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“Management of land use systems for enhanced food security:
conflicts, controversies and resolutions”

Managing Land Use Systems with Young Farmers in Kenya: Field Experiences of Controversies and Possibilities

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Abstract

This poster shall present an analysis of land use practices on small farms owned by young farmers in Kenya in relation to food security programmes in the country. Literature suggests that the future of African agriculture is in increasing its human capital, particularly in a new generation of farmers responsive to changing climate, technology, and markets. It is therefore important to understand what implications the current land use practices among ‘new farmers’ might have on future food security and biodiversity.

Recent programmes focusing on increasing a new generation of young farmers’ participation in food security programmes have shown a huge potential for redefining Africa’s food security through engaging youth in scaling up, modernizing and diversifying the farming systems. However, some of these ‘youth’ food security programmes, if not accompanied by sustainable approaches to land use might pose a threat to biodiversity, water, soil and as well, may be affected by the increasing impacts of climate change on agriculture.

This poster shall present findings from a case study research on young farmers’ contribution to food security, and the implications on land use systems in Kenya. I show the controversies of modernising small farming systems and as well, the possible impacts of introducing sustainable farming systems with young farmers. I recommend that sustainable land use management systems including practices such as evergreen agriculture, agroforestry, and protected agriculture shall be required alongside the efforts to increase human capital and enhance technological change and markets for food security in Africa. Importantly, enhancing food security through sustainable land use systems that include young farmers contribute to achieving social equity in agrifood systems.

Keywords: Kenya, land use analysis, sustainability, youth