Creating opportunities for rural youth

2019 Rural Development Report

IFAD
780 million rural young people in developing countries and the number is growing.
The majority of countries with large rural youth populations have high rural poverty rates.
Youth are central for rural development and the foundations for their success must be built.

Key considerations:

1. The settings in which rural youth reside.

2. The specific constraints rural young people face.

3. Today’s unprecedented and dynamic nature of change.
Almost three quarters of rural youth live in countries with low rural transformation.
Two out of three rural youth in developing countries live in areas with high agricultural potential.
Like their parents, young people in rural areas are working at jobs in, or related to, agriculture.
Rural youth face particular constraints that need to be addressed simultaneously.

- Capacities and skills
- Access to finance
- Access to land
- Gender norms
Simultaneous changes are unfolding faster, or in different ways than before, both opening and closing opportunities.
Countries with the highest youth shares depend heavily on agriculture and have the lowest capacity to deal with CC.
Mobile money provides youth in the least transformed countries access to finance.
Rural youth need cognitive and non-cognitive skills.

- Vocational training alone is not enough.
- Non-cognitive skills are - if not more - equally essential than technical skills.
- Partnering with private sector is needed to create opportunity.
- Continuous support is needed to incubate ideas.
Rural youth need to be empowered and participate in the decision-making processes. Rural youth participation helps to make interventions more responsive to their needs, increase their ownership and enhance their agency.
Young rural women face a triple challenge requiring that social norms be addressed.

- **Triple challenge:** youth, women, rural.
- **Economic incentives** important for change in women’s role.
- **Changing social norms** means to include everyone in the process.
1. Rural youth development policy and investments should be embedded in broader rural development strategies.

2. An effective approach to rural youth policy and investment is one that strikes the "right balance" between creating broader rural opportunities and fostering youth specific ones.

3. Policies and investments to foster rural transformation that is inclusive of youth and/or youth-centred need to consider the three foundations of rural development: productivity, connectivity and agency.
Low level of rural opportunity requires focusing on youth inclusion.
High level of rural opportunity requires focusing on youth-specific policies and investments.
Thank you