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Youth Access to Land, Credit and Choice of Farming as an Occupation in Bauchi, Nigeria

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Abstract

Youth under 25 years old shares 60 % of Nigerian population. Almost half of the population (100 million in 2017) lives in rural areas. These facts make rural youth key players in future development of Nigeria. The study investigates access of rural youth to land, credit and the choice of farming as an occupation in Bauchi State, Nigeria. The study adopted multiple sampling techniques in a multi-stage sampling process to select the study communities and respondents. A total of 180 youth respondents (under 25 years) and 36 elders (older than 44 years) are being surveyed in 12 communities. The data are being collected through structured personal interviews and 7 focus group discussions. The preliminary results show that majority of the respondents prefer to do other work as an occupation than farming. Parents and relatives are the major sources of obtain land and credit for farming by the youth. Irrespective of which mode (market and non-market) the youth employ to access agricultural land in rural areas, there are constraints to their farm size, location and quality. Majority of the youth hold small land sizes 1-2 hectares for farming purposes. In the studied location, traditional land tenure system is applied. In addition, cost of accessible land is usually high. Both are the general constraints for youth to get involved in farming as an occupation. However, using the logit model the study will also identify less obvious factors influencing the access of youth to land and credit. Further, factors influencing a decision-making of youth to become a farmer will be investigated. Farming should be made to be an occupation than just a stereotypical- tradition. Responsive policies are crucial in attracting young people to farm.

Keywords: Bauchi, credit, farming, land, Nigeria, occupation, rural, youth