



LEARNING KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FOR AGRICULTURE TO IMPROVE RURAL LIVELIHOODS



PRESENTATION OF SYNTHESIS REPORT






**'WORKING IN THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR MAKES ME HAPPY
BECAUSE I CAN MAKE NEW FRIENDS AND HAVE A LOT OF FUN'
(YOUNG WOMAN IN POPIS, CAMBODIA)**

- Diminishing access to productive land and other natural resources
- Strong linkages between on- and off-farm employment
- Changing values and lifestyles influencing attitudes towards family farming
- Greater access to schooling but real obstacles for the poorest young people



**'I WISH I OWN EVEN ONE QARAT. I WOULD BE IN HEAVEN
AND FILL THE HOUSE WITH ITS FOOD AND BLESSINGS'
(YOUNG WOMAN IN GEMI, EGYPT)**

- Farming as a 'given' amongst other livelihoods which young people also engaged in
- Looking for a secure income, but money was not the only consideration (social environment, sense of fulfilment, independence)
- Lack of access to land and supportive infrastructure to improve agricultural livelihoods
- Sense that traditional practices/indigenous knowledge were not enough to sustain livelihoods



‘LEARNING AGRICULTURAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS IS NOT A QUESTION OF CHOICE, WE LEARNED IT BECAUSE IT IS A WAY OF LIFE, WHERE WE ARE BORN FROM’ (YOUNG PERSON, BASONA, ETHIOPIA)

- Importance of intergenerational transfer of technical agricultural knowledge and soft skills
- Accidental versus intentional informal learning
- Informal learning was most effective when people saw strong benefits (cell phones, Eucalyptus) & developed their own strategies
- Informal learning filled gaps where no formal extension services were available



'A SCHOOLED FOOLISH PERSON IS BETTER THAN AN UNSCHOOLED CLEVER PERSON'


(YOUNG MAN IN YABELLO, ETHIOPIA)

- Young people had strong desire for formal education as offering economic returns and social status
- School as a threat: to traditional livelihoods and financial burden/loss of labour from within the family
- School was associated with a new way of life rather than agricultural livelihoods



**'FARMERS UNDER 40 YEARS ARE YOUNG, DYNAMIC AND
LESS RESISTANT TO NEW TECHNIQUES'
(CONTRACT FARMING EMPLOYER, CAMBODIA)**

- Exclusion from NGO, Government and private skills development programmes due to preconditions around land ownership, literacy, educational level
- One-size-fits-all approaches to functional adult literacy (in terms of vocational skills and programme structures)
- Lack of recognition of diversity amongst young people as a target group, and constraints faced by poorest youth



‘THESE CRAFTS ARE NOT IMPORTANT IN OUR POOR VILLAGE: THESE SKILLS ARE DESIRED IN PLACES LIKE CAIRO’ (YOUNG MAN, GEMI)

- Technical/occupational skill development prioritised over soft skills in formal institutions and non-formal programmes (including agricultural extension)
- Focus on technical knowledge in TV and radio programmes
- Indigenous knowledge, skills and practices rarely recognised or built on in educational programmes



'THERE ARE NOT CLEARLY DEFINED MECHANISMS OF ENSURING WHETHER THE DEMONSTRATED METHODS ARE GETTING THROUGH TO THE MAJORITY OF FARMERS THROUGH THE MODEL FARMERS' (EXTENSION WORKER, ETHIOPIA)

- Embedded learning of literacy/numeracy, on-the-job training and client-responsive approaches were most effective (private sector/NGOs)
- One-to-one individualised support preferred to the 'cascade' demonstration model of extension
- Strong need for other support alongside training
- Providers emphasised group learning for sustainability but this was sometimes problematic



IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND FUTURE RESEARCH TO ENHANCE YOUNG PEOPLE'S LIVELIHOODS IN RURAL AREAS

- Young people's more complex views of the relationship between learning, schooling and farming challenge the current narrow focus within the Education For All agenda
- The value and extent of informal learning in rural communities needs to be recognised in agricultural development and adult learning programmes.
- Policy and programmes need to prioritise development of transferable skills, including 'green' skills, for lifelong learning.
- Inter-sectoral linkages are essential in developing integrated (rather than complementary) approaches to learning and the necessary support in addition to training