

An Analysis of Rural-Urban Youth Migration in Western Kenya and Northern Tanzania

Empowering the Leaders of Today

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INTRODUCTION

Kenya and Tanzania are seeing a growing trend of migration to urban areas with yearly urbanization rates of 4.26% and 5.22% respectively (CIA World Factbook). More and more rural youth are looking to cities for employment opportunities, as many do not see a future for themselves in agriculture. Youth who want to start farming lack the capital to buy inputs, equipment, and sometimes even land. Youth who have ventured into farming are met with crop failure due to new pests such as stemborers, striga weeds, and fall armyworm as well as climate change that brings prolonged drought and flooding. In the face of these challenges, youth are forced to adapt, and for many of them this means migrating to an urban centers/cities.

When youth migrate from rural to urban areas, they may become less engaged in agriculture which endangers the food security in their communities. This study explores the desire of youth to migrate along with the “push” and “pull” factors that influence their migration in order to develop strategies that will provide more opportunity for youth in agriculture. A “push” factor is something that encourages urban migration and a “pull” factor is something that discourages migration

METHOD

Individual Interviews: There were fifty (50) respondents, ages 16– 30., individually interviewed, 30 from Kenya and 20 from Tanzania. Interviews were conducted in both Kenya and Tanzania to capture the unique perspective of each youth participant and their views of farming and rural-urban migration. The same questionnaire was used for all respondents, but some questions were only answered by those to whom they applied.

Focus Groups: To triangulate the findings from the individual interviews, focus group discussions were conducted. A focus group discussion brings together a group of participants that meet the experiment criteria to discuss certain questions from the individual questionnaire as a group. Three focus groups were conducted, two in Kenya and one in Tanzania.

Personal Observations: Informal, personal observations were also used as a tool to analyze dynamics amongst youth farmers. During the data collection process, observations were made outside of the formal individual interviews conducted as well as the focus group discussion in order to gather more context/insights that would support the findings in the interviews and discussions. Observations were made through conversations with farmers, field staff who were very knowledgeable about the area, and personal thoughts about experiences and encounters throughout the research process. All observations were recorded so they could be called upon when useful.



Interviewing two youth women while they wash dishes in Tanzania



Sengerema District Focus Group Discussion

RESULTS

Willingness to Migrate

- Of the respondents, 56% stated that they would migrate to an urban area to work, while 44% said they would not migrate for any reason
- While many youth expressed they would migrate, most wanted to continue farming in addition to having a job in town. Also, many desired to continue farming alone, but had experienced or seen crop failure so they think that there is more

“Push” and “Pull” Factors

- **Push Factors:** Young age, Male, Single, Certainty of Land Inheritance (Tanzania), Practicing Push-Pull Farming, Having Control Over Finances, Social Group Membership, Having A Job Other Than Farming (Tanzania), Can Support Themselves on Farming Alone (Tanzania)
- **Pull Factors:** Old Age, Female, Married/Widowed, Certainty of Inheritance (Kenya), Having A Job Other Than Farming(Kenya), Can Support Themselves on Farming Alone (Kenya)

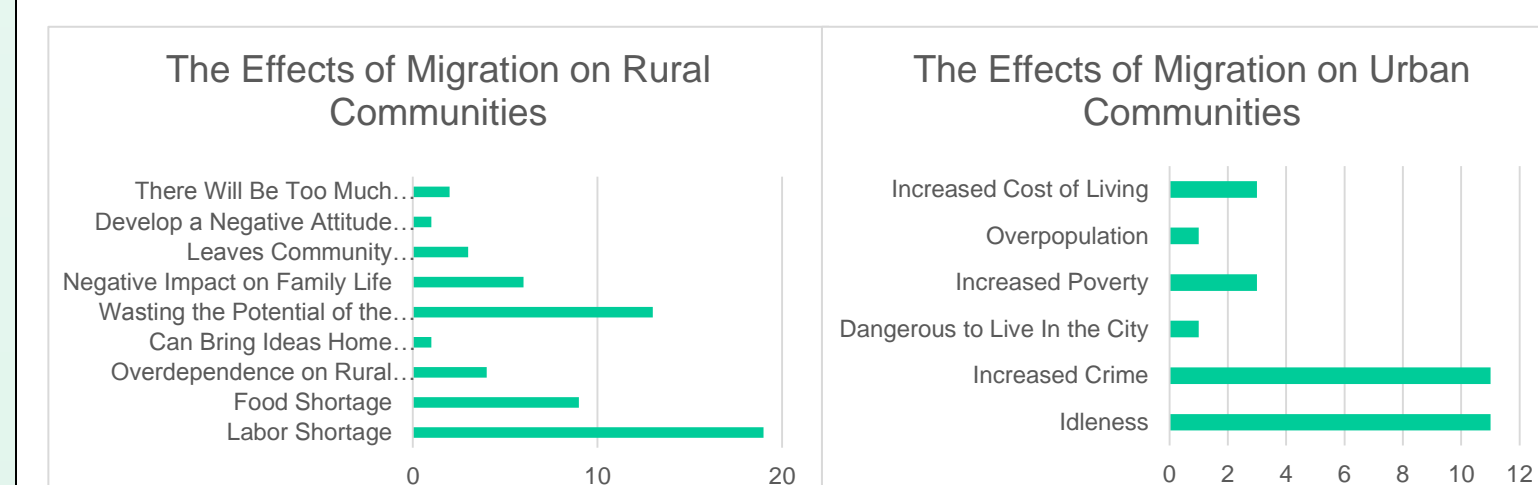
Factors That Did Not Affect The Will To Migrate

- Household size, acreage of land owned, livestock ownership, and perception of farming

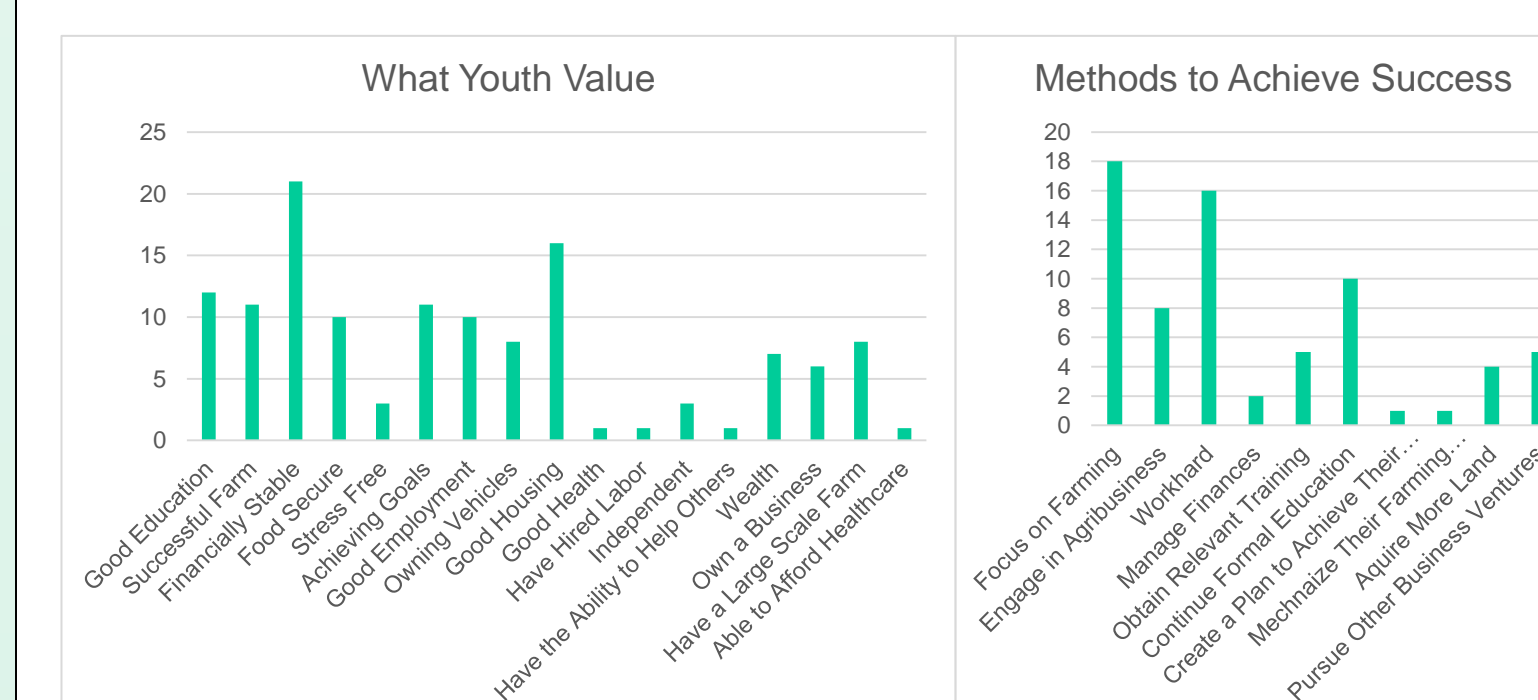
Where Youth Migrate

- Most youth ant to migrate to towns close to their villages so their can continue to work on their farms. Those who wanted to migrate further would stay in their home country, Only two respondents wanted to move abroad.

Effects of Migration on Rural and Urban Communities in the Opinion of Respondents



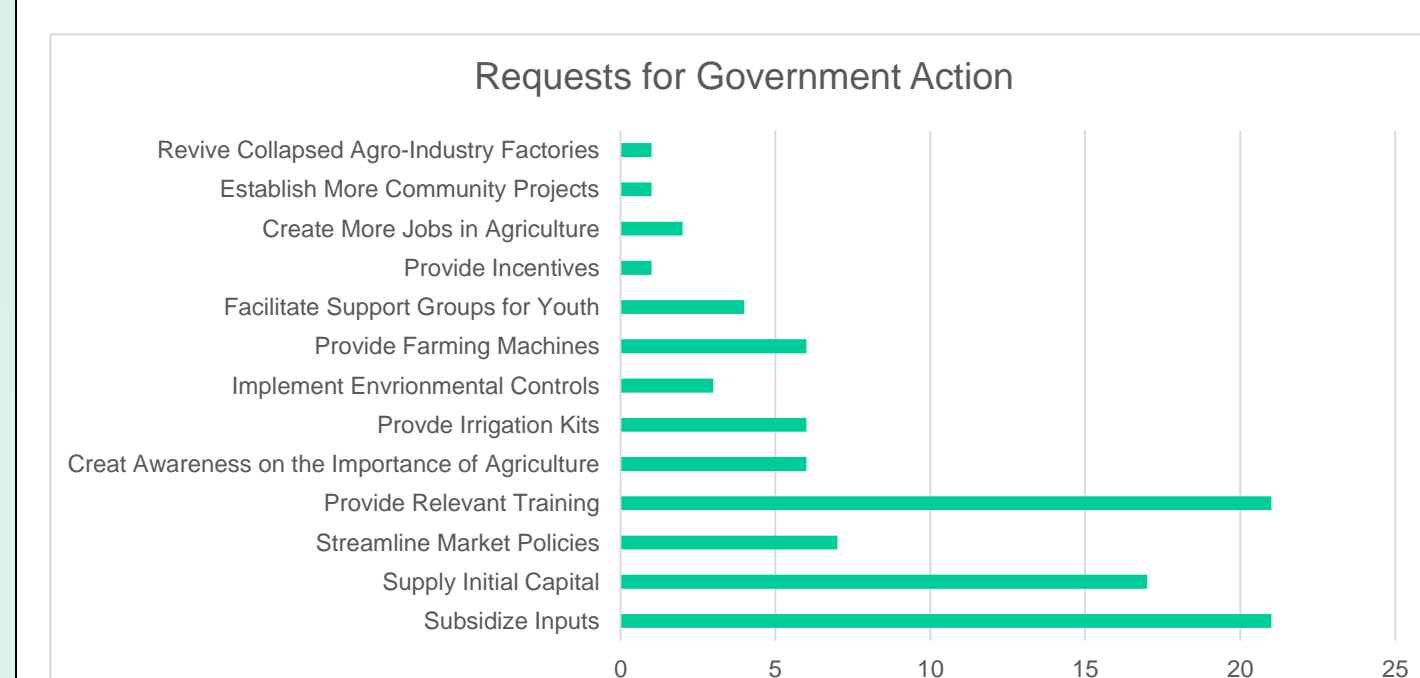
What do Kenyan and Tanzanian Youth Value



Perceptions of Farming



Government Involvement in Agriculture



CONCLUSIONS

It was initially hypothesized that the majority of youth would want to migrate and abandon farming completely. This hypothesis was informed by previous development trends experienced in other countries where youth generally moved to cities as their countries industrialized. Through the research conducted, it was determined that this is in fact not the case. While majority of respondents said they would migrate to an urban area, most did not want to completely detach from farming, and many wanted to stay in farming alone if they could be more successful.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS...

Further study must be conducted on the efficacy of the strategies presented to empower youth farmers. This investigation should also consider how factors such as socioeconomic status will affect these strategies. In addition, the study should be conducted with a larger number of participants to confirm that the findings still hold true for the broader population, especially groups that were underrepresented in this investigation.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

I am beyond grateful for the opportunity to serve as a Borlaug-Ruan Intern this summer. This internship gave me the chance to learn straight from farmers how they see and interact with agriculture everyday which was invaluable. Working specifically with youth made the experience even more incredible because I was exposed to the growth potential for agriculture in eastern Africa. The fact that the people I interviewed were the same age as me gave me a tangible idea of how we can grow together. The youth I met are going to be leading and shaping the world right along with me, so being able to see the future for the relationships I established was amazing. I will never be able to thank the World Food Prize enough for showing me that there is a place for me in agriculture by allowing me to witness first-hand the future of farming in our world

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Matilda (left standing), Anna (middle standing), I (right standing) watching Ama's Grandmother (left sitting), and Ama's mother (right-sitting) process maize at their home



Me with two future Push-Pull farmers



Talking with Rose, a Homa Bay farmer, about how she manages her sorghum Push-Pull plot