

Rural Youth and Agriculture:

Challenges and Opportunities *IFAD's Perspective*

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Outline: Conveying 3 principal messages

1. Rural youths' profile is heterogeneous, making standardized interventions a huge challenge.
2. Rural youths face a series of agri./non-agri. challenges that are intertwined and constrain their participation in rural-based livelihood development.
3. Opportunities exist that could be explored to contribute to enhance more rural youths involvement in agri. for their economic and livelihood empowerment.



Rural youths' profile is heterogeneous, *making standardized interventions a huge challenge*

- ❑ A growing demographic segment with:
 - Limited & poor quality and poorly remunerated employment;
 - Limited entrepreneurial skills and opportunities
- ❑ Multiple and Diverse sub-segments
- ❑ Fluidity/fungibility/volatility



Rural youths face agri./non-agri. challenges *that are intertwined and constrain their participation in rural-based livelihood development.*

1. Insufficient access to relevant knowledge, information and education;
2. Limited involvement in policy dialogue, regulation & decision-making;
3. Limited access to and/or ownership of land;
4. Limited access to input and output markets;
5. Difficulties implementing (green) environmentally-friendly agri. jobs to be more credit worthy;
6. Inadequate access to targeted inclusive rural financial services.



But opportunities abound *to improve rural youth involvement in agriculture*

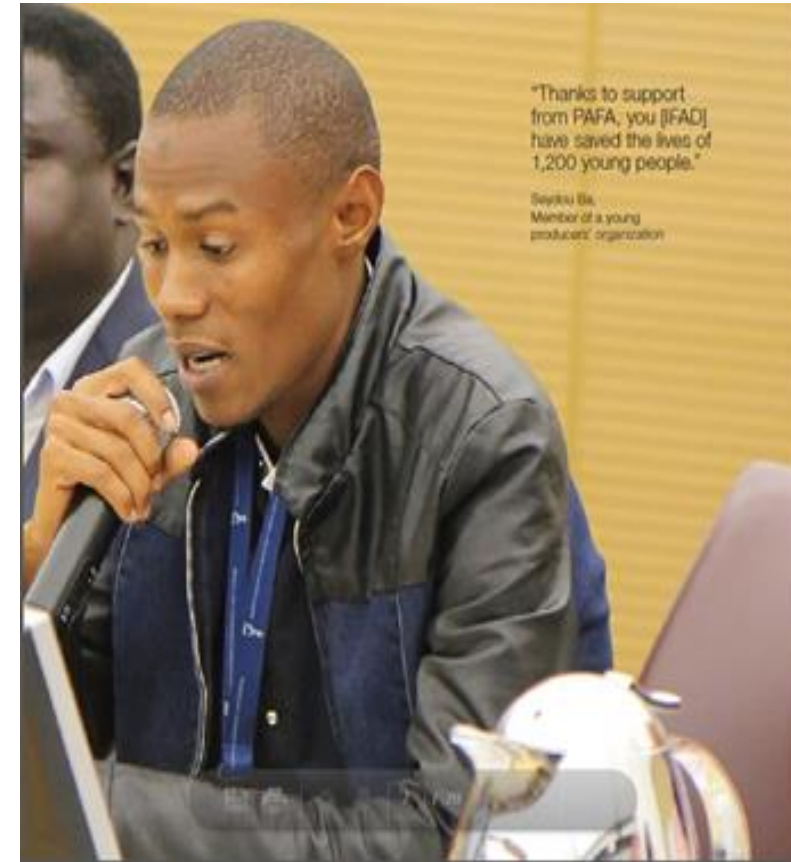
- ❑ Dedicated holistic (multisectoral/multidimensional) rural youth development strategies & agenda
 - political economy - macro/meso/micro level interventions
 - rural youth champions - pro-active participation in policy, regulation, & decision-making

- ❑ More context-based pro rural youth VC development approaches
 - subsidized experimentation/incubations/greenfields
 - training in viable business development skills
 - technology-enhanced interventions along the VC.



Opportunities *con't.*

- ❑ Identification of market outlets paying remunerative/full cost recovery prices
- ❑ Development of profitable/bankable business plans
 - rural youth ag. MSMEs as a business
- ❑ Associated post-harvest management enterprises



IFAD selected cases with dedicated rural youth support for engagement in agriculture

18 projects with dedicated activities for rural youth engagement in agriculture (since 2003)

- ❑ Benefiting from IFAD's two main financing tools
 - Concessionary priced loans - 8
 - Grants - 10
- ❑ Country-specific activities across 5 regions

Some concluding/forward-looking observations

- ❑ FAO/IFAD 2004 joint study identified the 6 challenges rural youths face:
 - access to inclusive financial services (beyond savings) is their most significant constraint;
- ❑ Rural youth - a Corporate Mandate:
 - A cross-cutting thematic focus like gender and nutrition;
- ❑ More piloting, experimentation and graduation programming work needed:
 - better understand and better serve this potentially huge and untapped rural youth market segment;
 - more engaged in secondary agri. (post-harvest handling and other forward linkages (value addition & trading))
- ❑ No dedicated rural youth policy yet but guidelines being prepared :
 - but more rural youth activities in the pipeline
 - capacity development (the process) vs. capacity building (the event)



Thank You