Future
Agricultures

Perspectives on jobs and farming: Findings from a Q study with young people, parents and development workers in rural Ghana[1,2]

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Summary

This paper presents the results of a series of Q Methodology studies with secondary students and parents at two sites in Ghana (Ashanti Region and Northern Region), and with development officials. The studies were informed by the argument that there is a significant risk of implementation failure when there is a clash of assumptions or world views among the parties associated with a policy process. Specifically the objective was to explore in a systematic way the perspectives of rural young people, their parents and development officials on a series of questions relating to work in general and agriculture in particular. Five specific research questions were addressed: What is a desirable job? What makes a job desirable? What explains young people's attitude toward farming? Why should we be concerned about rural young people and farming? What should be done about rural young people and farming?

The main conclusions from the study are that:

1. Among young people and parents at both sites, professional, salaried jobs are most desirable, although some perspectives emerge that also find a broader range of jobs – including some lower skill, informal sector jobs such as farmer – to be desirable.

2. Among young people and parents at both sites, the desirability of a job that allows one to make a broader contribution to the community or the nation is strongly and consistently (although not universally) expressed.

3. For the questions relating to farming there is little difference in the perspectives of young people across the two sites. The study provides no evidence that the farming potential of a particular area affects the attitudes of local young people toward farming.

4. In explaining their attitude toward farming, young people themselves strongly and consistently emphasise their desire for modern jobs and for jobs that are in line with their education. They also point to negatives around farming. Neither limited access to key resources like land and credit, nor the characteristics of rural areas are prominent in their explanations.

5. In relation to the question 'what should be done?', modernisation of farming is central to the perspectives of both young people and parents. This is particularly so at the site in Northern Ghana. Education both in terms of awareness-raising and training in business-oriented farming also features prominently. Only a few of the perspectives that were identified emphasised either the need to make resources like land or credit more accessible or the need to improve rural areas.

6. There is little evidence here that young people, parents or officials are separated by fundamentally different assumptions or world views. Indeed, it is remarkable how consistent the perspectives both within and across these groups appear to be.

Overall, what emerges from these studies is a significant gulf between the aspirations and interests of rural secondary school students and the current reality of smallholder farming in Ghana (both south and north). It is important to note that not all perspectives of young people or parents were negative (or completely negative) about farming or rural areas. While the positive perspectives are few and far between, they provide evidence that there are some secondary school students who, under the right conditions and circumstances, would be ready to work in farming.

Many of the perspectives described in this study suggest that the gulf identified above could be narrowed by modernising farming and increasing the awareness and skills of young people. But how much would current farming practices and systems have to change to in order to become attractive; how quickly could this transformation take place; will it be sufficient to moderate young people's interest in the 'bright lights' of urban areas; and what combination of policy and other forces will stimulate this process that presumably will entail both technological and deep structural change?

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Introduction

In recent years the nexus that links rural young people, employment and agriculture in the developing world, and with a particular focus on Africa, has received increasing attention from both policymakers and development organisations (e.g. FAO/CTA/IFAD 2014; USAID 2012; World Bank 2006). Perhaps the most common line is that taken by Brooks et al. at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) when they assert that 'African agriculture can absorb large numbers of new job seekers and offer meaningful work with public and private benefits' (Brooks et al. 2012). However, there is a tension between this sense of the potential of the agriculture sector to provide employment for young people, the significant changes that are required to make agriculture attractive (or what Brooks et al. describe as 'profitable, competitive, and dynamic'), and the rising aspirations and expectations of young people that are associated with, among other factors, increasing levels of education and access to information and communication technologies.

Since the advent of the HIV/AIDS crisis, the research literature on African young people has expanded significantly. It is important to note, however, that the vast bulk of this literature focuses on issues and questions around health and sexual behaviour. The research literature touching on the aspirations, attitudes toward different jobs and employment, and livelihood trajectories of young people in rural Africa is much more limited. This is particularly so in relation to their engagement in agriculture. Some selected highlights from this literature include:

- The work of Paul Richards and his colleagues in relation to the civil war in Sierra Leone, where the argument is that the war was an eruption of entrenched agrarian tensions, as reflected in the difficulty young men experienced in obtaining access to farm land (Mokuwa et al. 2011; Peters and Richards 2011; Richards 2005). However, also see Fanthorpe and Maconachie (2010).

- Recent econometric work by Bezu and Holden (2014) suggests that limited access to agricultural land is prompting young people in southern Ethiopia to abandon agriculture in search of other livelihoods. In Ghana, Amanor (2010) suggested that in some situations commodification of user rights to land make it increasingly difficult for young people to access land, despite the existence of sharecropping arrangements. The argument here is that young people are leaving farming not because they necessarily want to, but because they have no other choice. From their work in Burundi, Berckmoes and White (2014) also conclude that despite the unsustainability of current practices of land inheritance and farming that

drives them to other livelihoods, most rural young people aspire to a farming future at some point.

- The significant body of work by Gina Porter and her colleagues on rural transportation and implications for young people's spatial mobility and livelihoods (Porter et al. 2012; 2011; 2010; Porter 2010).

- The review by Leavy and Smith (2010) of literature relating to African young people's aspirations, expectations and life choices.

- Other Ghana-specific work including Anyidoho et al. (2012b) on perceptions and aspirations of young people in the cocoa sector; and Sumberg and Okali (2006) and Okali and Sumberg (2012) on the case of young tomato growers in Brong Afafo.

However, despite what would appear to be a growing interest in issues around the livelihoods of rural young people, policy is currently being made, and interventions designed and implemented, on a very limited evidence base.

Our reading of the available research literature and policy documentation highlights competing and conflicting framings and narratives relating to young people in general and the young people, employment and agriculture nexus in particular (see for example Anyidoho et al. 2012a; te Lintelo 2012). These framings and narratives tend to highlight one or a combination of three crises:

1. The crisis of unemployment and underemployment among young people

2. The crisis of agriculture and food security

3. The crisis of young people's moral and physical well-being

These competing framings and narratives suggest very different views of the world (Box 1). However, regardless of which crisis is emphasised, politicians, policymakers and development professionals tend to converge on one opportunity – agriculture. Despite the more nuanced picture sketched out by Brooks et al., the now widely accepted view is that if rural young people are provided with access to entrepreneurial and technical training, and credit, they should be able to generate sufficient income and build satisfying livelihoods in the agricultural sector.

But do rural young people themselves share this view? If so, which young people, in what kinds of rural settings? And what about their parents – are they also convinced that agriculture offers the kinds of opportunities and futures they want for their children?

Box 1. Propositions commonly associated with crisis narratives around rural young people and agriculture in Africa.

Rural young people are migrating *en masse* to urban areas in search of opportunity.

Rural young people are being driven out of rural areas and agriculture because of the commodification of land.

Young people are lazy and afraid of hard work.

The average age of African farmers is increasing – young people are needed in the sector to assure national food security.

Rural young people represent a vast pool of entrepreneurial energy that could be channelled toward selected agricultural value chains.

Rural young people need to be protected from the moral, social and health risks inherent in urban environments.

We acknowledge that policy processes are arenas of contestation and struggle. But we also assume that there must be some minimum level of common understanding among the various actors if policy and development initiatives are to have any chance of being effective. Along these lines Allister McGregor argues there is a significant risk of implementation failure when there is a fundamental clash of assumptions or world views among the parties associated with a policy process (pers. comm. 2014). This research was designed to explore this argument in more detail.

Specifically, the objective was to gain a greater understanding of the perspectives of rural young people, their parents and development officials in relation to a series of questions about work in general and working in agriculture in particular. The questions we address through this study are:

1. What is a desirable job?
2. What makes a job desirable?
3. What explains young people's attitude toward farming?
4. Why should we be concerned about rural young people and farming?
5. What should be done about rural young people and farming?

We submit that the viewpoints or perspectives of young people and parents are of considerable importance to any policy or intervention that seeks to address the young people, employment and agriculture nexus in Africa. Specifically, a systematic understanding of these viewpoints should go some way in avoiding implementation failure caused by incompatible assumptions or world views. In other words, understanding young peoples' and parents' viewpoints can increase the likelihood that the policies and interventions promoted by officials will be enacted more effectively.

Methodology

This study was based on Q Methodology (Q) which provides a well-established means of systematically exploring and analysing different perspectives (subjectivities or viewpoints) on a question or issue (Watts et al. 2012). According to Baker (2006) Q is an appropriate methodology with which to explore questions about personal experience and matters of taste, values and beliefs. Q combines qualitative and quantitative analysis. Data is collected in the form of a Q-sort, which requires a participant to sort a number of statements about a particular question or issue according to a subjective dimension such as 'most agree … most disagree'. The scoring patterns of a group of individual Q-sorts are then intercorrelated and compared and contrasted using factor analysis. This allows for any 'shared modes of engagement, orientations or forms of understanding to be detected' (Stenner et al. 2000: 442).

Q Methodology is not appropriate when the objective is to draw inferences about a particular population (e.g. 'on average rural young people in Ghana think…'; '45 percent of rural young people in Northern Ghana agree that…'). Rather, its value is in exploring the nuances of the different perspectives and viewpoints about a question that are represented within a selected group of participants.

Q has been used to address a wide variety of research questions and issues. Of direct relevance to the present study is, for example, the use of Q to study the career aspirations of school pupils, and particularly disparities between male and female pupils (Lightbody and Durndell 1996); Daniels and Kassdam's (2013) use of Q to study the personal goals of internal medicine residents; and Mutuku's (2011) use of Q to examine the perspectives of young adults in Kenya on empowerment. More generally, Previte et al. (2007) have argued that Q offers particular synergies and opportunities for rural social science.

Q-set design and content

A Q-set is a collection of statements about a particular topic or issue that comes close to capturing the full gamut of opinion and perspective in relation to that topic or issue. The statements in a Q-set are sorted by study participants according to a particular condition of instruction (e.g. 'Question: What is a desirable job? *Condition of Instruction:* Sort these 34 statements from Most Disagree to Most Agree'). There are several alternative approaches for developing the Q-set (Watts et al. 2012). For this research the Q-sets for each of the five questions were developed based on our reading of the relevant academic and policy literature; our understanding of relevant policy debates; and our interactions with young people, other rural residents and development professionals in Ghana. Q-sets for questions 1-5 are given in Annexes 1-5 respectively. It is important to remember that these are not meant to be exhaustive, but rather to cover the main possibilities or potential views relative to a question or issue.

Participants

In our case we worked with three types of participants: (1) secondary school students (aged 15-23); (2) parents of secondary school students; and (3) development officials. Secondary school students and parents were identified in and around schools in two sites in Ghana. The first site was Tepa in Ashanti Region where we worked with students from Tepa Senior High School (see Annex 6). The second site was Savelugu in Northern Region where we worked with students from Savelugu Senior High School. These sites were selected because they represent different farming regions. The Tepa site benefits from greater rainfall and a longer growing season, and is a cocoa producing area. Rainfall around Savelugu limits crop production options and outcomes, and it would generally be considered to have lower agricultural potential than the Tepa site. Poverty indicators in Northern Region are higher than in Ashanti Region (Al-Hassan and Diao 2007).

In summary, we worked with five participant sets (young people at two sites, parents at two sites, and officials) and each participant set completed four sorts, thus making for 372 individual sorting exercises within 20 Q studies (Tables 1 and 2).

While Q Methodology is not about hypothesis testing, the participant sets (young people and parents at sites with different agricultural potential, and development professionals) reflect our curiosity about if and how perspectives differ by social group and by the agricultural potential of the area.

We worked with officials at the two schools to identify students who were willing to participate in the study. Q Methodology is not concerned with representative samples – our aim was to identify a group of students that included the diversity present in the school, particularly in terms of age and gender. Participants completed the four sorting exercises in sequence. After each sorting exercise participants were asked if they had any comments they wanted to make about the ranking they had just completed. Notes were taken and some of these additional observations appear in the respective factor interpretations. On average young people took about 65 minutes to complete the whole exercise. The research protocol is given in Annex 7 and a completed sort is shown in Annex 8

Our original intention was to recruit into the study one of the parents of each young person who participated in the sorting exercises. However after identifying these parents, some of them could not or were not willing to participate in the study. We therefore had to identify other, unrelated parents of school children of similar age through random visits to households located near the schools. This was done with assistance from some community leaders. The same research protocol was followed with parents as with young people. On average it took about 50 minutes for the parents to complete the whole exercise. Some information about these participants is given in Annex 9.

Table 1. Study participants.				
			Participants (number)	
Location	**Group**	**Total**	**Males**	**Females**
Tepa	Young people	20	11	9
Tepa	Parents	14	9	5
Savelugu	Young people	18	7	11
Savelugu	Parents	20	16	4
----	Officials	21	20	1
Total		**93**	**63**	**30**
Percent		**100**	**67.7**	**32.3**

Table 2. Distribution of completed sorts per question.					
		Completed sorts			
Question	**Number of statements in Q-set**	**Rural young people**	**Parents of rural young people**	**Officials & development professionals**	**Total**
1. What is a desirable job?	34	Tepa: 20 Savelugu: 18	Tepa: 14 Savelugu: 20	n/a	**72**
2. What makes a job desirable?	26	Tepa: 20 Savelugu: 18	Tepa: 14 Savelugu: 20	21	**93**
3. What explains young people's attitude toward farming?	16	Tepa: 20 Savelugu: 18	Tepa: 14 Savelugu: 20	21	**93**
4. Why should we be concerned about rural young people and farming?	16	n/a	n/a	21	**21**
5. What should be done about rural young people and farming?	16	Tepa: 20 Savelugu: 18	Tepa: 14 Savelugu: 20	21	**93**
Total	---	**152**	**136**	**84**	**372**

For the development officials we identified individuals employed by organisations working in the fields of social development, poverty reduction, youth and enterprise development and agricultural development. Employers included government ministries and departments and local and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) located in both Accra and Kumasi. Introductory letters were initially sent to a number of organisations explaining the rationale and aims of the research. Directors and heads of these organisations who could not participate suggested the names of other staff. All the interviews with the development officials took place in their respective offices. On average it took about 45 minutes for the officials to complete the whole exercise. Some information about these participants is given in Annex 10.

Statistical analysis

Each of the 20 studies was analysed separately. Analysis of the Q-sort data was done using the software PQMethod.[6] The analysis proceeded as follows.

First, for each study, the statements and participants' sort data were entered using PQMethod. The sort patterns of all the participants were then intercorrelated. The resulting correlation matrix provided the basis for the extraction of factors – i.e. common sort patterns across a number of participants. For this study we used the Principle Component Analysis module (QPCA) of PQMethod to extract the factors. Factors were rotated using the Varimax module (QVARIMAX). For each factor, two or more Q-sorts that loaded signifincantly on it were identified. The weighted average of these significantly loading sorts was used to produce a factor exemplifying factor array. A factor array for the question 'What is a desirable job?', for example, took the form of a list of all of the statements associated with this question, with each statement having a weighted average factor score ranging from -4 (most disagree) to +4 (most agree). These factor arrays provided the raw material for a factor interpretation. To systematise the interpretation process we used the 'crib sheet' method described by Watts et al. (2012).

While each of the 20 individual Q studies is complete in and of itself, we took the opportunity to compare and contrast results over the different studies to explore differences and similarities in perspectives across social groups and sites.

An important limitation of this study is that all of the young people who participated were enrolled in senior high school. It follows that the perspectives of young people who for whatever reason are not in secondary school will not necessarily be represented in the factor interpretations presented in the next section. In 2013, secondary school enrolment in Ghana was estimated to be 61 percent (percent gross enrolment). [7] Another limitation is that we have minimal information about the family or socio-economic circumstances of the young people who participated in the study.

Findings

Question 1: What is a desirable job?

Young people

Two factors were extracted from the study of young people in Tepa as summarised in Table 3. Two factors were also extracted from the study of young people in Savelugu as summarised in Table 4.

The factors extracted at the two sites are very similar. At both sites the dominant perspective among the young people who participated in the study is that professional jobs are most desirable and that the low-skill or manual jobs that might be expected to be more easily accessible in the rural context are least desirable. At both sites the majority of the defining sorts for this perspective are female. The second perspective, which is also common across the two sites, again highlights the desirability of professional jobs associated with educational attainment. However, in contrast to the first factor, from this perspective a broader range of jobs, including some that are low-skill is considered desirable. Here half of the defining sorts are from male respondents. An interesting difference between the sites is that young people at Tepa who loaded on this factor were much more positive on farmer (+3) than those in Savelugu (-3).

Table 3. What is a desirable job? Young people in Tepa[8]
Factor 1. A big and professional job, with an eye to public service   Accounts for 42% of variation   Defining sorts: **7 (F-17)**, **8 (F-15)**, 17 (F-18), **20 (F-20)**, 1 (M-16), 5 (M-20)   Young people loading onto this factor desire big, prominent jobs which have a public service element and also pay well. These jobs mostly require leaving the village: local and low-skill jobs are seen as the least favourable.   Farmer is rated 0 (maximum possible = +4; minimum possible = -4)
Factor 2. A realistic and local job, with an eye to public service   Accounts for 24% of variation   Defining sorts: 3 (M-18), **11 (F-19)**   From this perspective, an eclectic mix of jobs is desirable, but the most desirable are generally visible, professional, service-oriented and locally-based. Their desirability may indicate a realistic analysis of employment prospects, and also a discernible local orientation. Nevertheless, not all highly visible or local jobs are desirable, and many jobs requiring some degree of professionalism are seen with indifference.   Farmer is rated +3 (maximum possible = +4; minimum possible = -4)

Table 4. What is a desirable job? Young people in Savelugu
Factor 1. A professional job, little else will do   Accounts for 53% of variation   Defining sorts: 1 (F-15), **6 (F-18)**, 10 (F-17), 12 (F-20), 18 (F-18), 2 (M-19), 5 (M-23)   For young people loading on this factor the most desirable jobs are those which are associated with high levels of professionalism, education, skill, and wage employment. Self-employment jobs, including farmer, are less desirable. For these young people in Savelugu, what might be the most common entry level jobs in rural areas are the least desirable.   Farmer is rated +1 (maximum possible = +4; minimum possible = -4)
Factor 2. A professional job, but there are many other options   Accounts for 19% of variation   Defining sorts: 13 (M-18), 16 (F-19)   Overall, young people from Savelugu who load on this factor find professional and publicly recognised jobs requiring some element of formal education (e.g. medical doctor, teacher) desirable, in contrast to other prominent and professional yet undesirable jobs (e.g. football player, business person, politician). However, they do not rule out many more local, low skill and accessible jobs.   Farmer is rated -3 (maximum possible = +4; minimum possible = -4)

Parents

Two factors were extracted from the study of parents in Tepa as summarised in Table 5. Two factors were also extracted from the study of parents in Savelugu as summarised in Table 6.

The perspective of parents who loaded on Factor 1 on Tepa has much in common with that of their strongly favoured professional jobs over low skill, low pay, local jobs. Parents loading on Factor 2 in Tepa find some professional jobs desirable, but other local, low skill jobs, including farmer (+3), are also desirable. Parents loading on Factor 2 in Savelugu are even more locally oriented and pragmatic in terms of the jobs they find desirable. Indeed, from this perspective agriculturally oriented jobs – including farmer at +4 – and local professions are among the most desirable.

Table 5. What is a desirable job? Parents in Tepa
Factor 1. A professional job, nothing else will do   Accounts for 54% of variation   Defining sorts: **1 (F-35 Accountant)**, 2 (M-32 Civil servant), 3 (F-37 Teacher), 7 (F-33 Susu collector), 8 (M-33 Teacher), 10 (F-30 Researcher), **11 (M-38 Cocoa marketing officer)**, 12 (M-36 Teacher), **14 (M-40 Teacher)**   For parents loading on this factor a desirable job is any salaried, professional job, full stop. Nearly all of the low skill jobs commonly seen in villages are considered undesirable, though farm-related jobs are seen as slightly less undesirable (e.g. farmer, livestock keeper).   Farmer is rated 0 (maximum possible = +4; minimum possible = -4)
Factor 2. A professional job, but there are many other possibilities   Accounts for 13% of variation   Defining sorts: **5 (M-45 Teacher)**, **9 (M-36 Surveyor)**   For parents loading on this factor some professional jobs can be desirable, but many other local, low skills jobs are also be desirable. There is lots of scope.   Farmer is rated +3 (maximum possible = +4; minimum possible = -4)

Table 6. What is a desirable job? Parents in Savelugu
Factor 1. One that offers formal salaried employment   Accounts for 32% of variation   Defining sorts: **3 (M-40 Youth centre volunteer)**, 6 (M-31 Business person), 7 (F-27 Business person), 11 (M-32 Teacher), **15 (M-25-30 Teacher)**, 16 (F-28 Caterer), 17 (F-30 Unemployed)   Overall this perspective finds jobs to be desirable if they are formal and salaried jobs; beyond this it is not discriminating. It is very negative about the common and accessible entry-level – but low skill and poorly paid – jobs in rural areas.   Farmer is rated 0 (maximum possible = +4; minimum possible = -4)
Factor 2. One that is local and within reach   Accounts for 24% of variation   Defining sorts: **2 (M-32 Teacher)**, 5 (M-30 Tailor), **10 (F-62 Teacher)**, 12 (M-28 Shop keeper), **13 (M-39 Electrician)**   Overall this perspective is locally-oriented and pragmatic, and as such highlights agriculturally oriented jobs and local professions. It may be informed by a suspicion or defensiveness toward the larger world.   Farmer is rated +4 (maximum possible = +4; minimum possible = -4)

counterparts who loaded on Factor 1 in Savelugu. Both strongly emphasised the desirability of professional or salaried jobs, to the virtual exclusion of any other jobs. Low skill or manual jobs are not at all desirable, although both perspectives are neutral about the job of farmer. Indeed, these perspectives are very close to those of young people in both Tepa and Savelugu who

Looking across the studies

What is a desirable job? Very similar perspectives emerge from these four studies. First, there are young people and parents at both sites who find professional and salaried jobs – including medical doctor, banker, civil

servant, nurse, teacher and soldier – to be highly and exclusively desirable. These individuals have no interest whatsoever in the manual, informal sector, low skill, low pay jobs that might be most accessible in rural settings.

Second, there are also young people and parents at both sites who find some professional jobs desirable – e.g. medical doctor is consistently ranked as the most desirable job – but for whom a range of other non-professional and locally-oriented jobs are also desirable. With the exception of young people in Tepa, all others who shared this perspective ranked farmer as a desirable job. Among respondents loading on these factors, parents at the northern site of Savelugu were perhaps the least ambitious (or most realistic?) in terms of the jobs they found desirable.

In sum, these studies indicate that there is considerable consistency in the perspectives of young people and parents within and across the two study sites. With the exception of some parents in Savelugu, professional jobs loom very large in terms of relative desirability. On the other hand, it is only among young people in Savelugu that no perspective was found that ranked the job of farmer as reasonably desirable.

Question 2: What makes a job desirable?

Young people

Three factors were extracted from the study of young people in Tepa as summarised in Table 7. Four factors were extracted from the study of young people in Savelugu as summarised in Table 8.

Table 7. What makes a job desirable? Young people in Tepa
Factor 1. Having it all: comfort, cash and community   Accounts for 22% of variation   Defining sorts: 4 (M-17), **9 (M-19)**, 15 (M-21), 16 (M-18), **11 (F-19)**, 12 (F-16), 13 (F-18)   Young people who load on this factor want it all: to have a comfortable, well regarded and well-paying job that allows them to provide for themselves and their families, and contribute to their communities.
Factor 2. Get ahead quickly while doing good   Accounts for 17% of variation   Defining sorts: 6 (F-17), **7 (F-17)**, 17 (F-18), **20 (F-20)**, **10 (M-21)**   Young people who load on this factor are ambitious to get ahead and have a marked desire to be recognised, and they have no hesitation about leaving their communities and families to do this. But importantly, they are not just out for 'number one': building the nation and making the world a better place are also important.
Factor 3. Making a contribution   Accounts for 16% of variation   Defining sorts: 2 (M-19), 3 (M-18), 14 (M-16), 19 (M-17)   What matters most to the young people who load on this factor are the altruistic, humanistic and personal development aspects of work, rather than the physical and the financial. It is what the work achieves that matters. This mix of idealism and pragmatism is summed up by an 18-year-old female: 'Every desirable work must be able to help people and contribute to nation building […] I don't desire to work for lot of money but what will be just sufficient. Also the location of the job whether rural or urban does not matter' (Gh11x19).

Table 8. What makes a job desirable? Young people in Savelugu

Factor 1. Comfort and respect

Accounts for 24% of variation
Defining sorts: 2 (M-19), **4 (M-17)**, 5 (M-23), 9 (M-17), **6 (F-18)**, 15 (F-16), 16 (F-19)

This perspective points to jobs that are comfortable and provide standing in society, while also giving the opportunity to make a contribution to the nation and other people. Jobs in rural areas are seen as particularly disassociated from these desirable attributes.

Factor 2. Money and a contribution

Accounts for 14% of variation
Defining sorts: 7 (M-17), **11 (F-18)**, **17 (F-19)**

Young people in Savelugu who load on this factor would appear to have the perspective of budding entrepreneurs, motivated primarily by financial gain, and are able to square this with making the world a better place.

Factor 3. If it provides a stage

Accounts for 10% of variation
Defining sorts: 10 (F-17), 12 (F-20)

This perspective highlights the importance of public recognition and being in control, and suggests that those who load on it may be entrepreneurs in the making. However, the interest in helping people and the lack of interest in money suggests that a potential pathway might in reality lead to jobs like teacher, preacher or social entrepreneur.

Factor 4. If it is broadly satisfying and fulfilling

Accounts for 12% of variation
Defining sorts: 8 (F-20), **14 (F-18)**

This is an idealistic, multi-dimensional perspective that values the personal development, relational and 'making a contribution' aspects of a job above remuneration and comfort.

What makes a job desirable? There is a common element to the three perspectives that emerge from the study of young people in Tepa: a job is desirable if it makes a contribution, e.g. by helping people, making the world a better place or building the nation. Beyond this shared orientation, the three perspectives highlight some important differences. Young people loading on Factor 1 want a comfortable, well regarded and well paying job that allows them to provide for themselves and their families; those loading on Factor 2 are ambitious to get ahead quickly; while those loading on Factor 3 prioritise the 'making a contribution' and personal development aspects of work over financial gain. Interestingly, four of the five defining sorts for the 'get ahead quickly' perspective were females, while all of the defining sorts for Factor 3 which emphasised 'making a contribution' were males.

The perspectives of young people in Savelugu are very similar to those seen in Tepa. The desirability of being able to make a contribution to the community or nation is again evident in all four perspectives. Building on this common core Factor 1 suggests that comfort and respect make a job desirable; Factor 2 has a very strong focus on financial gain; Factor 3 highlights public recognition and being in control; while Factor 4 is an idealistic, multi-dimensional perspective that values the personal development and relational aspects of a job above remuneration.

Parents

Two factors were extracted from the study of parents in Tepa as summarised in Table 9. Two factors were also extracted from the study of parents in Savelugu as summarised in Table 10.

What makes a job desirable? The two perspectives that emerge from the study of parents in Tepa share some common interest in opportunities for career development. However, those loading on Factor 1 strongly emphasise that financial remuneration and respect make a job desirable, while those loading on Factor 2 highlight the importance of making a contribution to society or the nation.

Table 9. What makes a job desirable? Parents in Tepa

Factor 1. Remuneration and respect

Accounts for 30% of variation
Defining sorts: **1 (F-35 Accountant)**, 7 (F-33 Susu collector), 2 (M-32 Civil servant), 6 (M-30 Teacher)

For parents who load on this factor, money and recognition make a job desirable, as do other attributes of salaried professional work such as learning new skills and opportunities for advancement. It will be difficult to meet these criteria in many rural contexts.

Factor 2. Contribution and career

Accounts for 28% of variation
Defining sorts: 3 (F-37 Teacher), **4 (M-40 Vet. officer)**, **5 (M-45 Teacher)**, 8 (M-33 Teacher), **9 (M-36 Surveyor)**

For parents who load on this factor, what makes a job desirable is that it makes a contribution and provides room for personal development and advancement; the material and physical aspects of a job are of little importance.

Table 10. What makes a job desirable? Parents in Savelugu

Factor 1. If it provides a means of getting on in life

Accounts for 24% of variation
Defining sorts: **3 (M-40 Youth centre volunteer)**, 4 (M-43 Teacher), 7 (F-27 Business person, 11 (M-32 Teacher), 14 (M-30 Teacher), **15 (M-25-30 Teacher),** 18 (M-33 Farmer), **20 (M-38 Farmer)**

This is a very practical and pragmatic perspective. A job is desirable if it provides a means of getting on in life, building and supporting a livelihood. Everything else is secondary.

Factor 2. If it makes a contribution

Accounts for 23% of variation
Defining sorts: 1 (M-30 Farmer), **2 (M-32 Teacher)**, 8 (M-35-40 Teacher), 9 (M-28 Teacher), 12 (M-28 Shop keeper), **13 (M-39 Electrician)**, 19 (M-30 Agent at microfinance institution)

This is a very idealistic, 'other-oriented' perspective, where the desirability of a job relates to the opportunity it provides to make a contribution. Career and financial reward are of little concern.

Compared to Tepa, one of the perspectives of parents in Savelugu is more pragmatic while the other is more idealistic. Thus, parents in Savelugu loading on Factor 1 emphasise the very practical aspects of a job – security, financial reward and a comfortable work environment – that allow people to use employment to build a livelihood and get on in life. In contrast, those loading on Factor 2 judge the desirability of a job by its potential to make a broader contribution. From this perspective career and financial reward are of little concern.

Officials

Three factors were extracted from the study of officials as summarised in Table 11.

The perspectives that emerge from officials cover essentially the same ground as those seen in the studies of young people and parents. Officials loading on Factor 1 emphasise job security and remuneration, while those loading on Factor 2 put making a contribution at centre stage. Factor 3 presents a more multi-dimensional view of what makes a job desirable.

Looking across the studies

It is striking that the idea of making a broader contribution – to society or the nation – is important in each of the perspectives of young people at both study sites. While there are clear differences in emphasis in relation to the importance of e.g. money, recognition/respect and personal development, the idea of making a contribution permeates young people's sense of what makes a job desirable. While among parents, one perspective at each site also put making a contribution at centre stage, this was of less importance in the other perspectives, which emphasised remuneration and respect (Tepa) and a job as a means of getting on in life (Savelugu). In this respect the views of parents and officials were closely aligned.

Table 11. What makes a job desirable? Officials [9]

1. Security and remuneration

Accounts for 27% of variation
Defining sorts: 4 (M-30-35/A Project Coordinator), 6 (M-36-39/K Field Official), 12 (M-45-50/A Extension Officer), 13 (M-25-30/A M&E Officer), 16 (M-30-35/A Principal Technical Officer), 20 (M-25-30/K Assist Programmes Officer), 21 (M-25-29/A Programmes Unit)

This is a strongly careerist perspective: a steady, well-paid job with opportunity for advancement is front and centre; personal fulfilment and societal contributions are of limited concern.

2. The opportunity to make a contribution

Accounts for 22% of variation
Defining sorts: 1 (M-25-30/A Field Supervisor), 2 (M 30-35/A Knowledge Management Coordinator), 7 (M-30-35/A M&E Officer), 8 (M-30/A Resource Development Specialist), 9 (M-25-30/A Field Supervisor), 10 (M-30-35/A Extension Officer)

This perspective suggests a strong preference for jobs that quietly make a contribution to society and/or help others, and provide a sense of self-fulfilment.

3. Having it all: family, money and fulfilment

Accounts for 11% of variation
Defining sorts: 3 (M-25-30/K Field Official), 18 (M-30-35/K Field Official)

Respondents loading on this factor have a multi-dimensional view of what makes for a desirable job, including balancing family, money and personal fulfilment.

Table 12. What explains young people's attitude toward farming? Young people in Tepa

Factor 1. It's all about us

Accounts for 23% of variation
Defining sorts: 5 (M-20), 15 (M-21), 16 (M-18), 17 (F-18), 18 (F-18), **20 (F-20)**

This perspective highlights the aspirations of young people as opposed to anything intrinsic to farming. Young people have a view about what they want – a view built on dreams that are not considered unrealistic, and farming and rural areas are simply not part of it.

Factor 2. It's not worth it, and we want modern jobs

Accounts for 19% of variation
2 (M-19), **9 (M-19)**, **7 (F-17)**, **11 (F-19)**, 13 (F-18)

This perspective highlights both negative perceptions of farming and the desire of young people to engage with the modern economy and urban life.

Factor 3. Farmers always have food but work hard for nothing (and we want modern jobs)

Accounts for 13% of variation
Defining sorts: **8 (F-15)**, **10 (M-21)**, 14 (M-16)

While this perspective has elements in common with the others, it is the only one that highlights one of the positive aspects of farming – always having food to eat. Also, in stark contrast with Factor 2, it suggests farmers are respected within their communities.

Factor 4. We want modern jobs and rural areas are a drag

Accounts for 14% of variation
Defining sorts: 1 (M-16), 3 (M-18), 12 (F-16)

This perspective highlights young people's interest in modern jobs, the attraction of the city and the sense that there are many work options (along with acknowledgment that young people's dreams may be unrealistic, and of the negative aspects of rural areas). Except perhaps inasmuch as it is not seen as modern, farming itself it not the issue.

Question 3: What explains young people's attitude toward farming?

Young people

Four factors were extracted from the study of young people in Tepa as summarised in Table 12. Three factors were extracted from the study of young people in Savelugu as summarised in Table 13.

What explains young people's attitude toward farming? Common to all four perspectives that emerge from the study of young people in Tepa is a strong interest in modern jobs, as well as an interest in the 'bright lights' of the city. However, each perspective links the interest in modern jobs and the attitude to farming in different ways, with potentially important implications for possible engagement with farming. Thus, young people who load on Factor 1 explain their attitude toward farming, and their interest in modern jobs, with reference to themselves – e.g. they want the bright lights of the city, they don't like hard work, and they have more education than their parents – as opposed to anything inherent in farming or rural life. In contrast, young people who load on Factor 2 point to negatives around farming: farmers work hard for little reward and are not respected. There is no sense that the rural context or e.g. an inability to access land is pushing them away from farming. Those loading on Factor 3 see something positive about farming – farmers always have food to eat and do not suffer from a lack of respect – but in common with Factor 2, they point to the fact that farmers work hard for little reward. Finally, young people loading on Factor 4 explain the attitude toward farming by pointing to negatives associated with rural areas (lack of services; young people not being taken seriously).

In many ways the perspectives of young people in Savelugu who participated in the study are similar to those in Tepa. Young people loading on Factor 1 explain their largely negative attitude toward farming by pointing to their level of education, attraction to the city, and their sense that there are many other job options. As with Factor 1 in Tepa, there is little about farming itself that is fundamental to this explanation. On the other hand, those loading on Factor 2 are negative about both farming (farmers are poor and not respected) and rural areas. Finally, young people in Savelugu who load on Factor 3 explain a largely positive attitude toward farming in terms of food security and independence (being one's own boss). There is some ambiguity about farming evident even in this perspective, but it relates to difficulties in accessing land and the drawbacks of rural areas as opposed to anything to do with farming itself.

Parents

Two factors were extracted from the study of parents in Tepa as summarised in Table 14. Three factors were extracted from the study of parents in Savelugu as summarised in Table 15.

What explains young people's attitude toward farming? Both of the two perspectives that emerge from parents in Tepa highlight the negatives around farming including poverty and working hard for little reward. But these perspectives then diverge. For parents loading on Factor 1 young people's negative attitude toward farming is not fundamentally about the rural context or about the attitudes or ambitions of the young people themselves. This contrasts with parents loading on Factor 2 who emphasise young people's education and aspirations for modern jobs. Again there is little sense in either of these perspectives that it is the rural context that is pushing

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Table 13. What explains young people's attitude toward farming? Young people in Savelugu

Factor 1. Our education, and our desire for and the availability of modern jobs

Accounts for 20% of variation
Defining sorts: 2 (M-19), **4 (M-17)**, 7 (M-17), 10 (F-17), **11 (F-18)**, 16 (F-19)

From this perspective young people's (negative) attitude toward farming is explained by young people's aspirations for modern jobs and their perception that those jobs exist. Except inasmuch as it is not modern, there is little about farming itself that is fundamental to this explanation.

Factor 2. Issues around farming, and more

Accounts for 18% of variation
Defining sorts: **3 (M-22)**, **6 (F-18)**, **14 (F-18)**, 15 (F-16), 18 (F-18)

From this perspective, young people's (negative) attitude toward farming reflects a multidimensional analysis that combines important negatives around farming and the rural context, with the desire for modern jobs.

Factor 3. Food security and independence

Accounts for 16% of variation
Defining sorts: 1 (F-15), **17 (F-19)**, 13 (M-18)

From this perspective young people's (largely positive) attitude toward farming is explained by the family food security and independence that are associated with farming. The ambiguousness evident in this perspective is not so much related to farming itself, but rather to difficulties in accessing land and the drawbacks of rural areas.

Table 14. What explains young people's attitude toward farming? Parents in Tepa

Factor 1. It's just not worth it

Accounts for 30% of variation
Defining sorts: 6 (M-30 Teacher), 8 (M-33 Teacher), 12 (M-36 Teacher), **14 (M-40 Teacher)**

Parents who load on this factor have a negative attitude toward farming primarily because it is not worth it: farming represents poverty, hard work for little reward and no respect. Importantly the negative attitude toward farming is not fundamentally about the rural context or about the attitudes or ambitions of the young people themselves.

Factor 2. Farmers are poor; young people want modern jobs

Accounts for 25% of variation
Defining sorts: **4 (M-40 Vet. officer)**, **9 (M-36 Surveyor)**, **11 (M-38 Cocoa marketing officer)**, 13 (F-42 Trader)

Parents who load on this factor explain young people's attitude toward farming primarily in relation to the mismatch between the hard work and limited reward of farming on the one hand, and their education and dreams of modern jobs on the other. In other words, the negative attitude is not just about farming, but it reflects the young people's sense of themselves and their aspirations for a better life.

Table 15. What explains young people's attitude toward farming? Parents in Savelugu

Factor 1. The gulf between heightened aspirations and harsh rural reality

Accounts for 20% of variation
Defining sorts: **2 (M-32 Teacher)**, 5 (M-30 Tailor), 9 (M-28 Teacher), 14 (M-30 Teacher), **10 (F-62 Teacher)**, 17 (F-30 Unemployed)

This perspective highlights the deep tension between young people's rising aspirations and the realities of farming. Young people are not being pushed out of farming, but rather they find little in farming that will satisfy their interest in modern jobs and urban life.

Factor 2. Young people have moved into a different world

Accounts for 28% of variation
Defining sorts: 12 (M-28 Shop keeper), **13 (M-39 Electrician)**, **20 (M-38 Farmer)**

This perspective explains young people's (negative) attitude toward farming with a singular focus on changing situations and aspirations of young people. It is not that there are strong negatives around farming or that young people are being pushed out. Rather, farming simply can't fulfil their dreams and rising expectations.

Factor 3. Farming is hard work and rural areas are a drag

Accounts for 28% of variation
Defining sorts: 6 (M-31 Business person), 7 (F-27 Business person), 8 (M-35-40 Teacher), 11 (M-32 Teacher)

This perspective explains young people's (largely negative) attitude toward farming by highlighting the poor work/reward ratio of farming and the limitations of rural areas. There is little sense here that because of more education or other changes, young people's aspirations or expectations have changed dramatically.

young people away (although Factor 1 did give some limited weight to the idea that young people cannot get land).

In explaining young people's attitude to farming the perspectives of parents in Savelugu diverge in relation to the importance of changes in young people's situation and aspirations. Thus, parents loading on Factor 1 highlight the tension between rising aspirations and the desire for modern jobs on the one hand, and the realities of farming on the other. Parents loading on Factor 2 also focus on young people's desire for modern jobs, education, dreams and interest in the city, but here there is no sense that there are strong inherent negatives around farming. Young people have simply moved into another world. In contrast, parents loading on Factor 3 explain young people's attitudes in terms of the poor work/reward ratio of farming and the limitations of rural areas – there is little sense here that education or other changes have impacted young people's aspirations or expectations.

Officials

Two factors were extracted from the study of officials as summarised in Table 16.

As with young people and parents, the two perspectives of officials in explaining young people's negative attitude toward farming highlight the aspirations of young people and/or the negatives around farming and rural areas.

Looking across the studies

What explains young people's (negative) attitude toward farming? The Q-set was structured to allow respondents to potentially highlight five areas of explanation:

- It's primarily about young people

- It's primarily about farming

- It's primarily about access to resources

- It's primarily about the rural environment

- It's about some combination of these

Across all factors that emerged from the four studies, the attributes of young people and of farming were most commonly used to explain young people's negative attitude toward farming (Table 17). Young people are more educated than their parents, and want modern jobs. For some respondents this is a strong enough explanation while others highlight the tension between these aspirations and the realities of farming. Constrained access to resources like land, credit and information featured prominently in only two factors. There is little support here for the idea that young people are being pushed out of farming by the difficulty of accessing land. On the other hand, the limiting or negative attributes of rural areas feature in five factors, three of which are from the Savelugu site.

Question 4: Why should we be concerned about young people and farming?

Officials

Three factors were extracted from the study of officials as summarised in Table 18.

Why should we be concerned about rural young people and farming? Officials loading on Factor 1 see this as primarily a sectoral matter: young people are needed to keep the agricultural sector alive. In contrast, those loading on Factor 2 suggest that national issues like food security and employment opportunities for young people justify our concern. Finally, the perspective that emerges from Factor 3 is more multi-dimensional – we should be concerned about young people and farming for the sake of the nation, young people, agriculture and rural communities.

These three perspectives echo what is seen in policy documents across Africa, where a focus on young people is often justified either in terms of benefits to the nation or (perhaps less often) benefits to the young people themselves. In other words, as in Factor 1 here, young people deserve policy attention because of an instrumental rather than an intrinsic interest.

Table 16. What explains young people attitude toward farming? Officials
1.   *Their aspirations and options, and farming's negatives*
Accounts for 30% of variation Defining sorts: 5 (M-30-35/A Research Officer), 6 (M-36-39/K Field Official), 8 (M-30/A Resource Development Specialist), 10 (M-30-35/A Extension Officer), 12 (M-45-50/A Extension Officer), 14 (M-30-35/A Programmes Assistant), 18 (M-30-35/K Field Official) This perspective points to a significant mismatch in young people's aspirations and sense that there are many work options, and the negatives associated with farming including hard work for little reward and little respect.
2.   *The negatives around farming are overwhelming*
Accounts for 23% of variation Defining sorts: 9 (M-25-30/A Field Supervisor), 13 (M-25-30/A M&E Officer), 16 (M-30-35/A Principal Technical Officer), 19 (M-25-30/A Programmes Quality Specialist), 21 (M-25-29/A Programmes Unit) This perspective points to a hard-headed analysis of the negatives around farming and the contextual factors that explain young people's attitudes. It is not about the young people, but about the nature of farming itself.

Respondents	Young people	Key explanatory factor(s)		
		Farming	Access to resources	Rural areas
Young people – Tepa				
Factor 1	X			
Factor 2	X	X		
Factor 3	X	X		
Factor 4	X			X
Young people – Savelugu				
Factor 1	X			
Factor 2		X		X
Factor 3			X	X
Parents – Tepa				
Factor 1		X		
Factor 2	X	X		
Parents – Savelugu				
Factor 1	X	X		
Factor 2	X			
Factor 3		X		X
Officials				
Factor 1	X	X		
Factor 2		X	X	X
Total	**9**	**9**	**2**	**5**

Table 17. Key explanatory factors in relation to Question 3: What explains young people's (negative) attitude toward farming?

Table 18. Why should we be concerned about young people and farming? Officials

1. For the sake of agriculture

Accounts for 21% of variation
Defining sorts: 5 (M-30-35/A Research Officer), 8 (M-30/A Resource Development Specialist), 18 (M-30-35/K Field Official), 20 (M-25-30/K Assist Programmes Officer)

This is a sector-oriented perspective. We must be concerned about rural young people and farming for the sake of the agricultural sector. Young people have a part to play in this, but they themselves are not the focus of concern. In line with this hard-headed view, this perspective is neutral in relation to the common exhortations about being a nation of farmers and farming being at the centre of the economy.

2. It's in the nation's interest, and theirs

Accounts for 12% of variation
Defining sorts: 13 (M-25-30/A M&E Officer), 21 (M-25-29/A Programmes Unit)

This perspective suggests that we should be concerned about rural young people and farming because farming offers an opportunity to simultaneously address national concerns and the income and economic opportunity concerns of rural young people. The agriculture sector per se does not figure at all prominently in this perspective.

3. It's in the nation's interest, and much else besides

Accounts for 14% of variation
Defining sorts: 3 (M-25-30/K Field Official), 7 (M-30-35/A M&E Officer), 17 (M-50-55/K President of Ghana Coalition of NGOs)

This perceptive presents a multi-dimensional justification for an interest in young people and farming. It is important for the nation, for young people, for agriculture and for rural communities.

Question 5: What should be done about rural young people and farming?

Young people

Four factors were extracted from the study of young people in Tepa as summarised in Table 19. Three factors were extracted from the study of young people in Savelugu as summarised in Table 20.

What should be done about rural young people and farming? The four perspectives that emerge from young people in Tepa bring together different combinations of modernisation, education and training, and improved access to resources. Factor 1 brings all of these together in a comprehensive, multi-dimensional view of what is needed. Factor 3 is similar to Factor 1 in that is suggests a multi-dimensional approach; however, it is the only perspective that highlights the need to improve access to key resources like credit and land so that young people can take advantage of the opportunities offered by modernised agriculture. Factor 2 puts the emphasis on the provision of education and skills, with a focus on both personal awareness and values, as well as business acumen. Finally, Factor 4 is similar to Factor 2 except that is makes explicit the role of schools in the education and training process.

The need to modernise agriculture with technology and machines is central to all three perspectives that emerge from young people at the northern site of Savelugu. In addition, young people who load on Factor 1 highlight the need to work through educational establishments to educate both the public and young people, while improving young people's access to land. Factor 2 focuses on practical and job-oriented education – there is no sense of a need to change arrangements governing access to resources or to improve the availability of rural services. Finally, Factor 3 puts a particular emphasis on educating the public on the importance of agriculture; also important is the training of young people in relation to opportunities, markets and a business-like approach to farming.

Table 19. What should be done about rural young people and farming? Young people in Tepa
Factor 1. Attack on multiple fronts Accounts for 21% of variation Defining sorts: 4 (M-17), **7 (F-17)**, **8 (F-15)**, **11 (F-19)**, 13 (F-18) This perspective provides a mature, rounded, multi-dimensional view of what should be done about rural young people and farming. Action is needed to educate young people, provide better access to resources and introduce technology and machines. Of the five defining sorts for this factor, four are female.
Factor 2. Give young people education and skills Accounts for 15% of variation Defining sorts: 3 (M-18), 14 (M-16), 12 (F-16) This perspective would focus interventions around education and training of young people. Young people need help in relation to both their personal awareness and values, as well as business skills.
Factor 3. Demonstrate, modernise and provide resources Accounts for 17% of variation Defining sorts: 1 (M-16), 5 (M-20), 19 (M-17), 6 (F-17) In common with Factor 1, from this perspective a multi-dimensional approach is needed. However, this is the only perspective that highlights the need to improve access to key resources like credit and land so that young people can take advantage of the opportunities offered by a modernised agriculture.
Factor 4. Use schools to open doors to markets Accounts for 11% of variation Defining sorts: 15 (M-21), 18 (F-18), **20 (F-20)** This perspective is similar to Factor 2 except for its emphasis on the role of schools.

Table 20. What should be done about rural young people and farming? Young people in Savelugu
Factor 1. Modernise agriculture, make land more accessible, educate   Accounts for 21% of variation   Defining sorts: 2 (M-19), **4 (M-17)**, 5 (M-23), **11 (F-18)**, 15 (F-16), 16 (F-19)   This perspective suggests a nuanced, multidimensional approach that included education (of both the public and young people) and institutional change to improve young people's access to land. Provision of more services to rural areas is not prioritised for action.
Factor 2. Modernise agriculture, and work through educational establishments   Accounts for 15% of variation   Defining sorts: 1 (F-15), 10 (F-17), 9 (M-17), 13 (M-18)   This perspective suggests that 'what should be done' is more practical and job-oriented education, and a modernised agriculture. There is no sense here that there are fundamental issues in rural areas – such as the arrangements governing access to resources or the available services – that must be addressed.
Factor 3. Modernise agriculture, educate the public, and train young people   Accounts for 17% of variation   Defining sorts: **3 (M-22)**, 6 (F-18), 8 (F-20), **14 (F-18)**, **17 (F-19)**   In common with the other two, this perspective highlights the need to modernise agriculture. However, it puts particular emphasis on educating the public on the importance of farming. The training of young people in relation to opportunities, markets and a business-like approach to farming is also important.

Table 21. What should be done about rural young people and farming? Parents in Tepa
Factor 1. Demonstrate, educate and train   Accounts for 30% of variation   Defining sorts: **5 (M-45 Teacher)**, 8 (M-33 Teacher), 12 (M-36 Teacher), **14 (M-40 Teacher)**, 7 (F-33 Susu collector),   From this perspective education and training – of the public and of young people themselves – should be central to responses in relation to young people and farming.
Factor 2. Integrated rural development   Accounts for 28% of variation   Defining sorts: **9 (M-36 Surveyor)**, 10 (F-30 Researcher), 13 (F-42 Trader)   From this perspective a multifaceted, integrated rural development approach is needed to modernise agriculture, improve rural areas, train young people and improve their access to resources (excluding land).

Parents

Two factors were extracted from the study of parents in Tepa as summarised in Table 21. Three factors were extracted from the study of parents in Savelugu as summarised in Table 22.

What should be done about rural young people and farming? Two distinct perspectives emerged from parents in Tepa. Those who loaded on Factor 1 put education and training – of young people and the public – at centre stage. Specifically, this perspective emphasised demonstrating the opportunities afforded by farming, making school more practical and putting farming at the heart of the school curriculum. There is no sense that

improvements are needed to rural areas or that changes to make land or credit more accessible are required. It is perhaps not surprising that with such a strong orientation toward education and training, four of the five defining sorts for this perspective were by teachers.

Parents who load on Factor 2 suggest what looks like an integrated rural development approach. Here action is needed on a number of fronts including modernising with technology and machines, providing more services in rural areas, training young people to farm 'as a business' and improving access to land and credit. While the first perspective targets young people through education and training, the second hints at the need for more systemic change.

Table 22. What should be done about rural young people and farming? Parents in Savelugu

Factor 1. Modernise farming and change public perceptions

Accounts for 24% of variation
Defining sorts: **2 (M-32 Teacher)**, 5 (M-30 Tailor), 6 (M-31 Business person), 12 (M-28 Shop keeper), **15 (M-25-30 Teacher)**, 18 (M-33 Farmer), **20 (M-38 Farmer)**

From this perspective, actions are needed on a number of fronts, the most important of which are modernising agriculture, changing public attitudes and positioning young people to take advantage of the opportunities offered by farming. Changing the rural environment is not a priority, and with the exception of credit, a need to improve access to other resources is not highlighted.

Factor 2. Modernise farming, train and educate

Accounts for 20% of variation
Defining sorts: 4 (M-43 Teacher), 8 (M-35-40 Teacher), 14 (M-30 Teacher), 7 (F-27 Business person), 17 (F-30 Unemployed)

This perspective highlights the need to modernise farming, and through training and education position young people to engage with it as a business. These respondents do not suggest a need for specific actions in relation to either rural areas or the character of young people.

Factor 3. Modernise farming, and raise young people's awareness

Accounts for 14% of variation
Defining sorts: 9 (M-28 Teacher), 11 (M-32 Teacher), 19 (M-30 Agent at microfinance institution)

As with the other two perspectives this one suggests that modernising agriculture is a key step in addressing concerns about rural people and farming. In addition, there is a need to focus on building young people's character and increasing their awareness. Easier access to key resources for farming is not prioritised.

The three perspectives that emerge from parents in Savelugu share a common emphasis on the need to modernise farming. In addition to this, parents loading on Factor 1 see a need to change public attitudes toward farming, and use education and training to position young people to take advantage of the opportunities offered by farming. The perspective of parents loading on Factor 2 is similar to those on Factor 1 except that there is no need to educate the public – on the other hand it is important to provide more services in rural areas. In neither perspective is there any suggestion of the need to improve young people's access to land. In addition to modernising farming, parents loading on Factor 3 see a need to inform young people about the opportunities afforded by farming and to build their character by educating them about the dignity of manual work and the dangers of the city. There is no sense here of a need to increase access to land or credit.

Officials

Three factors were extracted from the study of officials as summarised in Table 23.

Again the perspectives that emerge from officials are similar to those of young people and parents. Modernisation and training are at centre stage; however, interestingly, less emphasis is put on the need to promote farming within society (except in Factor 1). Factor 1 and 2 also highlight the importance of making resources like land and credit more accessible to young people.

Looking across the studies

What should be done about young people and farming? As might be expected there is a strong connection between perspectives on this question and those on question 3 (What explains young people's attitude toward farming?). Thus, the need to modernise agriculture is present in almost all factors, but it is particularly strong among both young people and parents from Savelugu. Education and training are also widely referenced, although sometimes the emphasis is on skills, business and markets, while at other times it is more oriented toward building the character of young people and promoting farming among the population. Making resources like land and credit easier to access is only of secondary importance in some factors.

So, what emerges from many of these perspectives is a sense that 'what should be done' entails work on all sides of the equation: in relation to farming (modernisation with technology and machines), young people (in their awareness, skills and attitudes) and the public (education on the importance of farming).

Table 23. What should be done about young people and farming? Officials

1.   Modernise, train and improve access to resources

Accounts for 32% of variation
Defining sorts: 1 (M-25-30/A Field Supervisor), 4 (M-30-35/A Project Coordinator), 7 (M-30-35/A M&E Officer), 8 (M-30/A Resource Development Specialist), 9 (M-25-30/A Field Supervisor), 10 (M-30-35/A Extension Officer), 12 (M-45-40/A Extension Officer), 15 (M-25-30/A Research Officer), 21 (M25-29/A Programmes Unit)

Overall, this perspective suggests a logical, integrated programme based on the modernisation of agriculture, the training of young people and increased accessibility of key resources like land and credit. This perspective gives no importance to changes to rural areas or to the values of young people.

2.   Modernise and make credit available

Accounts for 21% of variation
Defining sorts: 2 (M-30-35/A Knowledge Management Coordinator), 6 (M-36-39/K Field Official), 14 (M-30-35/A Programmes Assistant), 17 (M-50-55/K President of Ghana Coalition of NGOs)

Overall, from this perspective, the modernisation of agriculture, provision of more services in rural areas and easier access to credit need to be addressed. Business-oriented training is also called for, but young people do not need to be educated about the dangers of the city or the dignity of work. Respondents loading on this factor reject the idea that action should be taken to make it easier for young people to access land.

3.   Improve rural areas, train for more business oriented farming

Accounts for 12% of variation
Defining sorts: 11 (F-25-30/A Project Administration Support), 13 (M-25-30/A M&E Officer), 20 (M-25-30/K Assist Programmes Officer)

Overall, this perspective emphasises the improvement of rural areas and education and training in more business-oriented farming. Universities and schools have a role to play. In contrast to the other factors, the modernisation of agriculture is given no prominence. This factor is neutral on the need to make it easier for young people to access land.

Conclusions

What does all of this tell us about rural young people and work, and more specifically about farming as a potential area of work? Some preliminary conclusions are:

1.   Among young people and parents at both sites, professional, salaried jobs are most desirable, although some perspectives emerge that also find a broader range of jobs – including some lower skill, informal sector jobs such as farmer – to be desirable.

2.   Among young people and parents at both sites, the desirability of a job that allows one to make a broader contribution to the community or the nation is strongly and consistently (although not universally) expressed.

3.   For the questions relating to farming there is little difference in the perspectives of young people across the two sites. The study provides no clear evidence that the farming potential of a particular area affects the attitudes of local young people toward farming.

4.   In explaining their attitude toward farming, young people themselves strongly and consistently emphasise their desire for modern jobs and their education. They also point to negatives around farming. Neither limited access to key resources like land and credit, nor the characteristics of rural areas come across strongly in their explanations. It would be worth exploring this more, particularly among those young people who might be interested in farming

5.   In relation to the question 'what should be done?', modernisation of farming is central to the perspectives of young people, parents and officials. This is particularly so at the Savelugu site. Education both in terms of the business side of farming and of awareness-raising also feature prominently. Only a few of the perspectives that were identified emphasised either the need to make resources like land or credit more accessible, or the need to improve rural areas.

6.   Finally, there is little evidence here that young people, parents or officials are separated by fundamentally different assumptions or world views. Indeed, it is remarkable how consistent the perspectives both within and across these groups appear to be.

Overall, what emerges from these studies is a significant gulf between the aspirations and interests of rural secondary school students and the current reality of smallholder farming in Ghana (both south and north). It is important to note that not all perspectives of young people or parents were negative (or completely negative) about farming or rural areas. While the positive perspectives are few and far between, they provide evidence that there are secondary school students who, under the right conditions and circumstances, would consider the possibility of a career in farming.

Many of the perspectives described in this study suggest that the gulf identified above could be narrowed by modernising farming and increasing the awareness and skills of young people. But how much would farming have to change to become attractive; how quickly could this transformation take place; will it be sufficient to moderate young people's interest in the 'bright lights' of urban areas; and what combination of policy and other forces will stimulate this process that presumably will entail both technological and deep structural change?

We initiated this work thinking that officials might have a different view of the world than either young people or parents, and that this difference might help account for implementation failure around policy and programmes aimed at keeping rural young people engaged in farming. We found no evidence for this. In fact, the officials who participated in the study could not be considered policymakers: generally they were operational staff of development organisations who, in terms of educational background, looked very much like the parents who participated on the study. It would be extremely valuable to extend this work to include policymakers at the upper echelons of government, international organisations, bilateral funders and other development partners, as well as parents who have a significant engagement with farming.

From a policy and programme perspective it would be very valuable to gain a better understanding of the perspectives of rural young people who, for whatever reason, did not progress to secondary school. While this would entail methodological challenges, it could also add significantly to our understanding, as these are the young people who might be most likely to consider or to actually engage in farming.

End Notes

1. This research was undertaken as part of the work by the Young People and Agrifood Theme of the Future Agricultures Consortium, and financed by Irish Aid.

2. We gratefully acknowledge Jennifer Leavy, Naomi Hussain, Anne-Laure Roy and Paula Kantor who commented on an earlier draft of this paper.

3. Institute of Development Studies (IDS), Brighton, UK (j.sumberg@ids.ac.uk)

4. Centre of Development Studies, Churchill College, University of Cambridge

5. Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research, University of Ghana, Legon

6. PQMethod is a freely available statistical program tailored to the requirements of Q studies. See: http://schmolck.userweb.mwn.de/qmethod/#PQMethod

7. See http://data.worldbank.org/country/ghana for Ghana secondary school enrolment data – also http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.SEC.ENRR

8. In this and all the summary tables, 'defining sorts' are coded as follows. For example, 1 (F-15) means respondent number 1 who is a 15-year-old female. Codes that are in bold indicate a young person whose parent was also a participant, or a parent whose child was also a participant.

9. In relation to defining sorts, A indicates the respondent was based in Accra, K indicates he/she was based in Kumasi.

10. Source: Ahafo Ano North District Assembly, 2012.

11. Source: Mr Roland Owusu Skyere, Senior House Master, Tepa Senior High School

12. Source: Savelugu Municipal Development Planning Unit, 2012

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Annex 1. List of statements for question 1: What is a desirable job?

1. Agricultural input dealer

2. Apprentice

3. Banker

4. Brick maker

5. Business person

6. Caterer

7. Carpenter

8. Charcoal maker

9. Driver

10. Driver's mate

11. Farmer

12. Farm worker

13. Fisherman

14. Food seller

15. Football player

16. Government official or civil servant

17. Hairdresser

18. Journalist

19. Livestock keeper

20. Medical doctor

21. Mine worker

22. Motorcycle taxi

23. Nurse

24. Preacher or Imam

25. Politician

26. Police officer

27. Shop keeper

28. Soldier

29. Street Vendor

30. Taxi driver

31. Teacher

32. Tractor driver

33. Trader

34. TV or radio news presenter

Annex 2. List of statements for question 2: What makes a job desirable?

1. Be in the open air

2. Be close to family

3. Be your own boss

4. Comfortable environment

5. Same work as mother or father

6. A good boss

7. Good work mates

8. Help people

9. Make the world a better place

10. Earn enough money

11. Earn lots of money

12. Steady job / job security

13. Learn new skills

14. Located in rural area

15. Located in urban area

16. Can travel

17. Opportunities for advancement

18. Produces food for the family

19. Community respect

20. Public recognition

21. Gives quick money

22. Based in an office

23. Can be creative

24. Can use existing skills

25. Builds the nation

Annex 3. List of statements for question 3: What explains young people's attitude toward farming?

1. Young people have unrealistic dreams

2. Farmers always have food to eat

3. Farmers are not respected

4. Farmers are poor

5. Farmers are their own boss

6. Farmers work hard for little reward

7. Leaving the village is part of growing up

8. Parents encourage children to leave farming

9. Rural areas lack schools, clinics & entertainment

10. There are many other work options

11. Young people are not taken seriously in villages

12. Young people cannot get land

13. Young people don't like hard work

14. Young people have more education than their parents

15. Young people want the 'bright lights' of the city

16. Young people want modern jobs

Annex 4. List of statements for question 4: Why should we be concerned about rural young people and farming?

1. Farming is the heart of the economy

2. We are a nation of farmers

3. Without young people farming will die

4. It is good for the nation if young people stay in rural areas

5. Farming is needed for the nation's food security

6. Farming is the best way to create jobs for youth

7. Farming offers many opportunities for young people

8. Farming has a lot of potential to generate an income

9. Modern farming requires better educated farmers

10. Rural communities need to retain their young people

11. The population of farmers is too old

12. Unemployed youth get into trouble

13. Young people are more innovative than their parents

14. Young people are more motivated than their parents

15. Young people put themselves at risk when they move to the city

16. Young people want to farm, but cannot get land

Annex 5. List of statements for question 5: What should be done about rural young people and farming?

1. Educate young people about the dignity of manual work

2. Educate young people about the dangers of the city

3. Give young people more say in village affairs

4. Help young people find other kinds of work

5. Modernise agriculture with technology & machines

6. Make it easier for young people to get land

7. Make it easier for young people to get credit

8. Make it easier for young people to get information

9. Make school more practical

10. Make university more job-oriented

11. Put farming at the centre of the school curriculum

12. Provide more services in rural areas

13. Show young people the opportunities afforded by farming

14. Educate the public about the importance of farmers

15. Train young people to farm as a business

16. Train young people to understand markets & value chains

Annex 6. Research sites

Site 1: Tepa[10]

Ahafo Ano North District is located in Ashanti Region and shares boundaries with Tano, Asutifi and Ahafo Ano South Districts. The population of the district is estimated to be 85,936 with an annual growth rate of 2.96 percent. Population density is in the range if 151 persons per square kilometre.

Tepa is the only urban centre in the district and serves as the district capital. Tepa is growing fast and accounts for about 20 percent of the district's population.

Economic activity around Tepa includes agriculture, manufacturing, services and commerce, with agriculture being the most important. The traditional crops grown in the Tepa area are cocoa, plantain, maize, cocoyam, cassava, rice, oil palm, citrus and vegetables, with cocoa and oil palm being the main cash crops. In recent years some farmers have started to grow non-traditional crops such as black pepper and sweet berry, but the area remains very limited. In addition to domestic livestock, there is some production of lumber and other wood products.

Tepa Senior High School[11] was established in 1965 as a training college located in the Tepa Township – popularly called 'town'. In 1971, the Omanhene released about 103ha of land for a new location for the school, which changes its status from a training college to a secondary school. Currently, Tepa Senior High School is one of the three secondary schools located in Ahafo Ano North District. The student population is about 1,700, 42 percent of whom are female. About 52 percent of the student population is housed in the school as boarders.

The school has a total of 95 teachers, 77 of whom are men. They provide instruction in six main programmes: General Science, General Agriculture, Business, General Arts, Visual Arts and Home Economics. The academic performance of the school in recent times has generally been good, and it was rated the 3rd best performing school in the whole of Ashanti Region in 2013 (5th position in 2014).

The school is a community based school with most of the classrooms and infrastructure constructed through the assistance of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA). The recent past has however witnessed active support of Government in expanding the infrastructure of the school. Nonetheless, the physical state of buildings in Tepa Senior High School needs attention. In terms of sporting activities, students participate in football, volleyball, hockey, athletics and handball.
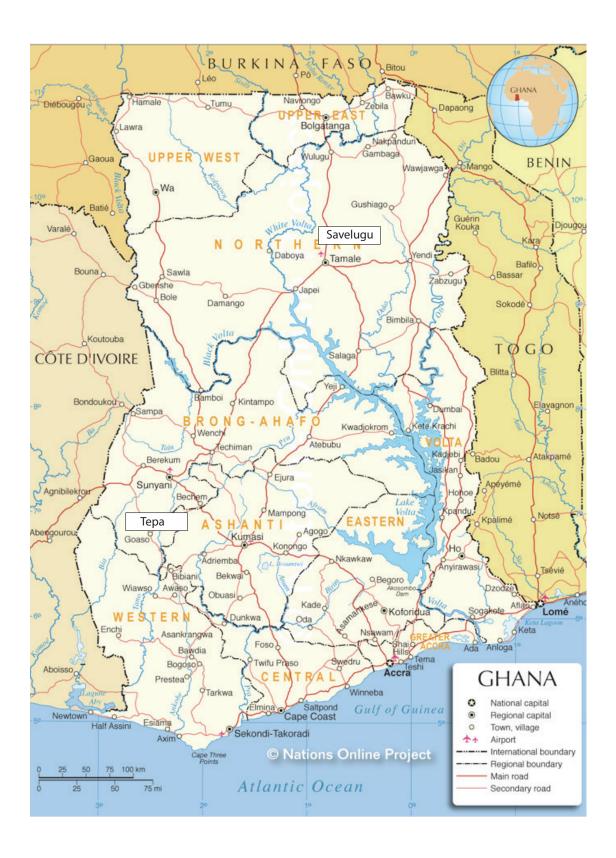
Site 2: Savelugu[12]

Savelugu/Nanton District is located in the Northern Region of Ghana. It shares boundaries with West Mamprusi to the north, Karaga to the east, Kumbungu in the west and the Tamale Metropolitan Assembly to the south. The district's total land area is 1,790km2. The population of the district is estimated at 119,747, with a growth rate of three percent; 59.2 percent of the population is dependent (0-19 and 65+ years old). The population density is about 67 persons per square kilometre.

Savelugu town serves as the capital of the district. The economy of Savelugu and its surrounding area is predominantly based on agriculture. Industrial activities, trade, services and formal employment represent a negligible part of the economy. Farm families produce food crops including maize, rice, yam, groundnut and cowpea. There is some limited production of cash crops including shea, soybean, cotton and cashew. Agriculture in the area is limited by rainfall which averages around 600mm per year. The annual rainfall pattern is erratic at the beginning of the rainy season, starting in April, intensifying as the season advances. Temperatures are usually high, averaging 34°C.

Farmers generally have limited access to formal financial services. Agro-processing is by traditional methods and on a very small scale. There are, however, efforts by external support agencies to upgrade technologies, especially for women in the processing of sheanut, groundnuts, rice, cotton ginnery and soap manufacture.

Savelugu Senior High School is located on the outskirts of Savelugu town along the Savelugu-Bolgatanga road. The school aims to provide science education to the rural disadvantaged young people and prepare them for a secure future. For the 2013/14 academic year there were 1,128 students in the SHS 2 and 3 classes. The school runs four main programmes: General Arts, General Science, Home Economics and Business (Accounting Option). The school has a total staff strength of 74, the vast majority of whom are men.

Annex 7. The protocol

FAC Q Methodology Study: Interview protocol (final, 29-05-14)

Introduction

1. Introduce yourself and the objective of the research...

    'My name is [….], I am a [….] and I am working with [The University of Ghana or the Institute of Development Studies] on a research project about young people and agriculture in [Ghana / Sierra Leone].

    One part of the research aims to get a better understanding of how different people see the opportunities and challenges facing rural young people, and how these might be addressed.

    This part of the research involves you sorting a number of cards under my instructions. During the interview today I will lead you through four of these sorting exercises. In total this should take less than two hours.

    Before we start I want to assure you that everything about this interview will remain confidential and anonymous. Your name or position will not be mentioned in any analysis or presentation of the results.

    Are you ready to proceed?'

2. Now you will start on the first of four (or in some cases three) sorting exercise

Sorting Exercise 1

3. Place the Exercise 1 Sorting Grid on a flat surface directly in front of the interviewee

4. **Draw the interviewee's attention to the question printed at the top of the sorting grid. Ask him/her to read it slowly and carefully. Make sure they understand the question.**

5. Hand the **Sorting Exercise 1 Cards** (there are 35 of them) to the interviewee. The cards should be in random order – there should be no pre-sorting.

6. Ask him/her to read and consider each card in turn. **While keeping the question at the top of the sorting grid in mind, you should sort the cards into three piles:**

    (1) those you agree with

    (2) those you don't agree with

    (3) those you are ambivalent about, don't have strong feelings about or don't understand.

    It does not matter at all if the number of cards in these three piles is not the same.

7. Keep these three piles separate

8. Now, ask them to take the cards in the **'those you agree with'** pile and place them on the **right hand side** of the sorting grid. The one they **'most agree'** with in relation to the question at the top of the grid goes at the far right (under +4), and the others are sorted under +3, +2, +1 etc **by the strength of your agreement with what is printed on the card.**

    NB: in doing the sorting what matters is what column the statements are under – e.g. +4, +3 etc – not the row.

9. Now ask them to take the **'those you don't agree with'** pile and place them on the **left hand side** of the sorting grid. The one you '**most disagree agree'** with in relation to the question at the top of the grid goes at the far left (under -4), and the others are sorted under -3, -2, -1 etc by the strength of their disagreement with what is printed on the card.

10. Then ask them to take the last pile, and to **sort the cards into the remaining empty cells in the grid,** to the right, left or on the '0' depending on how they feel about what is written on the card vis-à-vis the question at the top of the grid.

11. All the cards should be on the grid – there should be no empty cells in the grid.

12. When all the cards have been placed say **'please look over the whole grid and make any final adjustments in the placements that you want to make**

13. Now, take a small post-it note and write clearly the interviewee's name and the date on it. Place this post-it note at the **bottom right hand corner of the sorting grid.**

14. Use your phone to take two clear pictures of the grid, making sure that the complete grid, including the question at the top and the ID post-it note at the bottom right are included. **Check that the pictures are clear and of good quality and that you can read them.**

15. Now draw the interviewee's attention to the **far right hand side** of the grid, and ask: **Do you want to provide any commentary or explanation as to why they placed these items under +3 and +2?** Please record on take or take careful notes of their commentary. If they don't have anything to say, that is OK.

16. Then draw the interviewee's attention to the **far left hand** side of the grid, and ask; Do you want to provide any commentary or explanation as to why they placed these items under -3 and -2. Please take careful notes of their commentary. If they don't have anything to say, that is OK.

17. Now ask: **Do you have anything more you want to add about the exercise?** Be sure to take notes of any comments they make

18. At this point you have finished with Exercise 1. Gather up the cards **(making very sure you have taken the photograph before you move them!)** and the sorting grid.

Sorting Exercise 2

19. Now place the Exercise 2 sorting grid in front of the interviewee, and do the whole process over again, following exactly the same procedure.

Sorting Exercise 3

20. When you are finished with Exercise 2, go on to Exercise 3, again following exactly the same procedure. **Remember to use the appropriate sorting grid and cards**
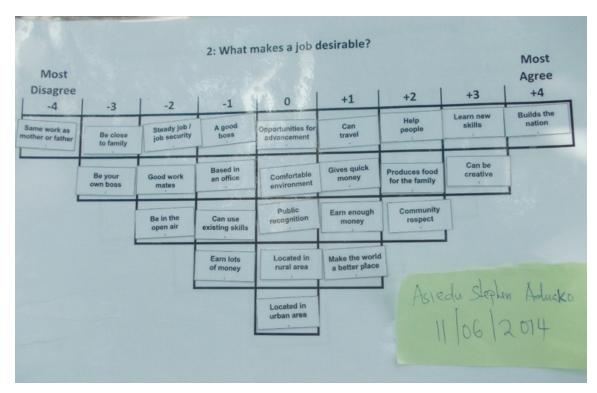
   NB: for Sorting Exercise 3, the grid goes from +3 to -3 (not +4 to -4 as in Sorting Exercises 1 and 2).

Sorting Exercise 4

21. When you are finished with Exercise 3, go on to Exercise 4, again following exactly the same procedure. **Remember to use the appropriate sorting grid and cards**

NB: for Sorting Exercise 4, the grid goes from +3 to -3 (not +4 to -4 as in Sorting Exercises 1 and 2).

End of interview

1. When you are finished with Exercise 5, you will want to confirm just a little information about the interviewee by filling in the **'Interview Information Sheet'**

2. Before you leave, thank the interviewee for his/her time and cooperation, and indicate that we will be happy to provide a summary of the research findings to them when they are available (and make a note is they want to receive them)…

3. Before you leave, make sure you have the three sorting grids, all the cards, the recorder and your phone/camera with you!

Annex 8. Example of a completed sort.

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	Tepa		Savelugu		Total	
Parent's occupation	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**
Teacher	6	42.9	8	40.0	14	41.2
Farmer			3	15.0	3	8.83
Business person			2	10.0	2	5.9
Accountant	1	7.1			1	2.9
Agent at microfinance Institution			1	5.0	1	2.9
Caterer			1	5.0	1	2.9
Civil Servant	1	7.1			1	2.9
Cocoa Marketing Officer	1	7.1			1	2.9
Electrician			1	5.0	1	2.9
Researcher	1	7.1			1	2.9
Shop keeper			1	5.0	1	2.9
Surveyor	1	7.1			1	2.9
Susu Collector	1	7.1			1	2.9
Tailor			1	5.0	1	2.9
Trader	1	7.1			1	2.9
Unemployed			1	5.0	1	2.9
Vet. Officer	1	7.1			1	2.9
Youth Center Volunteer			1	5.0	1	2.9
Total	**14**	**100**	**20**	**100**	**34**	**100**

Annex 9. Occupations of parent participants.

No	Age	Sex	Education	Employer	Position
				Annex 10. Additional information about 'development official' participants.	
1	25-30	M	Tertiary	Rural Enterprise Project	Field Supervisor
2	30-35	M	Tertiary	World Vision	Knowledge Management Coordinator
3	25-30	M	Tertiary	Ministry of Food and Agriculture	Field Official
4	30-35	M	Tertiary	Local Enterprises and Skills Development Programme	Project Coordinator
5	30-35	M	MPHIL	Centre for the Development of People (CEDEP)	Research Officer
6	36-39	M	Tertiary	Ministry of Food and Agriculture	Field Official
7	30-35	M	Tertiary	Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
8	30	M	MPHIL	World Vision	Resource Development Specialist
9	25-30	M	Tertiary	Rural Enterprise Project	Field supervisor
10	30-35	M	Tertiary	Ministry of Food and Agriculture	Extension Officer
11	25-30	F	Tertiary	Self Help Foundation	Project Administration Support
12	45-50	M	Tertiary	Ministry of Food and Agriculture	Extension Officer
13	25-30	M	Masters	United States Agency for International Development (USAID)	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
14	30-35	M	Tertiary	Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development	Programmes Assistant
15	25-30	M	MPHIL	Centre for Democratic Development	Research Officer
16	30-35	M	Tertiary	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)	Principal Technical Officer
17	50-55	M	Tertiary	Ghana Coalition of NGOs	President
18	30-35	M	Tertiary	Ministry of Food and Agriculture	Field Official
19	25-30	M	Tertiary	World Vision	Programmes Quality Specialist
20	25-30	M	Tertiary	Centre for the Development of People	Assist Programmes Officer
21	25-29	M	Tertiary	Ministry of Employment	Programmes Unit