

# Workshop Report

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## **Better understanding the realities, viewpoints, aspirations and challenges of rural youth living in the agricultural dryland areas of Midelt, Morocco**

**Workshop held in Midelt, Morocco, May 26, 2016**

*Organized and reported by: Alessandra Giuliani (Research leader HAFL), Courtney Paisley (YPARD), Karin Reinprecht (CRP Dryland Systems), Nicole Perkins (Planet H2O), Pascale Waelti (HAFL), Sebastian Mengel (HAFL)*

*Agenda provided in Annex 1*

*Participant presence list Annex 2*

50 people attended the workshop, from different stakeholder groups, which included 8 rural youth from the villages surveyed, older villagers, urban youth (rural migrants), representatives from government (e.g. Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agriculture Direction of Provincial Agriculture extension services, High Commissary of Water, Forests and Fight Against Desertification, local authorities), development partners (FAO, GIZ, SDC) the private sector (Credit Agricole) and the civil society (representatives from 3 associations active in rural development).

### **INTRODUCTION**

Roundtable of introductions, explanation of the aim of the workshop the agenda and working approach.

- **Rationale and partners involved:** Why did we do the research? Introduction of dryland systems and YPARD.
- **Context:** The study team roles, the research methodology, and the description of the socio-ecological context of the villages (presented by the local team).

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## **PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY RESULTS**

The research team presented the data and the analysis. Some key issues include:

- Education: highest illiteracy rate (40%) is found among youth living in the pastoral ALS. Illiteracy rate is also higher among young women (30% instead of 18% among young men)
- Source of living: the first source of living is the work on the family farm for irrigated and rain fed ALS. In the pastoral ALS, 64% of youths rely on sedentary herding, and 36% on nomadic herding. No interviewee young person has generates his/her income from his/her own farm or agribusiness
- Infrastructure: it is difficult to get goods to the market and to bring in agricultural inputs from suppliers
- Associations/cooperatives: Many youth are not part of an association. Youth said there were no local associations/cooperatives to join, or they did not have the time, they were corrupt or ineffective, or they did not know how to do it. There was a reticence to be part of a cooperative. How do we then reach these young people?
- Value Addition: 25% were involved in value added in agriculture. This was mostly in packaging produce. Very little had access to cold storage, a few were involved in wool production and dairy production
- Perceptions of agriculture: Many people said they had a neutral vision of agriculture, although when pushed for further information, many indicated they were interested. Many wanted to own farms, but they also said it was difficult work with low returns.
- Decision making structures showed that the majority of young women were very much excluded. It was found that education had little correlation with decision making
- Migration: many said that it was not an option. Not necessarily that they did not think of it but rather that it was not an option for them for various reasons. Those who did want to leave were because of lack of opportunities. Many young people want to stay, in particular with improved conditions. But how long will they want to stay if things do not improve?
- Innovation – mostly drip irrigation. Many indicated they did not know how to develop innovation
- The research looked at both challenges and solutions and dreams and aspirations, by gender. Many did want to own their own farms – how can we support them?
- The research looked also at the perspectives of other people (parents, older villagers, government, agribusiness, cooperatives) and urban youth as well as focus group discussions on the ‘village of your dreams’

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## **QUESTIONS, COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION**

- Questions and comments on research methods: FAO representative spoke about different research methods that could have been used in the analysis. The research team replied that the methodology of the study had not been presented during the workshop in detail due to time constraints. Additionally certain aspects (hypothesis) were not relevant as the aim was to find out what young people were thinking. Random sampling was difficult with limited funding and the sample size was too small for in-depth quantitative analysis and identifying correlations within the research, so that the results from the research can be considered only indicative and not representative. Further studies should be focused on the specific needs of young people (inability to migrate because they need to care for aging parents, etc.), separated by youth age 15-24 and those 25-30, and on specific grouped research themes. A larger study focus could embed the broader issue of rural development.
- Discussions on unsolved issues: based on the research results, participants exchanged on unsettled issues such as the difficulties of distributing and sharing of the common lands in Morocco, the access to primary and secondary education, access to agricultural training and coaching, the access to information on how to obtain funds and training, associations' membership conditions and the limitations in the association governance and management.

## **PRESENTATIONS ON A CASE PILOT STUDY OF YOUTH AND AGRICULTURE IN ZAGORA, MOROCCO**

A pilot study conducted in the Feija valley, in the region of Zagora, aiming at identifying factors that make rural employment attractive for youth in this area was presented. The case study shows that young nomads do not consider their way of life attractive because of the harsh living conditions, and the low income. However, living and working in rural dry area may be attractive for young people if the access to production resources (such as land and irrigation systems) is facilitated (e.g. by subvention), if they can be self-employed, and if they can cultivate a productive cash crop.

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## **PRESENTATION OF A VIDEO ON THE RESEARCH RESULTS**

A video produced in collaboration between YPARD, the local team and the research team was presented

## **YOUTH TESTIMONIALS**

The rural youth and some youth influencers from the village were given the floor to discuss their challenges and aspirations. The most commonly mentioned areas were the need for better roads, education and skills training. Eight youth and two village elders spoke:

Young Men:

- There are no roads, simply tracks. Transport is very important for buyers of our apples.
- Modern agricultural techniques are needed. Need refrigeration and irrigation for agriculture and training for modern agriculture. Without these, youth will not want to stay in villages for agriculture, but want to leave for jobs in other sectors such as construction.
- The cooperatives are simply not present.
- There is no water
- Increasing desertification and deforestation
- The collective lands are not equally shared.
- We need football fields.
- The hospital was built but doesn't work.
- There is no financing to enable farmers to expand.
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Older man:

- Problems with the quality of trees provided to villagers by the authorities: the type of trees given to farmers is not suitable to the soil in their area, so they trees do not yield (there was no study of the soil before delivering the new breeds of trees)
- There are services being provided in other villages but not in theirs. A dam was built near their village but unfortunately they do not benefit of any water from it since their village and farming lands as well are located upstream the dam and therefore he appeals for intervention that could help pull the water to their village.
- There are no work opportunities, and lack of training for the youth.
- The quality of education is poor, when teachers do come to school they teach poorly.

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- Cooperatives are required to better share collective resources and to access services and infrastructure.

Young women:

- We need opportunities, work and education. Without them we can do nothing.
- The roads are poor and are blocked often so it discourages those who buy agricultural produce;
- We lack water to irrigate apple trees.
- The pesticides are expensive and yet we still need to buy them.

Older woman:

- We cannot support children on the small parcels of land that we farm.
- The potable water is of poor quality.
- Equipment provided to access clean water was broken by the children and we can no longer use it.

Young urban man: I have secondary school and technical training in agriculture. I am attached to the land and wanted to work in agriculture, but the reality is very difficult. I worked as an agricultural technician at several large farms across the country but was very poorly paid and treated the same as those without any training. I worked in several areas (tourism, as a driver) and then returned to my village to settle and raise cattle. I sought support for my work and advice, I received a small bit but still have many problems.

**Presentations on local initiatives:** Presentations were made by Credit Agricole, the FAO on the integrated watershed management program conducted with the High Commission for Water and Forests and the Swiss Development Cooperation, and the Ministry of Education.

## RECOMMENDATIONS ON FUTURE ACTIONS AND ACTORS TO BE INVOLVED

### **1. Follow up research needed:** which kind of further research is needed?

what	who
Qualitative analysis of agricultural livelihood system, simulation and scenario development of possible feedback loops created by interventions for youth in agriculture	Research project Project proposal developed by Dryland Systems
Different types of impact studies (qualitative and quantitative, such as randomised control	Applied research project in collaboration with CERCAM and FAO

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trials) should be carried out. Many data can be already been used, by cooperating with other organisations like Credit Agricole (CERCAM) and FAO.	
There is a gap between demand and supply of services. Conduct a study on the causes for the gap between the offer (supply) and demand of support (education, training, credit).	Applied social research project Project proposal developed by Dryland Systems.
Carry out social action research supporting the youth to create an association;, while research what makes youth associations successful and what hampers them;	Applied social research project Project proposal developed by Dryland Systems.
Social action research: Investigate the social and psychological reasons why rural youth are not engaged in politics and civil society and at the same time raise awareness among the youth on how to be more engaged in politics and in social life. Why they are not engaged? Why they do not want to participate in groups/associations?	linked to the above

**2. Access to existing opportunities:** are the young people seizing the existing opportunities? How can we make existing opportunities more accessible and relevant to young people? What are the other opportunities available?

what	who
Rural youth are not aware and they do not have access to existing possibilities: Links back to point above on the gap between the demand and offer of services.	

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<p>To reach the youth population in rural villages, note that youth get information by word of mouth (parents) radio and TV and extension agents (DPA/FAO). These are the means to communicate information.</p> <p>There is a need to increase the number of extension agents (Ministry of Agriculture/DPA started in 2010 in Midelt, and is a relatively new entity).</p> <p>One idea would be to create and provide mentorship support for a flexible organisation (NGO) of young people who come from the villages and have good access to the rural youth (respected in their origin villages) and can play a role of mentors to the youth.</p>	<p>Concept note on capacity building for a development project: YPARD implementation : GIZ, IFAD, Belgian cooperation<sup>1</sup>, CERCAM / Groupe Credit Agricole /</p>
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## 3. Access to basic education (primary/ secondary - formal and non-formal) for improving literacy in the villages: How to improve the situation? Who are the involved players?

what	who
Mobilize the associations to raise awareness about the importance of school attendance and literacy	Associations, NGOs, Ministry of Education, those who already benefitted the non-formal education (mentoring model)
Improve and expand school premises and improvement of transport service to schools	Communes (Government) and associations
Strengthen / improve the education system and curricula through monitoring of students' performance and drop-outs	Ministry of Education and NGOs
Assess teaching quality and curricula	Ministry of Education and NGOs
Introduce extra-curricular activities, such as sports, arts, school gardening, environmental activities, etc,	NGOs, High Commission of Water and Forests, rural communes, Ministry of Agriculture/DPA, (mentoring model)
Increase the age of literacy within non-formal	Association (i.e. Al Amal) and Ministry of

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.challenge.ma/maroc-belgique-un-nouveau-programme-de-cooperation-2016-2020-de-16-85-millions-deuros-68620/> (avec un montant restant de 40 millions d'euros continue d'investir dans l'agriculture durable et solidaire (filieres du palmier dattier, du safran et de l'amandier), l'assainissement liquide, la gestion de la ressource en eau ou encore la mise à niveau environnementale des écoles rurales.)



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education programmes from 8-16 to 8-20, and include professional training in non-formal education	Education, NGOs, those who already benefitted from the non-formal education
Increase the budget to meet increasing needs (as suggested above)	

**4. Agriculture vocational training to employment:** how can we better link these trainings with income generating activities in agriculture? How to make the coaching relevant for young people? What types of courses/trainings and coaching are available and needed? Who are the potential players?

Integrate agricultural topics in the primary/secondary school curricula. <i>(The representative from the Ministry of Education said that they have just started to do this this year.)</i>	Though a collaboration between the Ministry of Education and the OFPPT ( <i>Office de la Formation Professionnelle et de la Promotion du Travail</i> ). Trainers from OFPPT from other provinces should be involved
Spread the information through the information board in the villages, and through TV and radio about the opportunity to participate in agricultural professional training at the villages (most people are not informed that every year there is a 1-week training about beekeeping, tree cultivation, vegetable, livestock sheep and chicken), This may change mentalities and convince some fathers to send their children to get this training and return to assist the farm with the information learned.	<i>Mokadem (chef du village)</i> , NGOs (mentoring model)
For the youth who get training in agriculture there should be a favourable credit system with long-term credit.	Crédit Agricole

**5. The management and governance of the associations:** What are the other mechanisms/models rather than associations that could be used? How can associations be improved to make them more useful and attractive to rural youth? How to encourage young people to get organized?



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*Background: Associations exist but with a lot of weakness. Being organised in associations/cooperative is the common model to get access to opportunities (trainings, funds, etc.). New rules exist: cooperative agreement can be obtained in 48 hours. A cooperative can be created with only 5 members for a great range of aims.*

what	who
Enhance the capacities of the association related to financial management, marketing, conflict management thought training	Government (ONCA), NGOs, other associations
Inform and raise awareness about current standards on rules related to the creation of associations and cooperatives (rights and duties of associations'' members and about how to establish, manage and develop an association/cooperative.	(mentoring model)

**Mentoring model** = this is the model we would like to suggest in the recommendation which can form the basis of applied social action research. Foster a group of people (possibly youth), well respected in the villages (as they either come from the villages themselves or they have a link to them) who can play a role of intermediaries between the public authorities and the rural youth and help with capacity building including: build trade relationships; help youth to install, manage and maintain technology /equipment; raise awareness of why and how to set up and manage an association; empower people by asking things of them, involving them, and to make them responsible for creating opportunities

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## ANNEX 1: AGENDA

AGENDA	
08:30 - 09:00	Registration
09:00 - 9:30	Welcome and acknowledgements Workshop agenda/process Introductions by participants Introduction of YPARD and CRP youth strategy Presentation of study: methods, context: research site (villages)
9 :30 - 10:30	The study results Pilot study in Zagora Presentation of video
10:30 - 11:00	Coffee break
11:00 - 12:30	Testimonials by rural youth Group discussion and validation of results (research gaps)
12:30 - 13:30	Lunch
13:30 - 14:30	Presentations from the participating organizations concerning youth Presentation of policy brief draft
14:30 - 15:30	World Café (moderated group discussions on recommendations and possible interventions) and <i>real</i> coffee
15:30 - 16:00	Conclusion from the world café and closing of the workshop

## ANNEX 2: PARTICIPANT PRESENCE LIST



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Feuille de Présence | Midelt le 26 mai 2016

Atelier de restitution du rapport | Exploration des Liens de Collaboration

Etude sur la jeunesse rurale et l'agriculture dans les zones arides dans la Province de Midelt

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