

IFAD-UNESCO Global Seminar on  
“Learning Knowledge and Skills for Agriculture  
to Improve Rural Livelihoods”

**UNDERSTANDING RURAL YOUTH KNOWLEDGE  
AND SKILLS LEARNING PROCESS FOR IMPROVED  
LIVELIHOODS**

*Case of Mixed Farming and Pastoralist Communities*

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# ***COUNTRY STUDY TEAM-ETHIOPIA***

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## country's socio-economic contexts

- 85percent of employment
- A large part of the economy is characterized by semi-subsistence agriculture with exceedingly low incomes.
- Rural-and Agriculture-Centered Development as a Means of Ensuring Rapid Economic Growth
- The policy states that rural young should be employed in agriculture because their future lies in effecting rapid and sustained development of the national economy.

# country's socio-economic contexts

- The policy also underpin agriculture-centered development guaranteed only when there is a young agricultural labor force which can use agricultural technology
- Strategy seeks to provide the youth with the necessary agricultural training and facilitate their deployment in agriculture.
- The reason- agriculture is the better alternative in which they can improve their own wellbeing as well as promoting development of the country as a whole.

# Education and training policy

- Parallel to general education, diversified technical and vocational training will be provided for those who leave school from any level of education.
  - **Training in agriculture, crafts, construction, basic book keeping in the form of apprenticeship for those with the appropriate age and leaving primary school.**
  - **Technical and vocational training in agriculture, industrial arts, construction, commerce and home science after primary education for those who may not continue general education.**
  - **Technical training for those who complete grade ten for the development of middle level manpower.**

# Methodology

- Two locations-agro ecologically socio-economic context and livelihood system difference (Yebello and Basonawerana woredas)
- Ethnographic method training to study team
- Two workshops
- **Ethnographic research style was used**
- FGDs
- Life Histories (male and female youth, Elders, migrants)
- Key informants interviews
- Participant observation and Transect walk

# FINDINGS

- In both contexts the youths do not have any aspiration to live on the agriculture.
- Agriculture in its present state unattractive and not dependable source of livelihood.
- Still agriculture is the main available livelihood opportunity
- Agriculture constrained by several factors as:  
( *rain pattern disruption, limited access to improved technologies, prevalence of disease and pest, frost, and low level of input use and lack of transport facilities* )



**MIGRATION**  
(*IN-LAND AND CROSSING BOUNDARIES*)

# Agriculture not attractive...

Informally  
learnt  
traditional  
knowledge  
and skills  
insufficient to  
sustain  
agriculture.

*'I am not able to feed my children throughout the year, Rain may come early or late, several weed species are expanding, disease on the major crop particularly wheat rust is diminishing the yield I get from my small plot of land.'*

*Other FGD participant also mentioned 'During the last 7 years, I have encountered a complete crop loss due to the occurrence of frost on my farm land.'*



# Youth looking for alternative livelihoods

- Non-farm employment
- Migration-mainly in mixed farming than in pastoralist communities
- Local beverage trading
- Petty trading-in both areas
- Cow dung and fuel wood trading, Carpentry, masonry



***"The village is very hot, the land is infertile and unable to produce anything other than millet. There are also very bad weed like Lelisa". She added, "I am on the verge to kill myself or escape from here. With all the these challenges, I will never ever succeed in the rural area.***

# Major challenges for the youth

- Land shortage
- Lack of access to financial capital /credit
- Technical knowledge
- Lack of skills in working as a group-free riders behavior

*‘I don’t need much skills and knowledge to live the way I am living now, however, if I gets capitals and lands, I will need some short term trainings for new businesses like animal fattening, bee keeping.*

*“I am a school dropout and the reason I dropped school is to serve my grandparents who are weak and aged. I have to serve them as a maker of their livelihood and I will have a chance to inherit their land otherwise there is no other way of getting agricultural land in the village.”*

*“I have many friends are waiting for their chances, wind fall chances, as employment opportunities are very limited and the natural resource base in deteriorating who couldn’t start their own income generation enterprises mainly due to shortage of land and capital.”*

# Perception about literacy and learning

- Learning is associated with going to formal schools.
- Learning for their self-esteem.
- unfavorable attitude for girls education
- Perceive education provide very nice jobs in town and good source of livelihood

*“Worku describe a person who is cannot read and write as a ‘moron.’ He said, ‘I feel I am moron as I am illiterate because I can’t read and write.”*

*“Since I am uneducated, deaf, the only fate I have is supporting my family by doing various domestic works (cooking, managing home), animal raring and agricultural works.”*

*She said ‘I bought it to fool others, If I put a watch on my hand people considers me as educated person and they do not even think of cheating me”.*

# Modes of learning and interactions

informal learning is dominant model of learning. (Trial and error, friends, relatives etc)



*“learning agricultural knowledge and skills in rural village like Goshe Bado is not a question of choice, we learnt it because it is way of life of our parents where we are born from.”*

*“agricultural knowledge and skills does not require any training, observing the practice is quite enough. As children learn how to walk, eat, and drink by simply observing what their parents do. So, does agriculture. Being the daughter of farmer is enough to learn skills related to agriculture.”*

# Interactions

- Policy and strategy on prior learning and experience assessment, recognition and accreditation. Therefore, recognition of informal learning is missing element in the lifelong learning policy
- Those who missed formal school are expected to attend the Integrated Functional Adult Literacy Program (IFAL).

# Interactions...IFAL

- IFAL has many shortcomings in terms of allocation of resources and approach, reducing outreach and efficacy. The problems:
  - the location of the program being delivered,
  - the schedule as to which the program being delivered,
  - shortage of logistics,
  - lack of staff motivation,
  - weak coordination

# Major educational issues that require further actions

- High dropout and/or illiteracy

Reasons:

- family economic states, distance from school, cultural impacts, Mobile lifestyle, early marriage, absence of school, scattered settlement, and shortage/absence of teachers.

# Recommendations

- Enhance availability of alternative non-farm livelihood sources for increasing number of landless youth
- Improve knowledge and skill delivery system through strengthening institutions such as FTC
- Strengthening IFAL
- Education and training programs need to include areas of trainings such as soft skill, negotiation skill, entrepreneurship skill and motivational trainings



**Thank You!**