

A Systematic Review of Development Interventions Related to Rural Youth in Chinaksen Woreda, East Hararghe, Ethiopia



Discussion with rural youth in Chinaksen Woreda. Photo by Chanyalew S.

Youth unemployment is one of the major challenges in Ethiopia, given that young people account for more than 28% of its total population¹. Youth rural–urban migration has increased in the country due to growing opportunities in cities and expanding urbanization, along with limited employment opportunities for youth in rural areas.² Other contributors to rural–urban migration include poverty, land fragmentation, land scarcity, and climate change. The opportunities available may vary across rural and urban settings due to variations in available resources, infrastructure, and development interventions. This study was initiated to systematically analyze the aspirations of and opportunities for youth in Chinaksen Woreda (district) of East Hararghe Zone of Ethiopia’s Oromia Regional State.

1. USAID. July 2017. *Developing Ethiopia’s Youth*. USAID Fact Sheet.
 2. Tsegaye B. 2021. *Land, climate change and internal migration among the Wolyta youth of southwest Ethiopia*. London: EU Trust Fund for Africa (Horn of Africa Window) Research and Evidence Facility.

For this study, review articles, office reports, working papers, conference proceedings, and other relevant documents were selected based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria developed for this study.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Family farming remains the main source of livelihood for youth.
- Young people need to transform their livelihoods using available opportunities, such as institutional, economic, social, and physical assets.
- Climate change, land fragmentation, conflict, drought, disease, and limited access to institutional services and infrastructural facilities are challenges youth face.
- Local government and NGOs in Chinaksen need to understand the local context, and support knowledge and skills development for rural youth.

CONTRIBUTORS TO YOUTH MIGRATION



Opportunities in cities and expanding urbanization



Poverty



Land fragmentation and land scarcity



Climate change



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

PURDUE UNIVERSITY

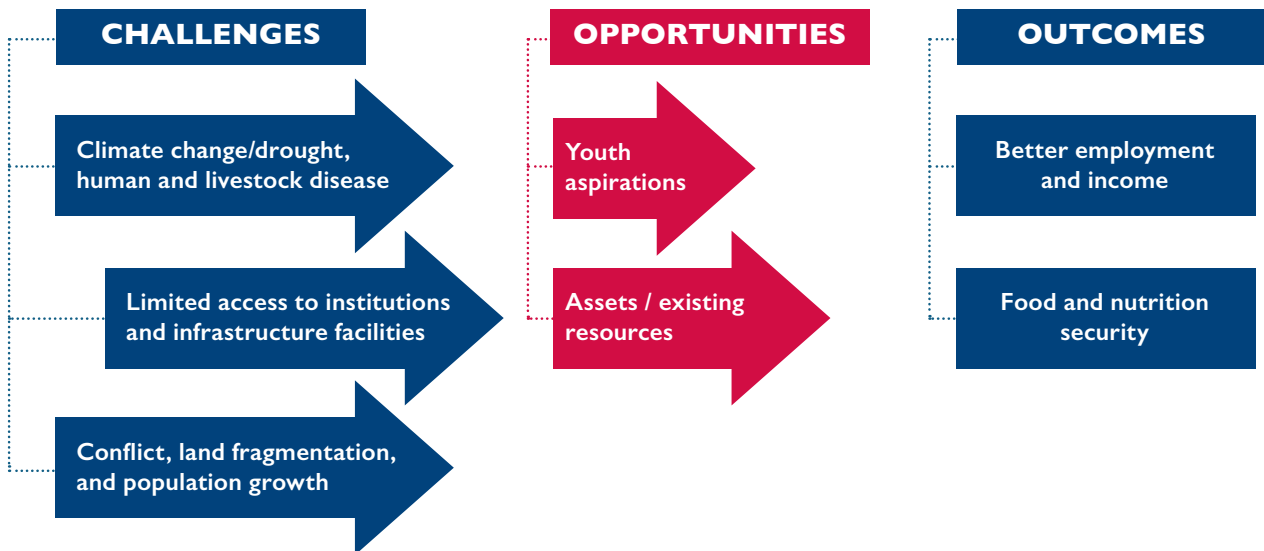


Key findings from development interventions

- Only a few development interventions specifically targeted rural youth in their project objectives and activities. For example, the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), primary cooperatives,³ and the Lowlands Livelihood Resilience Project (LLRP) are a few development interventions that target youth in the study area. However, other development interventions, both by the government and other development partners, lack focus in terms of clearly targeting youth.
- Youth aspirations in pursuing agriculture as their livelihood strategy have declined over time. Rural youth would like to live in urban centers and become employed in the public sector.
- The study further indicated that family farms remain a key source of livelihood for rural youth in the area.
- The study area offered several opportunities for rural youth to transform their livelihoods, such as enabling institutions (cooperatives and credit), proximity to market centers, and the presence of educational institutions and NGOs in the area. These structures can create capacity and self-employment for rural youth in the study area. However, rural youth are constrained by a range of factors, such as limited investment in and a lack of focus on youth-related interventions, as well as the limited capacity of the rural economy to absorb young people. This further constrains young peoples’ aspirations and pushes them to migrate to cities and other areas where they can secure employment and generate income.

3. Primary cooperatives are organizations established to improve the socioeconomic well-being of their members at the local level.

Conceptual framework of youth livelihoods showing challenges facing youth, opportunities, and livelihood outcomes:



Agro-pastoral and pastoral youth are disproportionately constrained by supply-side and demand-side factors, such as climate change, land fragmentation, drought, conflict and poor access to institutions and infrastructure facilities. High youth unemployment, for both the educated and uneducated, is one of the major crises in the area. Development interventions targeting youth in the study area need to understand youth realities and local context.



Key recommendations for development interventions

The following are key recommendations for development interventions:



Local government and NGOs focusing on rural youth in Chinaksen need to understand the available human, social, physical, natural, and financial resources at the local level.



Local government and other stakeholders need to also provide a youth-friendly finance system to enhance rural youth self-employment.



Local government and NGOs need to emphasize both agricultural and non-agricultural opportunities that can create employment for rural youth and transform their livelihoods.



Further research using primary data is recommended for a greater understanding of the context and better design of development interventions to improve youth livelihoods.

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