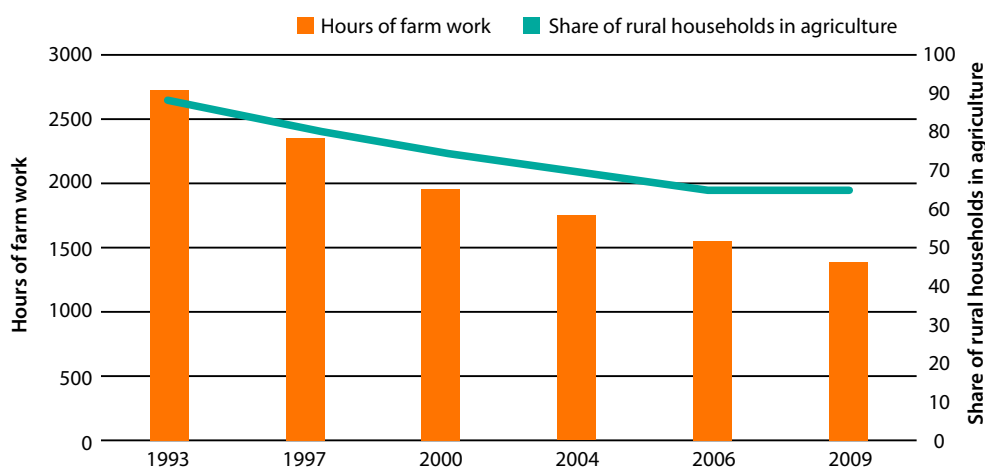


Figure 3. Hours of farm work and share of rural households in agriculture in China

Source: de Brauw et al., 2013 as cited in FAO 2018, p. 91.

What is important to note is that even in the context of migration, young people maintain ‘interdependent’ ties to the household. Many argue that this is done to both support livelihoods, but also to fulfill generational or gendered responsibilities over space and time (Punch 2002, 2015; Crivello 2011; Moraji 2016; also see Huijsmans 2014).

In Asia, mobility trends reflect how rural households are increasingly diversifying and de-localizing towards off-farm work (see Figure 3). Across the region, countries such as Indonesia and the Philippines export people for work (2.5 million workers in 2010 and 8 million workers in 2007, respectively); and others, such as Malaysia and Thailand, import people for work (2.1 million in 2007 and 1.8 million in 2006, respectively) (Martin 2009; UNDP 2009, 2010; Fang et al. 2009; and Kelly 2011 as cited in Rigg 2012, p. 166). Studies from across the region help us understand what these mobility patterns mean for rural land, households, and young people. In Northeast Thailand, for example, Rigg (2012) shows that the number of younger and middle generations (between the ages of 16-30 and 31-45) engaged in off-farm work rose dramatically (over 50 per cent from >200 survey sample) over a 25-year period. Similarly, from 1986 to 2009, De Koninck and Ahmat (2012) followed 28 households and found that while many still owned paddy plots and rice production was booming, labor patterns had changed. By 2009, few of the 28 households engaged directly with farming and, instead, most of them hired labor and rented their land to state operators. Other studies in Indonesia show similar deagrarianization trends. Studies by Li (2014) in North Sulawesi on cocoa tree crops, and White (2012a) in Java on rice production, show how market ties accentuated agrarian differentiation and have left many smallholders and youth unable to access land or the material means (capital and labor) needed for tree or rice crop production. Estimates for the percentage of the population engaged in agriculture in Indonesia further support these studies, as they show numbers dropping from 44 to 34.3 per cent between 2005 and 2014 (UN Statistics Division 2014).

Similarly, global studies show smallholders (i.e., those with 2 hectares of land or less) and agricultural work declining across much of the Global South; but these trends require nuanced views. Not only do understandings of smallholders, small farmers, family and peasant farmers vary (see Thapa 2009; Hazell and Rahman 2014; Rigg et al. 2016, 2018) in labor relations and types of farming (i.e., cash crops to subsistence to agribusiness), but their contexts for how and why they engage in off-farm work also differ. Ellis (1998) argues that in Sub-Saharan Africa, environmental constraints and a lack of services are what have ‘pushed’ many smallholders towards off-farm work, compared to the limited land sizes in Southeast Asia. Other factors also play a role in attracting rural workers, such as greater (and higher paid) employment opportunities as countries have industrialized, especially in East Asia (Wiggins 2014). These movements between farm and non-farm work have affected land use and labor practices, such as the planting of more tree crops in Southeast Asia (e.g., rubber, teak, eucalypt) (Thongyou 2014; Newby et al. 2012; Boulay et al., 2012), and in general, more labor saving practices and less intensive agriculture.

Table 2. Mean farm size by selected countries and world regions, 1990s

	Mean farm size (ha)
US	178.4
South America	111.6
Europe	32.3
Central America/ Caribbean	10.7
West Asia/North Africa	4.9
Sub-Saharan Africa	2.4
Southeast Asia	1.8
South Asia	1.4
East Asia	1.0

Source: summarized from Rigg et al. 2016, p. 124, based on data from Eastwood et al., 2010, p. 3330; Lipton 2010, p. 1402; Nagayets 2005, p. 7; Fan and Chang-Kang 2005; Klatt 1972, p. 240; Thapa 2009; Thapa and Gaiha 2011; Hayami 2001, p. 174; USDA. (<http://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/international-markets-trade/countriesregions/japan/basic-information.aspx>); and from World Census of Agriculture 2010 (<http://www.fao.org/economic/ess/ess-wca/wca-2010/en/>).

(e.g., such as more rice broadcasting than transplanting, see Hall et al. 2011; Ogura et al. 2011; Mertz et al. 2013; Rigg et al. 2016). Surprising, however, are what these trends have not caused in much of the Global South. In much of the West, as countries have had declines in their agricultural workforce and greater urbanization, the farm size has become larger. What is seen for much of Sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast, South and East Asia, however, is that the farm size has instead, become smaller (Table 2; Rigg et al. 2016). This has led many studies to ask why smallholders and smallholding persist in spite of decreasing returns of agriculture (for both smallholders and to national gross domestic product⁶). From the perspective of smallholders, Rigg et al. (2016) point out that between the rising costs of land and the precarity felt in non-farm work and a lack of social safety nets provided by the state, land itself remains an important resource to many rural households in Southeast Asia, and arguably, the Global South (see also Thongyou 2014).

1.3 Consequences for rural youth in employment, education and migration

These socio-economic changes and rural transformations have not only affected and influenced the livelihood patterns of rural households, but also those of young people. This section considers the current trends seen in youth employment, education and migration in the Global South, and what these patterns mean for rural work relating to forestry and agriculture. To date, many studies find that youth are exiting rural sectors not only because of economic need, but also because many desire more secure, paid jobs. Rural work in forestry and agriculture, at least in ‘non-modern’ terms, is often viewed as a last resort (White 2012a, 2012b; Tadele and Gella 2012; Sumberg et al. 2015; Sugden 2017).

⁶ Besides Rigg et al. (2016) some other studies include “Is small beautiful? Farm size, productivity, and poverty in Asian agriculture” (Fan and Chan-Kang 2005) and “The future of small farms” (Wiggins et al. 2010).

Employment

The structural and economic problems of youth employment are often cited in the news and literature but are difficult to quantify and measure (e.g. as in measuring the differences between ‘youth’ and ‘adult’ employment, and between the lines of rural and urban, or formal and informal work) (ILO 2004; FAO et al. 2014). Nonetheless, from the often mentioned employment estimates, one can gain a relative picture of the challenges rural youth face in securing jobs now and in the future, and why governments and development agencies are worried (see World Bank 2006; UNESCO 2012; ILO 2017; FAO 2018). Recent estimates from the International Labor Organization (ILO) report note that for 2017, youth unemployment rates (for those 15-24 years old) were 13.64 per cent (15.4 per cent for females, and 13.04 per cent for males), and expected to increase in the years ahead. Even more concerning, however, are the levels of ‘working poverty’ across the Global South. Defined as people who live in extreme or moderate poverty despite having a job,⁷ working poverty estimates for young people (ages 15-24) are high, at 72.2 and 30.2 per cent for developing and emerging economies, respectively (ILO 2016). Besides these estimates, the ILO and World Bank have long reported that youth un- and underemployment rates are at least double those of adult rates. Besides this, young people are likely to earn less, work in short-term or casual contracts, and have fewer social networks as compared to adults (World Bank 2006; S4YE 2015⁸). These trends are also gendered. The ILO reports a labor force participation rate of 53.9 per cent for young men as compared to 37.3 per cent for women,⁹ further complicated by the fact that young women are less likely to secure or complete an education (including primary school) (ILO 2016; UNDESA 2018).

⁷ Working poverty is measured by less than 3.10 USD in per capita income per day (ILO 2016).

⁸ Solutions for Youth Employment 2015.

⁹ This gender gap is especially acute in South Asia, North Africa and the Arab States.

Education

Global agencies, such as UNESCO and the World Bank, have played a large role in the spread, use and value of education in the Global South. Between 1950 and 1975, UNESCO aimed to decrease the global education gap, and, by using Western experience, acted to expand enrollment and improve textbook and curriculum quality in developing nations (Gould 1993; Ansell 2015). These processes continued through the 1980s and 1990s but were largely taken over by the World Bank, as many countries in the Global South were part of Structural Adjustment Programmes which required decreased per capita spending, increased privatization, and curriculum changes to suit economic demands (Ansell 2015). Since then, a global education agenda has continued for much of the Global South, but with more direct forms of international measurements and accountability, such as through targets set by the Millennium Development Goals and development programs such as UNESCO's Education for All. These processes, while positive in intent, have meant that global actors have shaped national governments' agendas for how education should be seen, including its increased formalization (e.g. as in new requirements for international vocational and technical schooling) (Ansell 2015; UNDESA 2017; Chea and Huijsmans 2018). Formal qualifications and enquiry-based learning, for example, are more valued today because they are seen as better suited for the knowledge-based economy, rather than non-formal curricula that might be better suited for everyday needs and affordability (Gould 1993; Ansell 2015; for examples in Cambodia and Laos, see Chea and Huijsmans 2018). Studies have found that greater formalization of education can disadvantage lower social classes by tests, costs and accreditation (see UNESCO 2016; Woronov 2016; Chea and Huijsmans 2018), and also affects the aspirations young people have for future employment and their attitudes towards agriculture and forestry (Sumberg et al. 2015; Elias et al. 2018).¹⁰ Moreover, the higher

¹⁰ It should be noted that this report's purpose is not to appreciate the benefits formal education does bring to many rural livelihoods in the Global South, or the many vocational or technical schools that do support further work in agriculture and forestry.

social value placed on formal education has a way of devaluing agricultural and forest work, as seen in a recent rural development report:¹¹

...in most parts of the world, agriculture is seen as a less worthwhile subject or as a last resort for underachievers, and using agricultural activities as a punishment is common practice in schools and households in many parts of Africa and the Pacific – attitudes that negatively influence the aspirations of rural youth (MIJARC/IFAD/FAO, 2012; PAFPNet, 2010 as cited in FAO et al. 2014, p. 2).

The significance of this disjuncture is that now many rural young people are directed towards off-farm work economically, but also in their social, 'everyday' and informal worlds. As schooling re-values knowledge, and regional and national economies have re-valued employment and pay, families and young people re-value the types of jobs and life they want in the future. All of these trends largely link to how education is often used as a 'golden plough', or as a means to improve one's future (Bruner 1961).

Several studies have documented these trends and their effects on rural young people. In Indonesia, White (2012b) explains how, over thirty years, the experience of growing up changed in central Java. As children spent more time in school (as compared to their parents), they spent less time on 'farm' and doing household chores. Eventually, children desired more time in and around school simply because they grew to look down upon rural life (see also Katz 2004 for South Sudan). Others have noted that as more young people are enrolled in education for longer, there

¹¹ This was a joint project on "Facilitating Access of Rural Youth to Agricultural Activities" with the International Movement of Catholic Agricultural and Rural Youth (MIJARC), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) carried out in 2011.

is a prolongation of ‘youthhood’, because youth are dependent upon the household for longer (and start work and marry later) (Rigg 2006; Robinson 2016). Higher education also means that many rural youth desire more ‘modern’ and salaried jobs which match their qualifications, and, as a result, are less interested in rural work as it usually means low pay (see Punch and Sugden 2013 on the uplands of Vietnam and China; Huijsmans 2014 on Laos; White 2012a, 2012b on Java; Sumberg et al. 2015 on rural Ghana). Still other studies show that a major deterrent for young people’s engagement in forestry and agricultural production (and particularly for young women) is that they feel they have insufficient knowledge and information for this type of work (FAO et al. 2014).

Migration

A further effect of these trends is that since many rural young people face a lack of educational or employment opportunities in their natal areas, they have a ‘mobility imperative’ to leave rural areas for their futures (Farrugia 2016). This imperative is shaped by a range of factors, including the social and economic attractiveness of new, urban places for living, work and education; and by a ‘capacity to aspire’ where education is seen as the prevalent means to escape poverty in rural areas (Bruner 1961; Appadurai 2004; World Bank 2006; Farrugia 2016). Recent studies demonstrate how and why rural young people are moving. In Laos, for example, Huijsmans (2014) shows how gender and family position informs who will migrate for work to support the household. In Vietnam and China, Punch and Sugden (2013) describe how more rural upland families prioritize education, which has triggered an out migration of youth from the village. Consequently, many younger generations have grown up with less experience in, and respect for, indigenous ecological knowledge. In Peru, Crivello (2015, p. 39) shows that parents often say “there’s no future here” as they expect their children to migrate for schooling in the future. In Cambodia, Peou (2016) examines how the country’s declining rural sectors, large youth demographic, and the state’s poor governmental and educational institutions

mean that labor migration has become a part of growing up and becoming adult. Lastly, other studies show how rural young people migrate for their own futures or to support the household, because of land scarcity and crop and market changes. For instance, Bezu and Holden’s (2014) study of youth migration in southern Ethiopia; Amanor’s (2010) study of agricultural commodification in Ghana; Katz’s (2004) study of the commodification of land in Sudan; and Berckmoes and White (2014) studies of rural youth’s abandonment of agriculture in Java, Indonesia and Burundi all show such trends.

As younger generations have engaged in off-farm work and engaged in the modern wage-based economy over the last few decades, new forms of social differentiation have developed as more households receive remittance income than generations before (Rigg 2006; Eder 2006; Panelli et al. 2007; Kelly 2011; FAO 2018). The effects of these processes are many, but some note new age and gender dynamics in villages, while others see the rise of multi-sited households as younger and older generations maintain work and income across sectors and spaces (Deere 1995; Koning 1995; Rigg and Salamanca 2011; Bergstedt 2016). Bryceson and Vuorela (2003) noted these trends with the rise of transnational families supporting livelihoods between the Global North and South. Douglass (2006) uses the term ‘global householding’ to describe how migrant labor helps sustain families in the Asia-Pacific region today.

What these new householding patterns mean for the future of rural areas is unclear, but it does point to how new forms of family maintenance are multi-sited, and crucially, how many rural households seem less connected to land-based livelihoods. Little is known about the longer-term social impacts of rural economic diversification – via remittances, migration, cash crops and infrastructure development – on rural landscapes, families and youth. Rigg et al. (2012) note that many scholars assume that newly migrated and moving peasants will return ‘home’ or to the village, but that these assumptions should be questioned. This is particularly so in terms of how education, migration and technology come to influence young people’s aspirations, and engagement with land and rural work; all of which are pertinent to FTA (see FAO 2018).

2 Conceptualizing rural young people

The youth studies literature tells us that young people are often studied from two different perspectives: that of 'becoming adult' and in transition; and that of 'being young' and in relation to their peers. This section reviews these approaches, along with other useful concepts such as age and generation, to examine how rural youth are seen amongst and within economic transformations and urbanization across the varying contexts of the Global South, and how these changes are theorized to influence rural youth's actions and future directions. The section concludes by recommending a relevant approach for conceptualizing rural young people for FTA.

2.1 Becoming, being and contemporary perspectives of rural youth

The becoming perspective sees youth as a 'condition' (i.e., in process) and as 'human capital', (i.e., as people in development) by studying major life transitions from youth to adulthood (Jones 2009). Scholars have found the 'becoming' perspective helpful because it focuses on a phase in young people's lives in which multiple changes are occurring, such as transitions between education and employment. Studying these types of transitions among youth can shed light on broader processes of social change. For example, some have argued that today, there is a 'prolongation of youthhood' (Vanderbeck 2007; Furlong 2009). In this respect, this approach is useful in how it can focus on stages in young people's lives, and how they navigate their futures. Less useful, however, is that this perspective can assume Western transitions, such as an autonomous adulthood, for young people in

the Global South. It therefore may not account for the cultural and economic differences young people face in forest or agricultural environments, or more generally, in the Global South (Jeffrey and McDowell 2004; Jeffrey 2010; Honwana 2012).

The 'being' perspective examines youth as individuals and as social groups (Naafs and White 2012). Scholars have described this perspective as 'being young', because it uses lenses of agency, mobility and peer relationships to understand how youth identity is constructed (rather than trying to understand youth in comparison to adults) (Parker 2016). In the context of rural youth and globalization, then, this perspective is useful in how it recognizes how the growth of technology and the market economy has influenced lives and livelihoods, where some scholars argue young people's lives have become more individualized than generations before (Giddens 1991; Furlong et al. 2011; Naafs and White 2012). This perspective is also helpful because it sees youth as active agents and in pursuit of their own desires or aspirations (White 2016). Less useful, however, is how the 'being' perspective can rely too heavily on youth agency, and therefore neglect other important social and geographic factors, such as their gender or social class, that also shape the options young people have (Lehmann 2004).

The becoming and being perspectives are helpful in how they analyze life phases, such as young people 'becoming' adult and in transition, or 'being' young in culture and society (Worth 2009). Youth lives are diverse, however, and for FTA, it will be important to understand how local contexts influence 'growing up', and affect young people

differently. Contemporary youth studies have demonstrated that there are many different ways of seeing youth lives in relation to a range of factors, such as how social class, age relations, gender, and ethnicity can inform youth identities, transitions, inequalities and dependence. Some of these perspectives include (see Jones 2009):

- **Youth as Identity:** bringing attention to time and scale in a young person's life. It explores how young people fit into societal structures, such as social position, 'belonging', and generational age-cohorts (see Mannheim 1952 [1927]; also Jones 2009, p. 82).
- **Youth as Transition:** looking at how young people manage their lives (pragmatically or defensively; strategically or experimentally, etc.) in relation to larger socio-economic structures and agency (linked to the work of Giddens [1991] and Beck [1992]).
- **Youth as Inequality:** examining the heterogeneity and intersectionality (i.e. intersecting identities and axes of marginalization) found within young people alongside structural and cultural disadvantages (Jones 2009, p. 113).
- **Youth as Dependence:** examining how household relations play a role in youth's (inter)dependence and decision-making contexts, such as their generational or gendered responsibilities to migrate or return (see Punch 2002, 2015; Huijsmans 2014).

These perspectives demonstrate that youth lives can and should be studied from multiple perspectives. They also demonstrate how youth lives are heterogenous and intersectional, and that their opportunities, constraints and aspirations are produced relationally. How then to engage these multiple factors for studying rural young people?

2.2 Understanding rural young people relationally in the Global South and for FTA

For FTA, it will be important to see how young people's choices in rural environments are affected by their agency and aspirations, as well as power and socio-economic class

constraints. Engaging a relational approach that sees the intersectionality of rural youth lives is helpful in that it relies less on one perspective per se, but recognizes that multiple factors can affect young people. A relational approach draws on factors highlighted earlier, such as **identity** (for understanding historical structure, opportunities, sense of self and place); **agency and action** (for understanding activities and strategies); and **power** (for understanding inequality, social relations, generational dynamics, gender, and class) for gathering the complexity of rural youth pathways (Wyn and White 1997; Panelli et al. 2007). Besides these factors, the multiple meanings and uses of age and generation within society and households are also important to note for understanding young people in relation to local contexts.

Age: Age is produced socially, and therefore has different meanings across cultures and countries. Most commonly, age is understood biologically from birth (or chronologically, based on the Gregorian calendar system). *Biological age*, for example, can act to include or exclude young people from state and development programs (e.g. such as mass education [see Horton 2016]; or children's rights [in conditional cash transfers in Ecuador, see Palacio 2016]). But there are other forms of age which are important to consider for rural young people. *Relative age*, understood as being older or younger in the household, is especially important for considering the roles and responsibilities young people might have (see Punch 2002; Huijsmans 2014). *Social age*, or the "socially constructed definitions and attributes ascribed to different age groups, as well as generational power relations" (Clark-Kazak 2016, p. 104), focuses on how society produces age specific gender and power relations, which are highly dependent on gender and on a young person's particular context. These multiple uses of age not only demonstrate its multiple meanings, but also show how age can be used in processes of social differentiation within and among young people (Huijsmans 2016).

Generation: Like age, generation can be understood in several ways. Karl Mannheim (1952) introduced the theory of generations as a way to understand how history, place and social events affect the relations and identities between young people. Mannheim studied *generational cohorts*, or how successive generations were shaped by historical, political or contemporary trends, which influence young people's identities, cultures and movements (Huijsmans 2016). A second, and more common understanding of generation is linked with *kinship* descent. This refers to the relations between parents and children, which can be useful for understanding 'negotiated

interdependencies' and other intra- and inter- household dynamics (Punch 2002). These inter-household (or generational) relationships, however, can change, especially within contexts of migration (Punch 2007; Alanen 2011; Hoang and Yeoh 2015). A third understanding of generation is as a *life phase*, which means that generation is defined by relations to social institutions, such as schooling and work (Alanen 2011; Huijsmans 2016). This can help explain how youth 'transitions' must be understood within specific geographical, cultural and temporal contexts, illustrating why youth are shaped by different social and market structures in the Global South and North.

3 Engagement with youth by some international aid and development institutions

As a focus on ‘youth’ has become more widespread within rural development, how do major international aid and development organizations (e.g., UN agencies; the World Bank; other bilateral development agencies, etc.) align their activities and approaches to promote ‘youth’ and engage young people? To answer these questions, five strategic reports on youth produced by large development agencies such as the World Bank, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom (DFID); and UN institutions (FAO, UN Women, and UNDP) were reviewed. These organizations were chosen based on their work and relevance to FTA’s research programs; their size and international influence in policy and discourse; and their focus on rural development and youth approaches. Moreover, focus was on strategies which were more inclusive of social factors such as gender and ethnicity (i.e., UN Women’s), as compared to other stand-alone youth strategies.

In reviewing their development approaches, several aspects were considered: first, how did they identify and define young people (i.e., by age, gender, as a social group, or as an individual) and the issues they face in the Global South? Second, how did they situate the diversity of young people against larger societal structures and cultural influences? In what follows, there is a summary, organized chronologically, of these development players’ strategies and main ‘youth’ reports. Then there is a deeper discussion of the strategies’ features that are helpful to FTA. Key points and learnings for FTA are summarized at the end of the section, in Table 3.

Youth reports and strategies reviewed:

- **The World Bank’s “Development and the Next Generation” (2006):** This report sees youth as human capital, and argues for the importance of investing in young people’s ‘five life transitions’, which span from puberty to economic independence. The report was chosen for its international influence in discourse and national government policies, such as how young people are seen. A helpful feature of the report is how it engages with a ‘youth lens’ (or youth perspective) for improving development policies in the Global South. This includes youth perspectives towards finance and business investments, as well as education, health, and welfare reforms.
- **FAO, CTA (Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation) and IFAD’s (2014) Report on Youth and Agriculture:** This report discusses the specific challenges and alternative activities that have affected young people working in agriculture and forestry environments. This report was chosen for review because it not only discusses common constraints young people have faced in low, middle- and high-income countries, but also because, different from others, it was youth-led and practitioner-based. For these reasons the report provides good examples of successful programs that have addressed challenges facing young people in farm to forest environments. These are projects and actors that FTA can learn from.
- **UNDP Youth Strategy (2014):** This strategy prioritizes addressing youth rights through networks and advocacy. Like the World Bank’s, this report was chosen based on its influence within the international development arena. A main takeaway of the report is its priority of strengthening young people’s voices.

- **DFID’s Youth Agenda (2016):** This strategy studies young people through formative life transitions. The report was chosen because not only is DFID an influential aid and development organization, but also because it has a history of rural development work that integrates a livelihoods framework (i.e., employs social and economic analyses, see Bryceson 2002), which is an approach relevant for FTA’s work in rural environments. A key feature of DFID’s agenda is that it promotes youth-led development by engaging young people in the design and delivery of programs.
- **UN Women’s (2017) Strategy for Youth and Gender Equality:** This strategy prioritizes vulnerable young women and girls in developing countries. The strategy was chosen because it focuses on youth and gender together. A takeaway from this strategy is its adoption of a flexible age range, and how it approaches young people in relation to other cross-cutting factors (also see DFID).

3.1 World Bank (2006). World Development Report 2007: Development and the next generation.

As with the other youth strategies, the World Bank sees a large demographic reason to invest in youth because of the sheer size of the young population and its contribution to the labor force (p. 4). The World Bank identifies ‘youth’ in the 12-24 age range as “it covers transitions from puberty to economic independence” (p. 2). The strategy aims to invest in ‘youth’s five life transitions’, which include *continuing to learn, starting to work, developing a healthful lifestyle, beginning a family and exercising citizenship*, as these are times when skills are developed and deployed for independence (p. 2). Overall, the World Bank strategy largely sees youth as ‘human capital’, which presents developing countries with both risks and opportunities. “If countries fail to invest in human capital...” youth can be an economic risk and constraint on growth. Conversely, if countries develop human capital during ‘youth’s five life transitions’, it pays off in more productive work and a “climate for

investment in firms” (p. 5). The World Bank sees this strategy as especially important for countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, the Middle East and North Africa as they have “opening demographic windows of opportunity” – or more people who will be entering the workforce – and therefore need policies and institutions for young people to reach their potential and develop their human capital (pp. 4-5).

Importantly, the World Bank strategy acknowledges how both a ‘supply side’ (shortage of work opportunities) and ‘demand side’ (lack of information or resources) can affect investments for youth, and argues that these can only be addressed through the right policies (p. 10). For this reason it suggests using a ‘youth lens’ for developing relevant policies and programs that address the needs and interests of young people (i.e., governance, the economy and investment climate, education, health and welfare, etc.), which is something that FTA and similar organizations could learn from. These youth lenses orient how strategies should be designed to create ‘youth friendly’ policies which help countries and wider society invest in human capital, as well as *broaden the opportunities, develop the capabilities, and offer second chances* for young people (pp. 10-11; p. 22). Likewise, developing a youth lens within FTA Flagships would orient programs to invest in the interests and abilities young people have within land and forest environments.

3.2 FAO, CTA and IFAD (2014). Youth and Agriculture: Key challenges and concrete solutions.

The FAO et al. (2014) report on youth, among other documents on youth,¹² aimed to “take a closer look at the challenges that rural youth face while engaging in agriculture” (p. xvii). This was because they saw the

12 FAO et al. (2014) builds on a joint project named “Facilitating access of rural youth to agricultural activities” (FAO 2012); also referenced is a summary document entitled “Youth: Present and future of agriculture” (No Date); See <http://www.fao.org/3/a-c0390e.pdf>; and <http://www.fao.org/rural-employment/work-areas/youth-employment/en/>.

agriculture sector as “crucial to addressing the disproportionately high levels of youth unemployment, underemployment and poverty” (ibid).

FAO et al. recognize the UN definition of youth (persons between the ages of 15 and 24) but noted that for the purposes of this project, it was flexible with this age category as “youth might differ from one country to another depending on cultural and local patterns, and also according to the project/mechanism/system described in the various case studies” (p. xviii). FAO’s strategy was to develop a strong enabling environment (through policy assistance and advocacy) for rural young people by, at the local level, developing field tested approaches to address youth constraints; at the regional and national level, by supporting governments to develop country specific research to inform stakeholders of current conditions and implement plans that target rural youth; and at the global level, by advocating for rural youth’s priorities and needs.¹³

Youth informants identified several challenges to youth entering agriculture, with **“access to land and access to finance as the main challenges for starting an agricultural activity”** (p. 95). Other challenges included a lack of:

1. Access to knowledge, information and education, which is often worse in rural areas and among girls and young women (p. 2);
2. Access to land and credit (a number one requirement for farming) ensuring employment and income generation (p. 20);
3. Access to financial services, for covering the costs of planting, harvesting, and other tools needed for trading and marketing (p. 34);
4. Access to green jobs, which need skills development, particularly for youth just entering the market (p. 50);
5. Access to markets, as rural youth often lack business and management skills and have little access to information. These challenges apply especially to youth in markets dominated by adults, and to young rural women (p. 65);

6. Engagement in policy dialogue, to work for and with youth in decision-making (p. 78).

While the report gives context-specific examples and approaches to address these problems, some general recommendations include (see p. 95):

- Young farmers need access to the right information to overcome their lack of experience. Examples include integrated training approaches to meet their needs, rather than top-down vocational training or extension services, which may be a poor match to their needs.
- Modern Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) (i.e., mobile phones, computers and the Internet) are attractive to youth, but there are many structural obstacles to their use, such as illiteracy, expense, and limited Internet coverage. If available, however, they can offer several tools (marketing, training and financial information) helpful to young people in rural sectors.
- The formation of rural organizations can be helpful to young people as they offer economies of scale to buy agricultural resources, access to land and other capital; a place to sell products and share information; and a louder voice for participation in policy making.
- Projects or programs which aim to support youth’s interests and comparative advantages, such as agricultural scholarships geared towards higher agricultural education; or financial training and management coupled with agricultural loans for young people.
- Integrated and coordinated partnerships designed to work with youth who enter the agricultural sector. These partnerships need to be transparent and coherent across local to central level agencies, organizations, the private sector, and development institutions.

These examples highlight the contextual nuance rural development approaches require for effective vocational and skills training, for successful ICT use, and how FTA will have to consider other social and cultural barriers when working with young people (and households) in rural environments.

¹³ From: <http://www.fao.org/rural-employment/work-areas/youth-employment/en/>.

3.3 UNDP (2014). Empowered Youth, Sustainable Future.

UNDP's first youth strategy (2014-2017) sees young people as "a positive force for transformational change" (p. 2). Youth are defined by a flexible 15-24 age range.¹⁴ The strategy's approach reflects the wider UN System-Wide Action Plan on Youth (UN-SWAP) goals (see p. 4), and works through four key areas to implement activities:

- To support **capacity development** of youth organizations and young people in governmental institutions;
- To support youth **engagement in advocacy and mainstreaming** young people's issues for better development planning;
- To promote youth's **influence and leadership** in policy debates that include the voices of marginalized youth;
- To sustain young people's **participation in national policy** for more informed and effective strategies (p. 4).

From these activities three outcomes are identified for youth: 1) their economic empowerment (i.e., through skill building, entrepreneurship, access to productive sectors, and enhancing social protection); 2) their engagement in civil society and political processes; and 3) that they become agents for community resilience in times of conflict or disaster (pp. 2-3). The UNDP uses a human rights-based approach as a larger framework for working with actors (described as claim holders [i.e., youth, social groups] and duty bearers [the state]), and engage principles of gender equality, participation, non-discrimination and accountability. In sum, the UNDP youth strategy prioritizes the empowerment of youth through the advancement of rights and political participation, rather than directly enhancing or expanding the development opportunities available to them.

What is helpful for FTA is how the UNDP's framework (and others, as discussed below)

¹⁴ The report notes that this range is flexible, and young people up to 30 or 35 may be included, depending on national contexts (p. 8).

uses a broad (chronological) age¹⁵ range to identify and work with young people. This broad age range recognizes that "youth are not a homogenous constituency" and "face particular challenges of exclusion, inequality and multiple forms of discrimination" (p. 11). The UNDP further notes the socially constructed assumptions around (chronological) age that can often result in a lack of respect or discrimination towards youth for the skills or achievements they may or may not have (p. 11). Importantly then, the strategy aims to include disadvantaged youth – described as indigenous, ethnic and migrant groups as well as young women – who often face uneven access to education, work, and health services (pp. 11-12), something which may also be relevant for FTA and its work in rural or remote areas. A final lesson is how the strategy seeks to address both the demand side (via entrepreneurship and advocacy for youth jobs and internships) and the supply side of youth employment in UNDP countries (p. 27), which is also important for FTA to consider in addressing issues around rural employment.

3.4 DFID (2016). Putting Young People at the Heart of Development: The Department for International Development's Youth Agenda.

At a time of the 'youth bulge', DFID sees it as vital to take youth demographics seriously and put young people, 10-24 years old,¹⁶ at the heart of development. DFID sees young people as "a force for positive change – engines of growth, deliverers of development and changers of social norms" (p. 2). As such, DFID takes a life-cycle approach to youth that focuses on formative transitions into adulthood, and one they see as "valuable because it allows us to go beyond defining young people by age when identifying what it means to become adult" (p. 3). Likewise, they see this approach as considering the broader country, cultural and socio-economic contexts that affect transitions. DFID defines

¹⁵ See p. 13 of this report for the multiple ways to understand age.

¹⁶ But "recognizes that young people outside of this bracket will also be transitioning from childhood to adulthood" (p. 3).

two transition periods as particularly important in the life-cycle approach: early adolescence and adolescence to adulthood. They see these times as critical in young people's development, where education, sexual and reproductive rights are important in adolescence; and education, skills and networks are important in transitions to adulthood. Within these transitions, their programming aims to "work with young people as **agents** of social change and as passionate **advocates** seeking to shape and influence the world that they will inherit" (p. 2).

There are several important features of DFID's youth strategy that FTA programs can consider. First is how DFID works alongside young people by seeing them as development actors, and therefore aiming to support "youth-led development agencies, youth movements and young individuals who are bringing about local, regional and national change" (p. 5). DFID aims to do this by integrating youth into DFID programs (i.e. design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation); by enabling youth to deliver programs on the ground; and by "supporting young people to shift social norms and change behavior" of peers and others (p. 5).¹⁷ DFID also aims to make young people's voices heard by providing advocacy platforms. In this way it sees more chances for youth to be visible in a variety of ways, such as to be heard by decision makers; to be a part of political processes; to enable accountability and better services; to give young people access to data and information; and to enable young voices to be heard internationally (p. 6). Overall, a key lesson is how DFID's youth strategy mobilizes a broad range of youth voices within program development and policy. Bringing young people into the design of development programming early is something FTA can apply in its Flagship programming as well as the tools described here to engage and enable young voices to be heard.

¹⁷ We assume that since DFID supports "youth-led development at local, regional and national scales" they mean to include local young women and men for designing and implementing their activities (as compared to youth in external organizations). However, this difference is not made explicit.

3.5 UN Women (2017). Youth Leap into Gender Equality.

The UN Women's Youth and Gender Equality Strategy builds on several other international texts, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY),¹⁸ and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (p. 7). In working with youth, UN Women engages a flexible age range largely dependent upon country context, such as recognizing the age range used by the African Youth Charter (i.e., ages 15 to 35) (pp. 24-25). In light of "gender-responsive implementation" and "achieving gender equality and sustainable development" under the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Agenda, UN Women prioritizes the most vulnerable groups of young women and girls (p. 13). Key problems it focuses on are forms of gender-based discrimination (e.g., early marriage, HIV, genital mutilation/cutting and other numerous challenges) that often affect young adolescent girls and women, estimated at 600 million between the ages of 10-24 years old who primarily live in developing countries (UN Women 2017, p. 8). Besides these issues, it aims to be flexible to the types of contexts and problems faced by young people, as well as to support their education, capacity development, inclusive participation and civic engagement. In order to do this it adopts the "10 I's"¹⁹ – or methods of creating an enabling environment – by targeting a range of stakeholders, "including governments, civil society, business communities, the media, academia, men and boys, and youth" (p. 13).

¹⁸ Although the WPAY program does guide the UN's youth agenda, its activities were not reviewed for the purposes of this report. This is because several UN documents specific to youth programs were already reviewed (e.g. UN Women and Gender and Youth Strategy; UNDP and FAO et al. reports) and our aim was to include other development agencies within this review. Where relevant WPAY's activities were referenced in this report. See: <https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/wpay2010.pdf>.

¹⁹ The 10 I's include: Inspiration, Implementation, Indivisibility, Integration, Inclusion, Institutions, Investment, Information, Innovation and Impact.

One of the main goals of UN Women’s strategy is to “mainstream gender perspectives into the wider youth discourse, policies, and programs and to bring the youth perspective to its ongoing gender mainstreaming work across the UN system and beyond” (p. 12). It aims to do this by partnering with many entities to mobilize resources and have active monitoring and evaluation, such as the targeted stakeholders described above (p. 7). The strategy’s objectives therefore include providing *technical and financial support* to youth-led organizations and to regional and national levels of government; empowering young women and men through *leadership and capacity development* programs; and providing *technical advice* to address gaps in education systems, and *vocational training* to improve computer skills and help young women access employment or entrepreneurial opportunities (p. 9). Besides this, UN Women works at national scales to advocate SDG 5 (achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls).

For FTA, a major takeaway is how UN Women mainstreams gender perspectives into programs and policies, which include youth discourse. These types of program mainstreaming that are sensitive to gender and youth dynamics are relevant for FTA’s work with local and regional partners and within the larger CGIAR system. Other takeaways for FTA include how UN Women recognizes “the fluidity of what constitutes youth” (pp. 24-25) and that young people’s identities and opportunities are shaped by a range of socio-economic, cultural and physical rationales and experiences – including, class, age, ethnicity, gender and geography (p. 24). This approach then centers on ‘life management’ through supporting *young people* (who they recognize as often overlooked but affected by government policy) and *young adults* (more independent and in or close to working age) in its activities. Similar to DFID then, the UN Women’s strategy is helpful in how it identifies and approaches youth, and especially young women, today.

Table 3. Summary of youth approaches by selected international development organizations

	Definition of Youth	How are rural young people conceptualized?	Learnings for FTA
World Bank	12-24 age range	Invest in youth’s 5 life transitions from puberty to economic independence.	A ‘youth lens’ towards a wide range of economic and social policies that affect young people and a country’s development.
FAO, IFAD, CTA	15-24 age range*	Not discussed	Gives examples of best practices and activities that help address some of the key challenges youth face in agriculture.
UNDP	15-24 age range*	Human rights-based approach that aims to empower youth through rights, advocacy and participation.	Uses age inclusive language and demonstrates youth is a heterogeneous group. Gives strategies for youth advocacy, and an enabling environment for youth organizations at regional and international levels.
DFID	10-24 age range*	Life-cycle approach that focuses on two major life transitions for youth: early adolescence and adolescence to adulthood (i.e., young people and young adults).	The life-cycle approach identifies young people inclusively and integrates youth into the design and delivery of development programming early.
UN Women	10-24 age range*	A relational approach towards youth, and particularly vulnerable girls and women.	Considers multiple factors that can constrain or enhance opportunities across youth groups and classes differently.

*Considers ages outside of this defined range.

Takeaway messages for FTA

There are several key takeaway messages gained from these reports for FTA. First, the FAO et al. (2014) report highlights the lack of management, business and entrepreneurial skills that many rural youth have. Yet many rural development strategies rely on promoting entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial skills (e.g. World Bank 2006; UNDP 2014), which places solving the problem of underemployment and unemployment on rural youth. While enhancing entrepreneurial skills cannot be dismissed, the broader structural and societal problems of rural (youth) unemployment cannot be solved by self-employment alone, especially among young people who lack capital and basic business skills and are more interested in securing formal employment (Dhanani et al. 2009; Naafs and White 2012; Sumberg and Okali 2013; Sumberg et al. 2015; Ayele et al. 2017).

Second, many of the strategies examined here lacked a critical view of the multiple ways power relations – seen across social, economic and cultural spheres – work among rural populations and affect generations and genders differently. For instance, in her study of the SDGs and contemporary aid discourse, Clark-Kazak (2016) found that much of the language uses age groupings as a basic definition of youth, with little attention given to intergenerational power relations. The

dangers of this are that ‘normal’ chronological age groups for youth, adults and even gender categories are repeated in discourse, normalized, and promoted worldwide (such as by the World Bank 2006, see Ansell 2016b, p. 328). Similarly, the debate for ‘defining youth’ is unending for several reasons, but mainly because the nature of ‘youth’ (and adulthood) across legal and cultural contexts varies. As such, the best way forward for FTA may be to work with flexible categories, such as rural young people and young adults (see DFID’s 2016 youth strategy) and in the context of the capacities they require.

Lastly, mainstream agricultural policies that supply a ‘one-size fits all’ or promote ‘access to rural markets’ will not work for rural youth (FAO et al. 2014; Wiggins 2016; FAO 2018). This is for several reasons, but mainly because young people are differentiated, as is their access to resources and abilities (via networks, capital, knowledge, etc., see Ribot and Peluso 2003) in the contexts in which they live, and as compared to adults. Young people, for instance, often lack the credit and capital to gain further education, to access loans or current information, or to sell or buy resources (Dhanani et al. 2009; Ayele et al. 2017). Likewise, if young people have access to rural markets, many are often inherently weak, and can easily exclude inexperienced young people on the basis of their lack of knowledge or of their gender (Wiggins 2016).

4 Engagement with youth by CGIAR Research Programs

One of CGIAR's four key cross-cutting themes within the CGIAR Strategic Results Framework (SRF) is 'Ensuring gender and *youth equity* and inclusion' (CGIAR 2015, p. 6), and a related sub-Intermediate Development Outcome is "Improved capacity of women and *young people* to participate in decision-making" (ibid, p. 31). Moreover, the SRF refers to "the *role of youth* in agri-food systems, to embrace the dynamism of agriculture and innovation to create growth, income and jobs, particularly in rural areas" (ibid, p. 9). Aside from these thematic areas and aims, youth is only mentioned in CGIAR's overarching framework in reference to "entrepreneurship and innovation along the agri-food supply chain to provide major opportunities for *youth* employment" (ibid, p. 10). Recognizing that CGIAR aims to bring a greater 'youth' focus into its research and programming, this section reviews recent CRP strategies and reports to see how, and to what extent, youth are identified and approached in current/emerging CGIAR research programs.²⁰

Rather than developing one overarching framework, the CGIAR Research Programs have been tasked with creating their own strategies for engaging with youth. As a consequence, some CGIAR programs are still developing their youth strategies or have integrated a youth approach within their new or existing gender strategies. The most developed youth strategy to date, and the focus of this review, is the CGIAR Research Program on Dryland Systems (henceforth referred to as Dryland Systems)

Youth Strategy 2014-2017.²¹ Two other strategies, which have integrated youth into their existing gender strategies are also summarized: those of the Water, Land and Ecosystems (WLE) and Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH) CGIAR Research Programs.

Each of these strategies approach young people in useful ways for FTA. The Dryland Systems program recognizes the major unemployment challenges affecting rural young people in marginal areas of the Global South, and, in this way, conceptualizes how economic and socio-cultural factors affect young people's engagement in rural sectors. At the same time, this strategy notes the little research available (within and outside of CGIAR) on the topic. WLE's gender strategy posits gender and youth together as key factors for understanding rural dynamics within resource dependent communities. This is also a useful approach for FTA, although other cross-cutting factors – such as class, age or ethnicity – should be included when studying rural households' access and use of natural resources. The A4NH gender strategy examines gender (and youth) differences in labor and household contexts. It is, like WLE's strategy, useful in how it combines a gender and youth framework for examining power relationships. This section reviews each of these strategies in more detail.

20 Particularly the CGIAR Research Programs that aim to integrate youth issues and perspectives.

21 The CGIAR Research Program on Dryland Systems ended in 2016 and was not renewed in the second phase of CGIAR Research Programs.

4.1 CGIAR Research Program on Dryland Systems Youth Strategy 2014-2017 (2015)

Between 2013 and 2015, the CGIAR Research Program on Dryland Systems developed the first Youth Strategy within the CGIAR, with an overall goal to engage young people in agriculture (p. 3). The strategy recognized the growing youth unemployment problem and the difficulties of securing work, especially for women, in many dryland countries (e.g. North Africa, Middle East) (pp. 9-10). Cross-cutting themes such as youth, gender, biodiversity, and capacity building were reportedly mainstreamed throughout the program. The strategy focused on youth in two major dryland production systems: areas with endemic poverty and vulnerable people; and areas with the most potential to contribute to food security and livelihoods (p. 4). In the second category, youth are given the highest priority as they “are better placed to exploit new opportunities developed by the program to create/expand entrepreneurial activities” (p. 20). Three major objectives centered on methods, capacity building, advocacy and networking to summarize the program’s strategy for engaging youth in dryland areas (p. 21):

1. To develop and implement multidisciplinary methods for understanding the conflicting needs and demands of young people’s contexts and aspirations (i.e., addressing knowledge gaps) and identify the best entry points (by class and gender) to catalyze youth engagement in drylands livelihood activities.
2. To use innovative mechanisms to build support and the capacity of young people in order to attract them to entrepreneurial crop and livestock activities.
3. To work with policy makers, the public, and private entities to strengthen alliances and scale-up investments in youth skills and rural entrepreneurial activities.

For FTA, key lessons from the Dryland’s Youth Strategy lie in how young people are recognized and conceptualized in rural

areas.²² The strategy identified youth in several ways that give attention to local and social contexts, and importantly, how these connect to other cultural factors, such as gender. Youth were recognized by national (legal) definitions and customary roles; by categories such as teenagers (aged 15-19) and young adults (aged 20-24 but up to 30 years), with different physical abilities and maturity; and by gender, to pay attention to gender roles in agriculture, in the household, and in society (p. 12). In conceptualizing youth, the strategy examined the structural (limited land access, information/knowledge and skills, resources or capital) and socio-cultural factors (aspirations outside of agriculture, male and age dominant societies and practices, other values in society) that affected young people’s (dis)engagement in agriculture in dryland areas (pp. 13-15).

What may be less useful for FTA is the heavy reliance on the ‘entrepreneurial nature’ of rural young people because they are seen as better educated (i.e., in technology and media) and more world aware than their parents’ generation (p. 14). The strategy sees that today’s youth question traditional methods and/or cultural practices, or desire to do things differently. While many of these trends are present in rural areas, there are also problems with these assumptions. First, these types of statements tend to picture ‘rural youth’ as a homogenous social group, which they are not; and second, while many rural young people are better educated today than their parents’ generation, it is dangerous to assume that rural young people are educated enough, or have the resources, to be (or want to be) entrepreneurs. Many rural young men and women desire a regular paycheck which is not guaranteed through entrepreneurship, particularly if the business is in a rural, marginal area (Sumberg et al. 2015; Flynn et al. 2017).

Overall, the Dryland Systems youth strategy contains several important messages for FTA. First, it identified and approached young people with attention to local social norms

²² The strategy noted that there are few available data on youth in dryland areas or in the CGIAR system as a whole. Data that are available often treat youth as a homogenous category and do not differentiate between vulnerable households or persons (pp. 11, 16).

and cross-cutting factors, which affect the positions, power and directions young people take (pp. 16-17). Second, the strategy focused on activities and methods to address noted gaps in knowledge and practice of research on (and with) young people (p. 11). These methods aimed to test “youth responsive and transformative participatory action research” and to study young men and women’s aspirations to better understand what incentives might attract them to agriculture (pp. 17-18). Importantly, these methods match the strategy’s relational youth approach, and how it identified young people’s opportunities and constraints. Last, the strategy aimed to integrate these methods and field practices into the research designs and questions found in other CGIAR programs (i.e., the former CGIAR Research Program on Humid Tropics). This was done to inform analysis and planning, and to scale up initiatives for complementary public policies and institutions.

4.2 CGIAR Research Program on Water, Land and Ecosystems (WLE) Gender Strategy (2014)

In working with resource dependent communities, the overall goal of WLE’s Gender Strategy is “to improve the equitable sharing of benefits and responsibilities of water, land and ecosystems (both tangible and intangible), as defined by women and men, through innovations and approaches developed by WLE for enhancing the sustainable use and stewardship of the natural resource base” (p. 5). Women are a special focus because to a great extent, young and older men are found to engage in more off-farm work, creating gender and age imbalances in many rural areas (v; p. 16) – a trend that is also relevant for areas where FTA works. ‘Youth’ is used as a cross-cutting theme in WLE’s Guiding Principles that discuss the efficient use of resources, and restoring and improving small-scale irrigation and rain-fed agriculture systems (p. 1).

A key lesson for FTA from WLE’s gender strategy is its relational approach to “gender-responsive and gender-specific research”, and the importance placed on supporting people, such as women, older people, youth

and children, who do not migrate from rural areas.²³ Likewise, its methods and activities mentioned (i.e., gender analysis and mapping, surveys, focus groups, interviews, etc.) aim to take account of the ways power relations operate through gender. For including youth in such a strategy, FTA would want to extend the analysis to other cross-cutting factors such as geography, age, class, and ethnicity, to better understand how power relations operate in households and society.

4.3 CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH): Gender Strategy for Phase II (2016)

The overall goal of the A4NH Gender Strategy is to “understand how gender influences impacts on nutrition and health” by examining gender differences in labor, food production and household contexts (p. 3). Within this strategy, “how to target youth” is a cross-cutting theme that centers on those “nutritionally vulnerable”, such as mothers, children and adolescent girls (p. 7). Emphasis is placed on adolescent girls for investing “in their health and nutrition, including education on infant and young child feeding practices” as well as in childbearing and family planning education (p. 7). Other related outcomes of the A4NH Gender Strategy are to bring “gender equitable control of productive assets and resources, and improved capacity of women and young people to participate in decision-making” (p. 9).

This strategy is relevant to FTA in that it acknowledges gender roles and power relationships among adults and young people; however, other power relationships, such as those that exist within the household by age, generation, class and ethnicity, are not as fully conceptualized. For FTA it will be important to extend these power relationships to young people’s social fields – communities, markets, schools, jobs – as these are also areas where young women and men engage in and negotiate social relations and forms of power associated with their gender, age, and ethnicity.

23 Also see: <https://wle.cgiar.org/partner-news/migration-water-and-trajectory-rural-change-south-asia>.

5 Moving FTA's Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy forward

This section gives ways forward for how to engage rural young people in forest and agroforestry landscapes through FTA. Each learning area is explained and justified for its relevance to FTA Flagships, and offers examples of activities, strategies and methods FTA might consider or reference. These lessons are based on the above review of academic literature and current rural development youth programs and activities, as described in Chapter 2, but also on consultations and discussions with FTA Management Team members (FTA Director and Flagship leaders) and the FTA MELIA leader. Discussions with Management Team members were held at the CIFOR Annual Meeting, by email, and virtually (on Skype) in October 2017. They took the form of semi-structured interviews with key youth themes discussed in relation to the research component (Flagship, Cross-cutting theme or Portfolio) under each of the interviewee's purview. FTA leaders were asked to describe the activities their teams were already engaged in concerning youth, and to describe their vision for engaging with youth in the work they lead in FTA.

5.1 Current activities and key youth approaches for FTA Flagships

To date, FTA Flagships have carried out activities which are attentive to rural young people's needs and interests through training programs in schools, with youth groups, and with young mothers. These activities include training on the value of fruit trees, both for nutrition and value-added production; engaging youth organizations in international forums on climate change initiatives; and being inclusive of positions for young people within the employment structures of rural enterprises. These are important first steps. As FTA leaders recognize the importance of youth sensitive analyses for their research programs, further engaging a relational approach towards understanding young people – within other social analyses – will help FTA develop programs that consider rural households' (and young people's) current contexts, interests and opportunities. Table 4 outlines key research questions on youth across the Flagships, and additional ways in which FTA can integrate youth perspectives into its programs. The table reflects several lines of questioning around youth in forest/agroforest landscapes: 1) what are young people's aspirations, and how do those relate to forest and agroforestry landscapes?; 2) how are changes in forest and agroforestry landscapes affecting young people?; 3) how do/can forest and agroforestry landscapes provide equitable opportunities for young people to pursue secure and fulfilling livelihoods?

Table 4. Engaging youth across FTA Flagships²⁴

Key research questions	Desirable outcomes as a result of FTA's influence on youth discourses, policies and programs, outreach and capacity development
FTA-wide	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the specific tree and forest sectors in which those involved are aging? What are their characteristics and why are young men and/or women moving away from them? What sectors attract young women and men and why? 2. How are benefits from forests and agroforestry systems distributed across generations and among groups of young people? 3. How are the division of household labor and responsibilities changing in rural areas? What opportunities do forest and agroforestry systems offer young women and men to work independently? 4. How will (agro)ecological knowledge be maintained and reproduced as many young people leave their villages and rural areas? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement of a diversity of rural young women and men in local to national level partnerships to advocate and give a voice to rural young people's needs and interests in tree and forest landscapes. • Contextually-rooted knowledge on intergenerational changes in communities' forestry and agroforestry knowledge and practice to influence youth-related (and rural development) discourses and policies. • Training/education and employment prospects that support the interests of young women and men. • Local and regional rural development activities that strengthen and advocate for young people's organizations and involvement in tree, forest, and farm landscapes.
Flagship 1: Tree production for sustainable landscapes and resilience	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What types of tree crops and production techniques are young women and men interested in and why? 2. What tree, crop and forestry training is available, missing and/or needed in school curricula, technical education and development programs? 3. How can information and communication technologies (ICTs) be harnessed to make tree crops and agroforestry attractive for young people? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replication of successful regional farms and/or field schools or other models for working with young women and men to raise seedlings, domesticate strong varieties, and/or create local products. • Education and funding for youth education in the use and production of fruit trees.
Flagship 2: Improving tree and crop production and marketing for smallholders' livelihoods	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do young people contribute to their household's or family's livelihood strategies, and how is this affected by gender and stage in the life cycle? 2. How are land uses and labor dynamics evolving as young people and household members pursue more multi-local livelihoods? 3. What are young men's and women's interests in producing and marketing tree products? 4. What opportunities and constraints do different groups of young people face to accessing modern ICTs to improve marketing and organizational development? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actors and institutions that can facilitate technology, training and resources for young women's and men's production and marketing of trees and crops. • Secondary and tertiary education institutions that offer young men and women courses and degrees relevant to tree and agroforestry sectors, with attention to production and marketing activities and other areas that reflect young people's interests and offer improved livelihood prospects.

24 FTA has five main research themes or 'Flagships': **Flagship 1:** Tree genetic resources to bridge production gaps and promote resilience; **Flagship 2:** Enhancing how trees and forests contribute to smallholder livelihoods; **Flagship 3:** Sustainable value chains and investments to support forest conservation and equitable development; **Flagship 4:** Landscape dynamics, productivity and resilience; **Flagship 5:** Forests, trees and agroforestry for climate change adaptation and mitigation (CGIAR Research Program on Forests, Trees and Agroforestry 2017b).

Flagship 3: Sustainable value-chains and investments for forest conservation

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|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the challenges and opportunities that different youth face in accessing markets and information related to tree products? 2. In which tree or forest-based enterprises, if any, are young men and women interested in participating? What skills, incentives and institutional arrangements are required to enable them to do so? 3. What are the livelihood trajectories of young people working in oil palm, timber, and other tree-based commodity sectors? What is their relationship to their natal village lands? 4. How do young women and men organize and access the land, technologies, finance, markets, and/or other resources required to participate in tree-product value chains? 5. How do local forest enterprises, agroforestry or agribusiness investments affect the dynamics of youth employment and migration in surrounding rural communities? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market institutions, information channels, financing, etc. that work for young women and men. • Value chain development for forest and agroforestry products of interest to young men and women. • Measures (policies, programs, projects) that enhance young women's and men's inclusion in agribusiness decision making and governance. • Options for resource-constrained (e.g. land constrained) young people to access entrepreneurship opportunities (e.g. out-grower schemes). • Policy, legal, financial, and business training and support for youth engaged in value chains (e.g. through cooperatives, private businesses, etc.). • Contextually-informed policies and programs that support safe youth migration, safe sending of remittances, and rural economic diversification, amid changing rural land uses and labor dynamics. |
|---|---|

Flagship 4: Institutions and actors in landscape dynamics

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|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How are young women and men positioned within rural organizations and forest and land governance? 2. How are changes in rural institutions (e.g. new policies or governance systems introduced by governments, cooperatives, or private sector enterprises, normative changes, or other institutional changes) affecting young women and men? 3. What institutional arrangements support young women's and men's (secure) access to land and resources? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local institutions, collective organizations, and governance mechanisms that offer young women and men voice and influence over the future of forest and agroforestry landscapes. • Measures to improve young people's access to land (e.g. through cooperatives, outgrower associations, land leasing, land markets or purchases, distribution of state land) and resources. |
|--|--|

Flagship 5: Mitigate and adapt to climate change in land and forests

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|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How does climate change factor into the livelihood and migration decisions of rural households and their young women and men? 2. How are young people contributing to decisions concerning climate change mitigation and adaptation at multiple scales? 3. What are the interests and opportunities for young women and men in the bioenergy sector? What are the related trainings and skills rural youth need, and what are available technologies and financing options? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures to enhance the voice and influence of young women and men in climate change-related decisions and processes. • New rural and urban opportunities for young women and men in renewable energy/climate change sectors, addressing the technical, marketing and management skills (and finance) needed to fill these roles. |
|--|--|

Monitoring and Evaluation

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How are diverse groups of young people integrated and engaged in project planning, development and implementation of activities? 2. How can young women and men contribute to monitoring changes in, and adaptive learning for the sustainable management of, forests and agroforestry systems? 3. What indicators are needed to track progress towards improving the equitable inclusion of young people in forest and agroforestry development processes? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approaches to engage young people in monitoring change in rural landscapes to make informed decisions about land and resource management. • Project design frameworks and methods that successfully integrate social dynamics (gender, youth, aging, etc.) into project phase development, planning and implementation. |
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5.2 Engaging rural youth in FTA

FTA can play an important role in contributing to filling the knowledge gap in the CGIAR (and the wider academic literature) on rural youth, particularly in relation to the forestry and agroforestry sectors. This will require engaging with new conceptual approaches, field methods and field practices in FTA Flagships. In large part, this means placing more effort in four key areas:

1. Engaging the heterogeneity of rural youth through a relational approach;
2. Adapting field methods and practices for research with young people;
3. Supporting local and regional rural development activities with a youth lens; and
4. Engaging local to national level partnerships to advocate and support rural young men and women.

5.2.1 Engage the heterogeneity of rural youth through a relational approach

Rationale: The problems affecting rural youth's engagement in tree, forest and agricultural production landscapes are multi-faceted in that many stem from rural sectors' challenges of low returns and lack of modern technology systems and infrastructure, to societal trends and young people's interests in secure, paid work. Understanding this heterogeneity in local contexts and among rural young people means seeing 'youth' as a relational category. Such an approach pays special attention to the ways young men and women are shaped by socio-economic norms that stem from the household and society. It also pays attention to how factors such as gender, age, ethnicity, and class position them within these relationships. Seeing youth as a relational category can thus allow for an examination of how different social and economic factors inform the constraints, decisions or opportunities of young men and women in rural areas (see Table 4), such as explaining why women and girls are more likely to experience gender-based discrimination in access to education, land and natural resources; and why, in some places, young men may be more likely to migrate than young women due to gender norms and family or societal expectations (see Deere 1995; World Bank 2006; AfDB 2016; UN Women 2017).

[All Flagships]

Example Activities

- Employ research methods that gather data from youth and households to understand their aspirations and wider household constraints or opportunities (see Ripoll et al. 2017).
- Engage concepts such as social age that pays attention to how people are made to feel 'young' or 'vulnerable'. This concept acknowledges how age intersects with other power relations, such as intra- and inter-generational relationships, and how these relations can inform identity and/or access to opportunities (Clark-Kazak 2016: 104-105).
- Arrange group discussions or other activities based on interests, gender or needs first rather than based on age categories.²⁵ The aim is to limit the factors which may cause some persons or groups not to speak (see strategies of DFID [2016] or UN Women [2017] for how they use 'needs-based' categories for working with youth, rather than chronological age limits).

5.2.2 Adapt field methods and initiate projects to research with young people

Rationale: Understanding rural youth challenges and opportunities requires methods which are context-specific, and which can study youth in relation to larger social groups and economic structures (adults, peers, etc., see 5.1 relational approach above). Applying these methodological and conceptual approaches can better reveal how young people sit within and relate to processes such as land use change and migration (Berckmoes and White 2014; Elias et al. 2018). In adapting FTA's methods to research with young people, the Dryland Systems Youth Strategy (2015), the DFID Youth Strategy (2016) and the gender-responsive practices of WLE's Gender Strategy (2014) all present good examples of such field methods that ask questions of relevance to youth experiences, and

²⁵ See the CIMMYT blog "Engaging youth: beyond the buzzword": <http://www.cimmyt.org/engaging-youth-beyond-the-buzzwords/>.

methods which aim to research, work and learn with rural young people. Engaging methods such as these within FTA's programs is critical to address research gaps within the CGIAR and wider rural development literature. Furthermore, these methods could not only strengthen FTA's research agenda, but give youth experience and confidence through their involvement in programmatic work.

[Flagships #2 #3 #4 #5]

Example Activities

- Conduct interviews, surveys and focus group discussions with rural young women and men (and with households/wider community as needed) to understand rural youth's needs, priorities, constraints, interests and aspirations (as described in 2.5.1.9. Gender in the FTA proposal, p. 178; also see Table 1, impact pathways in WLE 2014, p. 7).
- Involve youth early into the design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of programs (see DFID 2016).
- Consider research approaches that focus on marginal and indigenous groups and those that prioritize young women and pay attention to dynamics and power relations within households and communities (see WLE 2014; DFID 2016; UN Women 2017).
- Consider developing longitudinal surveys that follow young people over time on related FTA thematic areas (e.g., see projects such as Young Lives and Migrating Out of Poverty).²⁶
- Practice participatory discussions that engage assessments of youth contexts and abilities, and if needed, other livelihood opportunities/challenges faced in local and regional contexts. These groups could be identified by farm/nonfarm specializations or interests, and also be used to discuss other priorities and needs (i.e., training, infrastructure or knowledge needs) (see Bryceson 2002).

²⁶ Young Lives, a longitudinal study into children and youth around the world <https://www.younglives.org.uk/>; and Migrating out of Poverty <http://migratingoutofpoverty.dfid.gov.uk/>, study the relationship between internal and regional migration and poverty in Africa and Asia.

5.2.3 Support local and regional rural development activities that address rural youth's challenges

Rationale: The joint project on “Facilitating access of rural youth to agricultural activities” (by FAO, IFAD and MIJARC) identified several challenges affecting rural young people in agriculture today. The main challenge the report found was young people's inability to access land and finance for agricultural (and agroforestry) activities (FAO et al. 2014, p. 95), and substantiates literature on rural people's wider abilities to access – and gain benefits from – natural resources (Ribot and Peluso 2003). One way to address this problem is to bring young people together as farmer groups or youth organizations to enable an ‘economy of scale’ in accessing rural capital, such as buying or selling agricultural inputs, obtaining credit, or accessing land. These groups can also act as advocates by giving young people a bigger voice in local and regional dialogue. Farmer Field Schools can be used as a way to improve rural youth's knowledge (via farmer groups) and smallholder activities on such things as improving farm/tree-crop productivity and farm technology, or as a way to learn enterprise and value chain activities (e.g. see Task Force Mapalad in FAO et al. 2014, pp. 21-22). Critical aspects are that rural young people hold decision-making roles and responsibilities within these groups, and that they do not become ‘mixed’ where older adults can take control (FAO et al. 2014, p. 95).

[Flagships #1 #2 #3 #5]

Example Activities

- Support education and training to rural youth organizations in financial management, savings and loan activities, ICT use and marketing, seed saving activities, irrigation and water management, and new and/or modernization practices for improving farming, tree or land productivity and resilience.
- Work with local and regional organizations to learn from successful rural youth organizations and Farmer Field Schools.
- Encourage and support youth farmer groups and organizations to form informal Savings Clubs to generate group savings,

loan and interest activities (see the “Friends Help Friends” saving group in Cambodia in FAO et al. 2014).

- Encourage and support rural youth organizations to establish decision-making positions and responsibilities to organize their needs and activities.
- Work with Farmer Field Schools, youth organizations, and local universities and/or schools to organize regular exchanges in co-mentoring practices.

5.2.4 Engage in local to national level partnerships to advocate and support rural young women and men

Rationale: Rural youth, and particularly those in the Global South, often lack a powerful voice: they may be marginalized in the household or community because of their age, gender or position, and may also be marginalized in matters concerning agrarian production systems. As mentioned previously, the CGIAR, and the wider academic and policy literature note how rural youth contexts and perspectives from the Global South are often unheard and understudied (e.g. see Panelli et al. 2007; Jeffrey 2008; 2012; Punch 2015). This recognition is important as it means there is a lack of information on how environmental and educational transformations, migration, state policies and social relations to land have evolved to affect rural young people’s access and opportunities today. For FTA, addressing these gaps means not only researching with youth to learn their interests and needed skills, but supporting the ‘scaling-up’ of rural youth organizations and groups to regional, national and international fora (e.g. see Togolese National Farmers Forum in FAO et al. 2014, p. 79). It also means discussing the structural challenges youth face, such as the lack of formal sector jobs and the aspiration-attainment gaps widely reported in Africa (Leavy and Smith 2010; Chinsinga and Chasukwa 2012; Elias et al. 2018; UNDESA 2018). Bringing these ‘youth’ perspectives and discussions on specific issues (e.g., such as informal and formal education and land reform) to national and international scales are needed in order to place greater priority and investments on the resources youth need and/or lack, but also, to give

youth encouragement and support (see Borras 2006). These activities correspond to UNDESA’s (2018) recent report which underscores the need to address these broader structural issues that affect young people’s opportunities, rather than simply strengthening their skills for ‘employability’.

[Flagships #2 #3 #4 #5]

Example Activities

- Support youth groups and organizations to document and record (using audio-visual methods) their strongest agrarian production systems or practices, for influencing youth policy and initiatives (e.g. see Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network [FANRPAN] example in FAO et al. 2014, p. 82).
- Work with governments and stakeholders to improve research practices that document rural and household labor dynamics (e.g., migration effects on gender, see Bryceson 2018) and types of informal and formal educational skills needed by rural youth, as well as highlight the structural problems in formal sector employment (see Chant and Jones 2005; Woronov 2016; Chea and Huijsmans 2018; UNDESA 2018) to inform country-specific policies that work to address gender imbalances, education and employment reform, and programs that improve the ability for rural young women and men to access land, capital and resources (see Ethiopia’s example in Holden and Ghebru 2016).
- Encourage and support regional and/or national organizations to connect older and younger farmers for the purposes of mentoring, accessing, sharing, leasing or selling land (e.g. see Taiwan’s “Small Landlords, Large Tenants Programme” or the trading firm, Rivall Uganda Limited, for examples in FAO et al. 2014).
- Work with governments, universities and public and private donors (including those within the CGIAR or UN systems) to offer scholarships in agriculture and forestry education and vocational training (WPAY 2010).

- Work with governments and public/private employers to create and promote formal and informal apprenticeships, jobs and training for rural young people.
- Encourage and support CGIAR programs and development banks to offer financial management training and savings and credit courses for young farmer groups, cooperatives and organizations (for tools, see IFAD 2010; HLPE 2013; FAO et al. 2014).
- Encourage and support farmers groups to take action and represent their needs and interests at regional and national scales; help facilitate these to link to international discussions in the CGIAR system, and other organizations such as UN Women, UNDP, FAO and IFAD.

Conclusion

In the current context of rising population numbers, limited employment, and changing aspirations, rural youth in the Global South experience widespread difficulties in accessing meaningful livelihoods that meet their ambitions, now and in the future. Researching with young people to learn about their interests and opportunities, as well as their difficulties, can bring critical lessons for FTA's Flagships and the wider CGIAR now and in the future. This report has argued that the best way to study rural young people is by understanding them in relation to their households, communities and cultures, and moving within, and against, larger economic and political environments. Additional concepts such as age, gender, class and generation are helpful for revealing how other forms of power can act to include or exclude young rural women and men in opportunities for education and work.

In moving FTA's social inclusion strategy forward, a relational approach will require applied and empirical accounts of the challenges and opportunities young women and men, and boys and girls, face in forest and agricultural environments. FTA's field methods, then, should research with youth in

a way that captures their perspectives and voices, and perhaps engage in longitudinal studies that follow young lives over time. These methods mean learning about the factors and contexts that influence young people's decisions, mobilities and points of view. What this does not mean is creating projects or programs that focus on young people alone, as doing so would ignore the contexts and social relations in which they live and move.

Integrating a relational approach across FTA's Flagships can address critical knowledge gaps about rural young women, men and households in forest and tree environments. Supporting participatory research with rural youth groups, schools and informal and formal networks is one way FTA and its partners can address the lack of information and opportunities facing many rural and resource dependent people. These youth inclusive approaches can further the generational knowledge needed to reach FTA's objectives, and can inform new avenues for longer-term research that follow patterns of rural labor and land uses, and address the challenges arising from livelihood and landscape change.

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Appendix 1

FTA Flagships

Flagship 1: Recognizes the importance of tree genetic resources for productive and sustainable landscapes. It aims to enhance the coordination and investments of tree genetic resources and production systems to bridge production gaps and promote resilience towards safeguarding genetic diversity.

Flagship 2: Aims to enhance how trees and forests contribute to smallholder livelihoods' food security and nutrition through research on forests, tree crops and silvopastoral systems (including production and marketing).

Flagship 3: Supports public and private institutional arrangements that create enabling environments for sustainable commodity production. Encourages business models, trade and governance arrangements that integrate smallholders for positive impacts across social, economic, and environmental dimensions.

Flagship 4: Aims to understand landscape scale patterns of change between ecosystem services, forests and agricultural production systems to understand livelihoods and ecosystems across multiple dynamics and wider contexts. Aims to identify the actors, stakeholders and institutions active and/or marginalized in land use change.

Flagship 5: Aims to research how to mitigate and adapt to climate change in land and forests. Examines how to sustainably produce bioenergy in developing countries and assess the performance of policy and practice in addressing these goals.

WORKING PAPER

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'Rural youth' is a new focus area within the CGIAR (and in the wider academic literature), yet there are few studies which examine young people's roles and relationships to trees, forests and agroforests. This background report suggests ways the CGIAR Research Program on Forests, Trees, and Agroforestry (FTA) can involve rural young people into its research and action. This is at a time when academic and government reports note the widening gaps between the aspirations young people have as compared to the realities of the job markets in much of the Global South. For rural and marginal areas, these trends are especially acute as agriculture and forestry sectors decline and many rural young people desire stable, paid employment. , suggesting now is a critical time to involve young people into FTA's research and action. In doing so, the report examines how rural youth are studied from a variety of angles: in contemporary agrarian, youth and development literatures, and examines how young people are studied by five large development agencies; and by some of CGIAR's Research Programs. In learning from these studies, the report offers four major lessons for FTA. These lessons focus on how to study rural youth and their various contexts, conceptually and methodologically; how to engage local to regional rural development activities; and how to support local to national level partnerships. All of these activities give means and networks of support for rural young people's development and employment. In sum, the report offers key questions and starting points for engaging with young people in each of FTA's Flagships, which can not only move the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy forward, but help study and address the challenges facing rural livelihoods and landscapes now and in the future.

The CGIAR Research Program on Forests, Trees and Agroforestry (FTA) is the world's largest research for development program to enhance the role of forests, trees and agroforestry in sustainable development and food security and to address climate change. CIFOR leads FTA in partnership with Bioversity International, CATIE, CIRAD, ICRAF, INBAR and TBI.

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