

**YOUNG PEOPLE'S ASPIRATIONS IN AGRICULTURE: A CASE STUDY OF
GHANA'S COCOA SECTOR**

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**Paper for "Young People, Farming and Food": International Conference on the
Future of the Agrifood Sector**

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19 – 21 March 2012

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Introduction

Our paper¹ considers the question of young people's aspirations in agriculture in light of the renewed interest in the agricultural sector as a viable basis for development in sub-Saharan Africa and the perception that young people's involvement is important for the success of this project.

Life choices and outcomes are affected in part by aspirations. The nature and formation of young people's aspirations therefore have direct implications for emerging visions and future models of agriculture to the extent that young people's aspirations inform the choices they make in regards to agriculture. Recent research presents aspiration formation as a dynamic process, developing within and influenced by the context in which a person lives. This context encompasses personal beliefs, societal expectations, educational and other life opportunities and constraints, among many others. The literature presents two main ways of conceptualising aspirations. First are concepts of aspirations that embody some component of reality: that is, what people expect to achieve (see MacBrayne, 1987). Second are aspirations as 'hopes and dreams' and thus distinct from expectations rooted in reality (Morrison Guterman and Akerman, 2008; Quaglia and Cobb, 1996, among others. See Leavy and Smith, 2010, for a review). Our study took a broad view of aspirations, asking young people in rural Ghana what they want to do in the future and whether cocoa farming would feature in those plans. Some plans were immediate and realistic (for example, farming now to get money to learn a trade), while others were long-term and perhaps less likely for our sample of young people (for example, obtaining a university degree and subsequently securing a white collar job).

Generally, there is a dearth of recent research on youth in Africa outside certain narrow areas, such as HIV and risky behaviour. A stock-taking exercise on published research and an audit of datasets relating to youth systematically reviewed the distribution of issues and topics on young people in Sub-Saharan Africa. It found that 65 percent of all articles identified addressed "health", "sexuality/reproductive health", "HIV/AIDS", "nutrition" and "disabilities/mental health", while those addressing agriculture, livelihoods and employment or child labour constituted just 6 percent of all articles identified (Kuchanny and Sumberg, 2010). There is a similar lack of recent, empirical studies on the aspirations of youth in Africa, and even less for youth in rural areas (Leavy and Smith, 2010). There is a general notion that young people are not interested in engaging in agriculture, with some evidence in the literature for this. With reference to Tanzania, Juma (2007) finds a career in agriculture lacks appeal for many young people as it is framed very much as 'farming' and seen to be a dirty activity, and thus "an employer of the last resort" (Juma 2007, p. 2). Kritzinger's (2002) study of teenage girls working as hired labour on fruit farms found similarly negative views. These relate not only to the nature of farm work itself and low wages, but also to social challenges of living and working on the farm, including: alcohol abuse; lack of privacy, boredom and social isolation; and the low status attributed to farm children compared to those living in towns and villages. Low status in Perry's (2009) study in Senegal is also a key consideration in young men's livelihoods preferences, with different types and forms of agricultural activity associated with varying degrees of economic benefit, status and prestige. However, there is insufficient evidence for the claim that young people in SSA are choosing to reject agriculture wholesale.

¹ We would like to thank Christine Okali for her useful comments on our analysis.

We argue that it is important for effective policy to have a better understanding of young people's own experiences and perspectives. Second, the paper takes issue with essentialising narratives about rural youth in agricultural areas that obscure the diversity that exists within that group. We need to investigate such diversity and its significance for young people's aspirations (Leavy and Smith, 2010). In this paper, we consider young people of diverse backgrounds (in terms of education, socio-economic circumstances of their family) and their experiences of cocoa farming, and analyse how this affects their expectations of the role of cocoa production in their future.

The new policy consensus on agriculture

Agriculture has made a comeback onto the agendas of policymakers, donors and governments after two decades of relative neglect in terms of government expenditure and volume of development assistance. There is widespread agreement that agriculture can be the salvation of sub-Saharan African economies. In Maputo, Mozambique, heads of state of African countries initiated the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) and agreed to commit at least 10 percent of their budgets to agriculture to ensure a 6 percent growth in the sector, although few countries have been able to meet the expenditure commitment (NEPAD and AUC, 2003). In addition, under CAADP each African country is supposed to prepare and sign a compact with its respective regional economic community delineating the strategy for agricultural development and an accompanying investment plan. By the end of 2010, 22 African countries had completed and signed their compacts (IFPRI, 2010a). New commitments to support agriculture were made at the Group of 7 Summit in Rome in 2009 and the World Economic Summit in Davos in 2010.

This renewed emphasis on agriculture is a turnaround in the policy direction of the past twenty years, during which waning attention to agriculture, combined with urban-centric policymaking, coincided with a rise in rural Africa's share of world poverty from 15 percent to 20% percent between 1990 and 2004 (de Janvry and Sadoulet, 2010).² The proportion of overseas development aid going towards agriculture in African countries was 1% in 2004, compared to 5% in 1990 (ibid.). Agriculture's comeback is a recognition of the large numbers of people employed in agriculture in the continent, mainly in the rural areas where poverty is pervasive; of the sector's contribution to GDP; and of the large weight food assumes in the consumer basket and thus its importance in the computation of the consumer price index or headline inflation. This became further pronounced when food prices rose significantly in 2007-2008 and again in 2010, leading to increased hunger and malnutrition in many countries and civil unrest in some parts of the world.

The new agenda for agriculture is to revitalise the sector and increase the share of agro-industry in the economy, so that agriculture is the 'engine' of economic growth and the basis for industrialisation. The major assumption underpinning this model is that the growth of agriculture, the largest sector for many African countries, will exert a pull on the economy and result in multiplier effects on other sectors.

Despite these expectations, the productivity and sustainability of agriculture has been a source of concern for policymakers. One commonly cited reason is labour shortage, currently and in all likelihood more acute in the future, as a result of an

² See de Janvry and Sadoulet (2010) for a detailed discussion about the reasons for the decline of agriculture on national and global policy and development agendas, and the reasons for its resurgence.

aging rural population in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), where most of agricultural production takes place (Stloukal, 2000; see also Mba, 2004).³ This fact is then folded into a popular policy narrative that states that young people must be mobilised to engage in agriculture. Not only will they provide more labour, but crucially they will infuse agriculture with innovation and entrepreneurial impetus that will realise the transformation of the sector (Anyidoho et al., 2011). The problem, according to this policy narrative, is that young people are uninterested in the agricultural sector, and even rural youth prefer to leave agricultural areas to seek alternatives to on-farm agricultural work (ibid.). The question then becomes how to attract young people to agriculture.

This question seems even more compelling because it dovetails into another critical policy issue, namely youth unemployment and underemployment. Worldwide, the youth unemployment rate is higher than that for adults and, with the economic crisis, has increased from 11.9% in 2007 to 13% in 2009 (ILO, 2010). Youth employment was a major theme in the World Bank's 2007 report (World Bank, 2007b), was underscored in the UN declaration of 2010-2011 as the International Year of the Youth, and features in the Millennium Development Goals. Creating employment for young people, therefore, is another strand of the policy narrative around young people (see Anyidoho et. al., 2011) and which lends weight to the narrative on sustaining agriculture since that sector is the largest employer for African countries.

A policy and popular narrative has therefore developed that is appealing in its simple logic: Agriculture is in danger because young people do not want to be involved in it; African countries therefore need to develop policies to motivate young people to go into agriculture to sustain the sector and, at the same time, solve the problem of youth employment. The paper is motivated by the problems that this narrative presents. First, it is important to point out that though the narrative may speak about 'agriculture', the way the problem is framed (young people's move from rural, agricultural areas) and the solutions offered (get young people back to rural, agricultural areas) suggests that what is really being talked about is young people's involvement in farming. What is ignored then is the range of off-farm manufacturing and other entrepreneurial activities in the broad agrifood sector. In other words, the narrative is not really about young people's involvement in agriculture writ large but rather about young people as farmers. Second, the narrative puts stress on labour shortage and lack of innovation as the source of the problem of low productivity, and suggests that both problems will be solved with young people's involvement. This prevents us from looking at the more complex web of factors that may obstruct the increase in productivity and ultimate transformation of the agriculture sector, even if young people were to enter the sector in droves. Finally, the axiom of young people's presumed lack of interest in, even disdain for, agriculture has little empirical basis since there are few studies into the perceptions and the aspirations of young people towards agriculture.

In this paper, we use Ghana as a case study to further analyse the correspondence to reality of this dominant framing of the young people-agriculture nexus. We focus in on the cocoa sub-sector because of its importance to in Ghana's agricultural sector and to national development. In doing this, we keep in mind the ways in which the cocoa sector can be considered a microcosm of the wider agriculture sector but also its peculiar role in the Ghanaian economy and society relative to other agricultural crops.

³ This is against the backdrop that there are more young people in the African population overall. According to UNECA/AUC (2010), approximately 70 per cent of Africa's one billion people is under the age of 30, making Africa a 'youthful' continent.

The cocoa sub-sector in Ghana

Ghana's policy documents echo the very same arguments about agriculture, sustainability and young people's role as we have discussed. Policy documents acknowledge the importance of agriculture for social and economic transformation. Ghana's immediate past development plan - the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II, 2006-2009) – and its current plan, the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GDSA 2010-2013) both identified a modernised agriculture as the means for economic growth and transformation of the economy (NDPC 2005, 2010). The GDSA states:

Given its central role in generating income and providing subsistence for majority of the people as well as its potential to lead the transformation of the economy, agriculture is expected to drive the new development agenda (NDPC 2010, p. 38).

Agriculture forms the biggest share to GDP at 39 percent and contributes to employment, livelihoods and poverty reduction (NDPC, 2010). At the same time, policy documents note that low productivity and low income, coupled with a generally unappealing rural environment, are thought to make agriculture unattractive to young people (MMYE, n.d.; MoFA, 2007 and NDPC, 2010). Some of these policy documents explicitly state that the lack of appeal of agriculture (read: farming) repels young people out of rural areas, leaving an ageing and less educated rural population to sustain agriculture production⁴ (e.g. MoFa 2007, p. 3). Further, the need to attract young people to agricultural production in Ghana is tied to the need to provide young people with jobs⁵, to secure their future, reduce poverty levels and boost development (see MoFA, 2007; MYS, 2010). Thus, initiatives such as the *Program for Youth Employment and Accelerated Agricultural Production* and the *Youth in Agriculture Program* make a clear connection between the policy issues of agriculture sustainability and productivity and employment for young people (see MoFA, 2007; MYS, 2010).

A discussion of Ghana's agricultural sector must necessarily reference cocoa. Since its introduction at the end of the 19th century, cocoa (alongside gold) has dominated not only the agricultural sector but Ghana's economy as a whole. Cocoa revenue financed dramatic expansions in physical infrastructure and social services in the colonial and immediate post-independence government from 1957 to 1966 (NDPC 2005). Moreover, development plans during these years were drawn on the basis of expected national income from cocoa (ibid.); that is, cocoa was to finance national development. While a downturn in the world market in the mid-1960s cautioned against over-reliance on this crop, leading to attempts by subsequent governments to diversify agricultural production and export to other crops, cocoa props up the agriculture sector and is largely responsible for growth in that sector and in the economy as a whole (NDPC, 2010).⁶ Further, cocoa has contributed to poverty

⁴ Although there is a lack of current and accurate demographic statistics, one study indicates that the majority of Ghanaian farmers are over 50 years of age (Dankwa 2002, cited in Bosompem, Ntifo-Siaw and Kwarteng, 2010). This is also true for Ghana; Among the reasons given for this phenomenon is the rural-urban migration of young people (Mba, 2004; Stloukal, 2000).

⁵ In Ghana's development policy, references to young people are mainly framed in terms of their need for employment (see NDPC, 2010). The policy document contains the following indicative phrases: 'opportunities [...] to create jobs especially for the youth' (p.64); 'dwindling employment opportunities especially for the youth' (p.108); and 'expanding employment schemes for the youth, women and the disabled' (p.119). See also the preface of the National Employment Policy (MMYE, n.d.): 'Unemployment remains a major development issue in many countries, and in Ghana, the rates are quite high especially among the youth' (p.i).

⁶ In fact, the total contribution of the 'non-traditional export crops' to total agricultural output has been falling since 2000 when it was at 18% to 10% in 2010 (MoFA, 2011).

reduction in the country; for instance, it is indicative that poverty rates have fallen in the past decade in the cocoa producing forest regions, while poverty has increased in the fishing and food crop producing coastal and savannah areas (ibid.)

Cocoa has not just been an economic force but has had social impact as well. Cocoa production in Ghana has influenced and been influenced by social institutions. It has affected land tenure systems and, by virtue of their intimate relation to land, the dynamics of traditional authority systems and kinship relations,⁷ both of which have been disrupted and reshaped in the struggle to gain access to and control of farmlands (Mikell, 1989). Kinship again interacts with cocoa as the basis for organisation of production (ibid.), consistent with the family as the basic economic unit in Ghanaian society (Nukunya, 1992). This has meant that labour for cocoa production has conventionally been supplied by the family, with additional labour from the labour market through share-cropping arrangements, or through *nnoboa*.⁸ Furthermore, cocoa income created a class of rich farmers who were able to access formal education for their children, both locally and overseas (ibid.) and at different points in history, cocoa farmers have been among the wealthiest. Cocoa production has also been implicated in migration patterns, especially in the movement of labour from the north to southern cocoa-producing areas (see Asuming-Brempong *et al.*, 2007; Hashim 2005; Hill, 1963).

Given the centrality of cocoa to the agricultural sector, its productivity and sustainability should be a concern. Even though the volume of cocoa production has risen steadily in the past decade (MoFA 2000), the national average yield of cocoa farms in 2007 was 350-400 kg per hectare, compared with 800-1000 kg per hectare in neighbouring Cote d'Ivoire (Barrientos *et al.*, 2007b). Another reason is the fact that cocoa production, as is true of the wider agricultural sector, is mainly carried out by small holders and is labour-intensive, with minimal use of machinery. In the past, labour was supplied by the farmer and his/her family. However, with migration and increased school enrolment, it has become difficult to find labour for cocoa farming activities. This situation has bid up the farm labour wage, which is now often higher than the minimum wage (Barrientos *et al.*, 2007b).⁹ The study also found, through a household survey of six cocoa producing communities, that income from cocoa production accounted for two thirds of household income, but that this income was only \$0.42 per capita per day (ibid.). Low productivity, lack of innovation and low incomes are indeed some of the reasons given in Ghana's policy documents as to why young people do not want to enter agriculture (Anyidoho, 2011). However, the broader study on cocoa sustainability on which this paper is derived interviewed government officials, cocoa researchers and farmers about the reasons for the low yields: these included the "decreasing fertility of land, the age (and low yield) of cocoa trees, the expense of inputs, and the waning attention of the government and Ministry of Agriculture to the circumstances of cocoa farming and cocoa farmers" (Barrientos *et al.* 2007b, p. 64). Thus there are many parts to the problem of low productivity and sustainability in the cocoa sector. Do policies looking at the agriculture-young people nexus recognise these complexities of this and other crops, and importantly for this paper, do young people? In other words, to what extent do

⁷ Despite the pressures on traditional land tenure systems due to migration, commercialization, formalization, and the imposition of statutory policy, the fact remains that about 80% of land in Ghana continues to be reposed in the custody of customary institutions. In general, families and the institution of chieftaincies are the biggest land-holders in the country. A nation-wide survey carried out by the Institute for Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER) in 2005 found that approximately 52% of land was under control of families and clans, and 29% by chieftaincies (ISSER, 2005).

⁸ This is a system where groups of farmers self-organise to provide reciprocal labour.

⁹ However, one can argue that cocoa production is perhaps less vulnerable to labour shortages than other crops because of the sharecrop arrangements that are the convention. (Christine Okali, personal communication).

young people's perceptions of and aspirations in agriculture match up to the perspectives and approaches in policy documents, both in terms of the framing of the problem and the proposed solutions.

METHODOLOGY

The data for the paper were obtained from fieldwork in cocoa farming communities in the cocoa districts of Ghana conducted in October and November 2006.¹⁰ A multi-stage stratified sampling procedure was used to select cocoa growing regions, districts and communities for the study, with both purposive and random sampling.

Ghana is divided into seven cocoa regions which are different from the ten administrative regions. The cocoa regions – Ashanti, Brong-Ahafo, Central, Eastern, Volta, Western North and Western South – were stratified into *high*, *medium* and *low* cocoa producing areas, using regional cocoa production data from the Ghana Cocoa Board. In the high production stratum, Western South was selected over Western North because of better road access to markets. For the medium stratum, demographic analysis found the Ashanti and Brong Ahafo to be fairly homogenous in demography and so a toss of coin led to the selection of the Ashanti region. In the low production stratum, the Volta Region was eliminated from consideration because of its extremely low level of cocoa production. The remaining two low production regions were found to be demographically similar and so a toss of coin was used to select the Eastern region over Central region. In each region, two districts were purposively selected to represent high and low levels of production. Further, for each district, two communities were randomly selected.¹¹ The final sample of regions, districts and communities is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Selected regions, districts and communities for survey

Region	Districts	Communities
Ashanti	New Edubiase	Menang
		Tonkoase II
	Agona Mampong	Bedomase
		Wiamoase
Western South	Dunkwa	Kyegyewere
		Nsuaem
	Manso Amenfi	Subreho
		Aku-Nkwanta
Eastern	Akim Oda	Mofram
		Asene
	Akim Tafo	Maase
		Nankese

¹⁰ The published report is available: Barrientos, S., Asenso-Okyere K., Asuming-Brempong S., Sarpong D., Anyidoho N.A., Kaplinsky R., Leavy, J. (2007b). *Mapping Sustainable Production in Ghanaian Cocoa*. Report to Cadbury Schweppes plc.

¹¹ Communities receiving Cadbury Schweppes support or piloting International Cocoa Initiative (ICI) projects were not considered, since the goal of the project was to study communities receiving minimal external support for cocoa production.

Data Collection

Data were obtained from focus group discussions (FGDs) and life history interviews with young people aged 16 to 26 years-old.¹² A total of 99 young people (43 females and 56 males), with an average age of 19.6 years, took part in 12 focus group discussions, one in each community. The size of the focus groups ranged from 5 to 10 persons with an average of 8 participants. Roughly half of all participants were current students or recent graduates of junior (JHS) or senior high school (SHS).

Participants of the FGDs and life history interviews were selected through purposive and availability sampling. For focus groups they were young people who were available and willing to take part at the time of field work, but also including different types of young people, in terms of age, education, nature of engagement with farming, and so on. The focus group discussion involved two related discussions: first, a general discussion of perceptions and aspirations towards cocoa farming; second, young people's opinions about the gap between the current situation of cocoa farmers/farming and the circumstances under which they (young people) would consider cocoa farming as a primary or secondary occupation. Respondents for life history interviews were chosen to maximise diversity in gender, age, family background, experience and relative success in cocoa production. Two young females and six young men, ranging in age from 17 to 24 years, were interviewed.

The focus group discussions and life history interviews were recorded on tape, transcribed and analysed thematically.

Diversity of young people in cocoa farming areas

The young people encountered through the study were diverse in terms of education, residence, involvement in cocoa farming, and experiences of life outside of their community. The first obvious difference was place of residence. While most cocoa growing areas are rural, our research sites run the gamut from remote villages with barely motorable roads such as Aku-Nkwanta in the Western Region, to sizeable towns such as Asene in the Eastern Region with paved roads and electricity. The research sites differed in availability and quality of economic infrastructure such as roads, amenities such as electricity and potable water, and social infrastructure such as schools and clinics, which are important indicators of quality of life and may be a consideration in young people's decisions about settling in or remaining in these areas.

The young people also differed in levels of education, which is important for aspiration formation because of its relation to perceived and actual opportunities. The proportion of students in the focus groups tended to be higher in the bigger towns than in the small villages, presumably because these towns had more schools and also because of the relatively higher income levels allowing parents to send their children to schools, both within and outside their towns. Approximately half of all participants were full-time students, either in junior high school, or recent graduates of junior and senior high school who were planning to continue their schooling. The remainder had primary or no formal education at all.

Most young people interviewed also had experienced life outside of their immediate surroundings. This is important to note because of the social nature of aspirations: that is, aspirations are formed through interaction with other people (Morrison, Gutman and Akerman, 2008; Whitehead et al., 2007; Del Franco, 2006). Of those

¹² The study used the UN age definition of youth as any person between the ages of 15 and 24. In some communities sampled however, the number of young people in this age range available to be interviewed were few and so 25-year olds were included, as well as one 26-year old.

who had migrated independently or with family into these cocoa growing areas, their movement could be characterised as rural to rural, rural to more urban settings, and from urban to rural settings. Even those born locally experienced some mobility, either to school in the nearest big town, or to other districts and regions for school or work. In one town in particular, Asene in the Eastern Region, we came across young people who had travelled to Nigeria to work. These movements suggest exposure of young people to different places, peoples, and sub-societies of Ghana and elsewhere, with differences in the nature and degree of exposure across the sample.

Further, most young people had, in common, first-hand experience of cocoa farming, though depth of experience varied across the group. Some were full-time farmers, some worked on farms part-time, usually family farms, and some students no longer involved in farming said they had helped on family farms when they were younger, with most of this farming experience being in cocoa farming.

Again, these differences are important not merely for providing a profile of the young people in the cocoa growing areas, but also correspond to young people's aspirations, as we discuss in the next section.

FINDINGS

Categories of aspiration

Analysis of the focus groups discussions and the life histories revealed a hierarchy of aspirations of future occupations. Importantly, the categories of aspiration roughly correspond with particular profiles of young people. Young people's prior experience and current engagement with farming, and their current and expected educational attainment, were most implicated in their aspirations.

Below, in ascending order of preference, are the categories of occupational aspirations derived from the interviews and focus group discussions with young people our research sites:

- i. full-time farming on own farm
- ii. farming as a means of capital accumulation for non-farm occupational or educational aspiration
- iii. formal work, either with no direct engagement with farming or with commercialised farming as a business enterprise

In this section, we describe the profiles of young people holding each of these aspirations. We will observe that there are two related dimensions that can be used to categorize young people. One is educational attainment; the other is current occupation or employment status. There was an observed distinction between young people with no formal schooling or with minimal (that is, lower primary) education, and young people with higher primary and high school education. The second dimension relates primarily to whether the young person was a full-time student or was employed in farming.

Farming as a full-time occupation

Previous studies inform us of significant migration of young people from rural areas of Ghana. Contrary to popular perception that young migrants invariably head for the cities, many end up working in agriculture, notably in cocoa growing areas (see Hashim, 2005; Whitehead, Hashim and Iversen, 2007). For these young people, leaving home to farm elsewhere holds prospects of greater cash income and other

resources than they might have in their places of origin. A few such young people were in our sample, exclusively in the settlements of Subreho and Aku-Nkwanta/Hiamanka, two cocoa farming settlements with predominantly migrant families. Each of these young people aspired to farm under better terms than they were presently under; they aspired to move from being caretakers to farming on leased or purchased land, with increased control and better income. Representatives of this group of young people were Dawoda (21), Yaw (22) and Sule (17), young men with at most primary education who had migrated to Subreho in the Western Region from the northern part of the country and had found work as caretakers on farms. Osei (age unknown) and his wife, Mamuna (21), had also migrated to Subreho from northern Ghana for the same purpose. Osei was helping an older brother with his caretaking contract in the hope that the farm owner would give him his own contract. Mamuna's narrative was interesting because of her aspiration to farm through an intermediary but also because her story intersects with those of her husband and brother, young migrants into cocoa growing areas and hoped to progress through caretaking arrangements, to sharecropping (that is, farming on land belonging to another person and sharing the proceeds or the farm), to ultimately owning a farm.

Mamuna (aged 21 years)

Mamuna's parents migrated from Bolgatanga in the north of Ghana to southern Ghana, to work as caretakers on a rice farm. Mamuna's mother returned home after the death of her husband but Mamuna, who was enrolled in a school at the time, chose to live in the south with an older relative she calls "grandmother", because her "grandmother" had promised that she would put Mamuna back in school. Instead, the old woman put her own daughter through school while Mamuna was made to help on her rice farms.

When Mamuna was still in her teens, her grandmother arranged a marriage to a man in northern Ghana, which dissolved after two years. Mamuna returned to southern Ghana, this time to live with an aunt who enrolled her as an apprentice to a seamstress. Soon into the programme she met Osei, a young man from her hometown. He told her he had prospects in cocoa farming, and that he was headed to Subreho to act as caretaker of a farm, and hopefully to establish a farm of his own. He promised he would give her some of his earnings so she could continue her apprenticeship.

They were married and immediately moved to Subreho at the urging of Osei's older brother, to help him with his contract as a caretaker, hoping that the farm-owning family would recognise his hard work and give him a contract of his own. However, according to Mamuna, Osei was not serious about farming and preferred to work as a casual day labourer for quick money.

At the time of the interview, Mamuna was rethinking her marriage. She said she would prefer to stay with Osei and help him to work towards buying their own cocoa farm, because she believed that they could earn enough money to look after their child. Since that did not seem likely, she was thinking of going to Bibiani to live with her older brother who, having started out as a labourer on a cocoa farm, now owned a six-acre cocoa farm, and was caretaker for another ten acres of cocoa farmland.

Farming as a means of capital accumulation

The predominant aspiration was to learn a trade like auto mechanics, carpentry, or electrical works, typically in a larger town. More than half of young people fell into this group. They had diverse backgrounds, but most had some level of formal education,

in contrast with those who aspired to be farmers who had very little or no formal education. This group can be represented by Kwaku (18), Owusu (21), Alex (21) and Mosi (24) in Aku-Nkwanta in the Western Region, who all saw their current cocoa farming activities (Kwaku, Owusu and Alex on family farms; Mosi as a caretaker) as a means to acquire the funds to enable them to enter a trade at a future date.

Kwaku and Owusu had gone to school outside of the village, and had moved back to take over their fathers' farms. Neither of their respective families lived in the village, although both had spent a part of their childhood in Aku-Nkwanta when their fathers were there as migrant farmers. They both described the challenge of resuscitating farms that had been neglected. Both were hoping to stay in the village only long enough (perhaps three years) to earn enough money to go into a trade. They would leave the farm in the hands of a caretaker, and occasionally come for visits to look over the farm.

Alex had lived in Aku-Nkwanta with his family all his life, but he was also hoping that, with the money he earned helping his father on the farm, he could move to Kumasi to enter into a trade.

Mosi who has had no schooling was born to a migrant cocoa farmer in Aku-Nkwanta, and had spent his childhood and teenage years working on different farms as a labourer. He had progressed to being a caretaker. He planned to work for another four years, make enough money and leave to learn a trade.

Since all four young men profiled aspired to undertake a trade, it would be easy to miss the subtle differences among them. Despite the similarity of aspirations, we see that these four young men had arrived at cocoa farming from different points, which then informed their perspectives on farming. Kwaku, Owusu and Alex had some education which seemed to have expanded their life expectations. Kwaku and Owusu were further influenced by the fact that they had spent time in bigger cities which presumably would have a similar effect on their aspirations. Paradoxically, while the three recognised their reliance on cocoa in order to achieve their ambitions, they were explicit that cocoa would not be a permanent occupation. For them, farming was a stop-gap measure; a means of earning income so they could move on to other work (see Sumberg and Okali, 2006). In fact, cocoa farming was an unwanted but necessary step *back* in order to go forward. In other words, they would have preferred to move on to their aspiration of learning a trade without having to engage in cocoa farming at all because the activity of cocoa farming, and the identity of 'cocoa farmer', was one that they did not want to claim. It should be pointed out that Kwaku, Owusu and Alex had acquired farming skills early through working on family farm in Aku-Nkwanta and further had family-owned land on which they could independently work as adults. This fact meant that cocoa farming was an option for them in a way that it might not have been for other young people. Even though it was not their preferred option, cocoa farming was an income-generating avenue they could fall back on.

Mosi, by contrast, while also having ambitions of learning a trade, did not hesitate to identify himself as a farmer. One reason might be because, unlike the other three, he did not have formal schooling and therefore had not developed the identity as 'student' as an oppositional identity to 'farmer'. His perspective of cocoa farming was more positive – he saw it as a legitimate step *up* to something different and better. It may also be that, as a migrant from the north, a group who have historically been hired labourers, owning a cocoa farm (whether one owns the land or works on leased land) is an aspiration, the probability of which has recently been greater as a result of shifts in labour patterns. Within his opportunity space, working first as a hired hand

and then a caretaker and then a farm owner was part of his perceived 'upward' trajectory towards his goal of learning a trade.

And what would be the place of cocoa farming in the lives of young men such as Mosi, Kwaku, Owusu and Alex, if they did attain their goal? Roughly half of all the young people who perceived farming as an investment into a preferred occupation said that they would prefer to leave farming behind completely. These were young people who had neither significant farming experience nor significant ties to the land and, presumably, have no easy access to land or an established cocoa farm. Thus their 'preferences' could reflect an acceptance of the reality of their situation. The other half of this group of young people expected to engage in cocoa production as an additional source of income. These young people were those who had significant prior experience of cocoa farming and expected to have access to farmland (usually on their parents' land). The story of Clement Nsuaem in the Western illustrates the latter perspective:

Clement (aged 21 years)

Clement, the eldest of seven children, was born and raised in Nsuaem. He attended school and helped his father on his cocoa farm on weekends. While he entered secondary school, he decided that there was no point continuing on to his final year; he did not think that he would be able to make a passing grade, and did not want to waste any more of his parents' money. His parents were unhappy with his decision to leave school and learn a trade; they had wanted their son to finish senior high school and go on to nursing or teachers' training college. However, when they realised that he was determined to quit school, his father made him a proposal: he would give Clement a portion of his cocoa farm (about six acres), and Clement would harvest and prepare the cocoa for sale. Out of the sale of the cocoa, his father would finance Clement's apprenticeship in masonry in Kumasi.¹³

Clement was interested in masonry work, and believed it would be a viable occupation, given how frequently people erect buildings. However, masonry would not provide him continuous employment as one may be hired on a building for just a few weeks or months with periods without work in between contracts. To fill in the slack time, Clement planned to have a cocoa farm alongside his trade. At first he would have to enter into either a lease agreement with a land owner, or act as caretaker. If he could save enough, he would buy land to start his own farm. If he had to be away on a building project for some time, his father or someone else would look after the farm.

Clement would not want his children to be cocoa farmers. He would prefer them to pursue high level of education and get a good job. His children would have the legacy of his farm, Clement explained, but they would ideally not need to farm themselves – they could always hire someone to take care of the farm.

It is important at this point to make an important distinction that will carry through the rest of this paper – that between cocoa farming and ownership of a cocoa farm. Clement's ambitions to go to school had been achieved through income from cocoa farming. Both he and his parents had expected that he would personally need to rely on cocoa farming as an occupation. His return to farming cocoa was a contingency plan, a way to invest in his aspirations of learning a trade. After become a mason, his ideal future involvement in cocoa would be as a farm owner, not as a farmer. In a

¹³ Kumasi is the capital of the Ashanti region and the second largest urban centre in the country.

similar vein, he would want his children to own his cocoa farms, but not work on them. In summary, all four young men saw cocoa as a source of capital or an investment in a future, rather than an occupation.

Formal work, either with no direct engagement with cocoa farming

The young people in our focus group strongly indicated that the 'best' form of occupation was formal, salaried work, preferably in a white-collar job. However, only a minority of young people in focus groups aspired to this as a realistic aspiration; this was predominantly full-time students in primary, junior high and senior high school who expected or hoped to continue their education to at least senior high school or even tertiary levels, and for whom therefore the prospect of a white-collar job was a possibility.

This group best illustrates the influence of educational attainment and educational aspirations on young people's expectations of their future. Formal education can offer knowledge and skills to young people that potentially allow them to engage in a range of occupations, the final choice of which depends on a number of contextual and personal factors. Education also seems to influence young people's ideas about their opportunities, which may or may not correspond with reality. Given the exigencies of their situation, it is possible that the young people aspiring to formal employment may face obstacles to further education and formal employment, and would then 'lower' their expectations.

There were two extremes in the role of cocoa farming in the imagined futures of young people who expected to reach higher levels of education. Most gave no space to direct engagement with farming; at best, they would find caretakers for their parents' farms but would not attempt to establish a farm on their own. This is because they believed they would not need farming for income since formal employment would provide them sufficient income and also because it would be incompatible with their lifestyle and status (a point discussed more fully later in this paper). Charles in Aku-Kwanata in the Western Region and Ben in Bedomase in the Ashanti Region, both children of cocoa farmers, are representative of this group.

Charles (aged 20 years)

Charles was born in Kumasi in 1986 "but since my parents work in the village, they brought me to the village."¹⁴ When he was ready to start senior high school, he was sent to Accra to live with his aunt so he could go to school there. After his junior high school examinations, and while waiting for admission to secondary school, he returned to Aku-Nkwanta to help his parents with their farm. His parents struck a deal with him that whatever money he made from harvesting cocoa would be used to pay his tuition and buy school supplies. This was the most farm work he did. For most of his childhood, he lived outside of Aku-Nkwanta, and even when he was in Aku-Nkwanta on holidays, he only helped with weeding and harvesting. It was not an occupation he was interested in: "farming is tiring, and does not pay well", Charles said. As to his own aspirations, when he was younger, he wanted to be a doctor, but science education was not strong in the schools he attended. Then he developed an interest in agriculture. He thought he could work with the government or become minister of agriculture in the future. However, his father discouraged him: "When I talk about it, he tells me it is a foolish course." His recourse now is to do general arts in senior high school and then perhaps law; he did not yet know.

¹⁴ All quotations are translated from Akan by the authors.

In the next ten to fifteen years, he would like to live in Accra with his family. And his parents' cocoa farm? "We will give it as a gift to the poor people here."

Ben (aged 17 years)

When Ben was younger, before he started school, he would go with his parents to the food crop farm every day. When he started school, he still helped on the farm on weekends. Now he had completed junior high school but his father said that he did not have money to continue his education; he had used his savings to start a cocoa farm. In a year, they would harvest the cocoa and be able to finance his senior high school education. Ben was very unhappy about this, but he could not blame his father; "He does not have a job, just farming", he explained.

Ben wanted to be an engineer, living anywhere but Bedomase, because he saw life as too hard in his town. If he had his way, and the means, he would make sure his parents did not have to grow cocoa. But he realised perhaps it would be difficult for them to just give up their farm, so instead he would help them financially with the farm if he was employed as an engineer. If eventually his parents were to bequeath the farm to him, he would find a caretaker for it.

At the other extreme, there were also young people aspiring to white collar work who spoke about their willingness to do capital-intensive, large-scale commercial cocoa farming. Generally, these were young people living in the relatively bigger towns of Wiamease in the Ashanti Region and Asene in the Eastern Region where there were examples of wealthy cocoa farmers. They were in junior and senior high school and had the expectation of going on to tertiary education and formal employment. They expected their formal jobs to provide access to capital for such a venture, either through their incomes or better access to loan facilities.

From the foregoing discussion, it is evident that young people in our study ranked cocoa farming at the bottom of their aspirations, followed by trade. White collar jobs were the highest preference of occupational, but one that was a realistic aspiration for only a few young people who expected to complete secondary school, at the least. Importantly, the perceived importance of cocoa farming diminished with actual or expected educational attainment. For those without formal schooling, cocoa farming was a step up towards a hoped-for better life; however, for those with some education, cocoa farming was a last resort or fall-back when one was unable to acquire sufficient education to aspire to another occupation. Kwaku (23 years of age) and Richard (18 years of age), two brothers in Moffram in the Eastern Region, have contrasting stories. Taken together, these illustrate how education mediates the content of aspirations. Unable to acquire the level of education he wanted, Kwaku had had to modify his aspirations to include cocoa farming, which he had previously shunned. While wanting to learn a trade, he wanted to use cocoa farming as a stepping stone and also a fall back if other aspirations did not work out. By contrast, his younger brother Richard had wanted to be a farmer when he was young. He was fortunate enough to do well in school and expected to move on to senior high school. Farming had no place in his future plans.

Kwaku (aged 23 years)

Kwaku complained that his life has been a great struggle. First, his father neglected his mother and his ten siblings. Then, a year after he started primary school, he began to struggle with long bouts of illness. At 15, he

realised he might not be able to finish school; besides, he thought he should help his mother support the family, so he quit school and took up farming. As he puts it, “I made the cutlass my brother; I made it my everything.”

In the beginning, he admitted, he did not know much about cocoa farming, and did not make much money from it. He turned to charcoal-making, which he thought would bring him money faster. He would make the charcoal in Moffram and transport it by train to Accra (the capital) for sale.

Three years ago, he returned to Moffram to find his mother struggling to maintain the cocoa farm. She would plant and weed the farm, but because she was too poor to hire labourers, the cocoa pods would not be harvested quickly enough. So he took hold of his machete again, and managed to save some of the cocoa trees. This was the turning point for him, the period when he made a commitment to cocoa farming as his occupation. “Looking at my situation – the fact that I didn’t go to school – I have no choice but to put my everything into farming,” he said. He farms with his mother on two acres of family land his maternal grandfather purchased. In addition, he has bought a piece of land in Nsawam, in the Eastern Region. He wants financial assistance to buy more land.

Kwaku still wants a chance to travel to a bigger town in the region to learn a trade (he would like to be an electrician), but he wants to make sure that he has cultivated the cocoa farm to a stage that he could comfortably leave it in someone’s care. Even with a trade, he would still maintain a farm. “I might have some (financial) hardship at some point in my life. I would know that I can come here, and get enough out of the cocoa to get myself out of that situation.”

Kwaku would like to send his children to school. He hoped they would become teachers, but he would help them to set up their own cocoa farms alongside whatever jobs they would do.

Richard (aged 18 years)

Richard remembers going with his mother to farm from the time he was five years old. She carved out a small part of her farm for him, and would teach him how to plant, weed and so on. That is how he started as a farmer. At 18, and unlike many of his age-mates in his town, he has his own cocoa farm.

When he was about six, Richard informed his mother he wanted to go to school like all his playmates. He managed to catch up with the rest of the children in a short time, and the teachers liked him because he was such a bright pupil. In his final year of JSS, he was elected school prefect, and he picked up four academic awards. He expected to do just as well when he moved on to senior high school (SHS).

While Richard was in school, his older brother, Kwaku, took care of his farm. Although Richard made some profit from his cocoa farm that went towards his school fees, he made up his mind that he was not going to continue with cocoa farming. He considered it too much of a burden to expect his brother to look after three farms (his mother’s, his brother’s, and his own). Besides, they did not have enough money to buy the necessary inputs, such as fertilizer and pesticides. When he was younger, Richard had wanted to be a cocoa farmer, but farming was no longer in his future plans; he would rather become a teacher or a policeman.

The distribution of young people across the three categories of aspirations also raises the question of what young people perceive as lying within the realm of possibility for them in terms of their occupational aspirations. The numbers of young people who aspired to undertake either full-time farming or salaried employment were low, compared to a majority aspiring to learn and practice a trade, which demonstrates the realism of these young people about what is viable for them within their context. Farming was perceived as an undesirable occupational opinion that young people generally abandoned when their opportunity space opened up, although farm ownership could remain an option. At the other extreme, the small number of people subscribing to salaried work suggests a constrained opportunity space; that is, while our sample of young people stated this to be the most desirable form of work, many of them were aware that this was out of reach to them, since it demanded higher levels of education, skills and knowledge than they expected to attain. Previous studies have suggested that young people can be unrealistic in their expectations (Leavy and Smith, 2010). If there was any area in which they young people in our sample were unrealistic, it was perhaps in the undue weight they placed on education as almost guaranteeing an occupation away from farming and, preferably, away from the rural sites of cocoa farming.

Young people's perception of cocoa farming

Beyond a listing of aspirations, the focus group discussions and individual interviews uncovered reasons for the ways in which young people configured cocoa farming in their future aspirations. The young people described the sheer drudgery of cocoa farming; the physical effort and time not compensated for by the profits from cocoa. Here, young people were making an observation about productivity and low incomes that are echoed in policy documents, as discussed. This appears to bear out policy prescriptions to raise productivity and income from farming as a way of attracting younger people.

What policies overlook is the question of status. Embedded in young people's observations was a perceived hierarchy of work within which an occupation requiring manual labour ranked lower than formal or salaried work. As noted, other studies have found that young people reject agriculture not only for economic reasons, but for social reasons such as status and prestige (see for example Perry, 2009; Juma, 2007) . The idea that status is important to young people helps to solve the seeming paradox of youth with the highest aspirations, for formal work, stating a possible interest in farming. In the way the young people expressed it, large-scale commercial farming was distinct from farming per se. This is because their social status would be based on the primary occupation, say as an accountant, lawyer, civil servant; they would not have the occupation label of 'farmer' since they would not personally undertake on-farm work but would hire labour or caretakers. Second, cocoa farming would be a business venture, rather than a primary occupation.

When asked what it might take for them to consider farming, overall the young people we interviewed stated that the government would have to once more invest in cocoa in terms of new technologies and inputs (such as fertilizer and other chemicals). They said also that credit must be made readily available and accessible to farmers; remunerative prices should be paid for cocoa purchases; and that infrastructure and amenities should be available to make the rural areas more 'liveable'. Public investments in cocoa production would also raise the status of cocoa farming, since government's attention to farmers would signal to them and to the rest of the nation that cocoa farmers mattered. This need for recognition was

especially strongly articulated in smaller cocoa producing areas, where there was a stronger feeling of isolation and neglect.¹⁵

In the larger study, we found that young people's general disinclination to farm was in consonance with their parents' stated aspirations for their children (Barrientos et al., 2007b). We can refer again to Ben and Charles, whose profiles were discussed earlier. Charles, a young man in Subreho whose father had told him not to do agriculture in school, shared his parents' disdain for farming and for the farming settlement that they lived in. He remarked that most of the young men in the vicinity were "illiterates"; that there were only three or four others like him (students) with whom he could have intelligent conversation about school. Ben, a student in Bedomase, like Charles, aspired to finish high school and live in a bigger town or city. He was not interested in farming but stated that he would endeavour to keep his parents' cocoa farm in the family. His perspective reflected his parents' positive attitude to cocoa farming as their best available means of financing their child's education. Still, adult farmers and parents preferred the younger generation to find alternatives to cocoa farming, and only undertake cocoa farming as an occupation as the last resort. However, they were more encouraging of their children owning cocoa farms on which others persons would farm (Barrientos et al., 2007b). Again, this tells us that cocoa young people's perception of cocoa as an investment is in consonance with the ways in which cocoa is regarded in their social context.

CONCLUSIONS

Our paper offers insight into the particular context of cocoa production in rural Ghana. The study suggests a more complicated relationship with agriculture than the literature would suggest. First, contrary to the policy narrative that young people disdain farming in rural areas, the majority of young people in our sample appreciated that their education and other opportunities came to them because of their families' involvement with cocoa farming. As we have found, some young people returned to cocoa farming when in need of money or employment (as illustrated in the case of Kwaku in Moffram in the Eastern Region). Some also indicated that they would retain ties to rural social networks even when they leave these areas, as farm owners. Second, even in this relatively narrow context, we see that diversity in the backgrounds and experiences of rural young people informs aspirations. Our research shows that the different backgrounds and experiences of farming of young people informed the role they gave to agriculture in their long term goals and current strategies. Third, the youth in our study, while not regarding cocoa farming (as it is currently practiced) as a preferred occupation, were more willing to regard cocoa farm ownership as a possibility. That is, rather than thinking of cocoa production as an occupation, young people preferred to think of farming as investment, capital accumulation and as a business. In this way, young people perceive the value cocoa in similar ways to their parents; cocoa can be a means of capital accumulation and investment, although the prospects for this is perceived to be less positive than in previous generations because of perceived decreased government support and lower availability of land, credit and inputs, among others. It also tells us that there may not be a large gap between young people's perception of cocoa farming and that of previous generations. This questions the idea in policy narratives that young people's presumably new (or 'modern') attitudes are the problem.

¹⁵ This came through particularly strongly in the focus groups interviews with adult cocoa farmers (see Barrientos et al., 2007b).

Again, young people's preference for farm ownership over farming may another indication that young people have a fairly accurate reading of their environment; for instance, given that there is less land now for expanding cocoa production – a fact that was mentioned fairly consistently in the focus group discussions – it may be that the future of cocoa farming is about acquiring farms from others or maintaining existing farms, or even of working as a caretaker in order to acquire access to or ownership of existing farms.

We found that a minority of young people took the concept of cocoa ownership further when they spoke about the possibility of cocoa production as a big commercial venture – as they explained it, this would mean bigger farms than the smallholdings that are the norm, and employing others as full-time workers. It is significant that this sub-group who could envisage involvement in large-scale commercial cocoa farming were located in the bigger towns and some of these young people were in agricultural technical schools where they learned modern farming methods. These were reasons that they could aspire to possibilities that other youth in smaller villages could not – they had both exemplars of successful farming and could see themselves having the means (education and access to capital) to achieve this. It is important to point out that this vision of large-scale farming was considered a possibility only under the right conditions, notably the availability of lands, loans and supportive government policies and services. Thus, the fact that young people said they would consider cocoa farming as a large business enterprise is not to assume that this is achievable or that they would actually pursue it, even if the factors they mentioned were all available. There is not always a strong correlation between what people think they will do in a situation, and what they might actually do. The important point here, however, is that there are prospects for encouraging their involvement if policy goes beyond the usual approach to the young people-agriculture nexus with its focus on young people's direct involvement in farming.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Our paper on young people's engagement with and aspirations in Ghana's cocoa sector has implications for agricultural policy, policies for the wellbeing of young people, and the way policy frames the relationship between young people and agriculture.

We titled our paper on young people a 'case study' of cocoa because, while an important part of the agricultural sector, cocoa production presents peculiarities that are important to attend to. This is to suggest that policy attempts to involve young people more deeply in agriculture production must be based on an understanding of the economic and social significance of a particular crop, and of the ways in which policy and people have engaged with that crop historically. We expect, for instance, that young people's perceptions of pineapple as a relatively newer export crop will also be informed by the ways in which it was introduced and supported by the government, and the sites and means of its production, as well as by the fact that the market for pineapple is more volatile than for cocoa (see Anyidoho 2009).

We have noted also that policy attempts to involve young people in agriculture tend to focus on on-farm activities and largely ignores opportunities in the agri-food sector beyond primary production. Against a backdrop of rising urbanisation in SSA over time, increasingly stringent standards in agrifood chains, increased trade, and the likely emergence of larger-scale formal enterprises, there will be more employment opportunities throughout the agrifood sector, not just in primary production but also

processing, catering and retail. These will not only be in rural areas but there will also be a significant amount of activity in urban areas, for example in retail, changing the complexion of the agrifood sector, and our view of what agriculture means. Where such 'agriculture' takes place, young people need the right skills to participate in the sector broadly conceived, and policy needs to reflect this.

An important question is whether or not policies for the wellbeing of young people and policies for modernising and sustaining agriculture practically differ? In particular, the policies that prescribe the participation of young people in agriculture may be good for agriculture, or at least certain forms of agriculture, but are they good for the wellbeing of young people in rural areas? Can such tensions be resolved between policy that is 'good' for agriculture and policy that is 'good' for young people? We suggest some policy directions that reconcile these goals.

The most important implication of our study is the need to recognise different categories of young people in agricultural policies that prescribe the increased participation of young people in agriculture. If these policies are to be successful and ultimately achieve their growth objectives, they need to be compatible with the lives, lifestyles, attitudes, and expectations of those being targeted. Failure to take account of the heterogeneity of young people, even of young people residing in agricultural areas, might mean that we continue to overlook certain categories of young people, which would mean that there are some groups whose energies are not being tapped for development. Many of the agricultural training/capacity development programmes target more educated youth, that is, those with high school or tertiary education, and this is because they tend to adopt innovative farming techniques and are more productive (see Barrientos et al., 2007b). And indeed, agricultural science should be put on the school curriculum from primary school to senior high school in order to attract educated young people. Agriculture clubs can be established in pre-tertiary schools to cultivate students' interest in agriculture, with activities such as excursions to successful agricultural enterprises, to foster positive aspirations towards agriculture, in the knowledge of what they could stand to gain. However, programmes to attract young people to agriculture should be tailored also for other categories of young people who might be less educated or who are out of school but who, as our study shows, are sometimes more motivated and willing to do (and perhaps stay in) agricultural work, given the right opportunities and incentives.

There is also a more normative rationale for making sure that young people do not slip through the gaps. When young people are not in school or in the formal sector labour force - that is when they operate outside of certain structures - it is more difficult to reach them with social protection or with training and other opportunities. This is an important line of argument given early evidence suggesting that young people have been more vulnerable to effects of the recent economic crisis (see Hossein and McGregor, 2011, for a discussion), and are in danger of falling outside of social and policy structures and becoming even more marginalised. The development of properly targeted interventions is therefore key, as is their timeliness.

Such policy would acknowledge that young people have different types of preferred interactions with farming and associated activities. The fact that young people might not want to engage in agriculture in the same way or to the same degree as their parents should not be interpreted as rejection. The youth in our study were generally not interested in working hands-on on the farm, but that is not to say they are uninterested in cocoa farming; their aspirations to pursue education and other work might give them better access to resources that they can send back to other members of the family who remain with farming, or that they can directly put into their own farms. The question to ask then is whether current policies are constraining young people in their attempts at physical and social mobility, which have the

potential to perhaps sustain agriculture and would fit with the agrifood vision of agricultural development. Acknowledging that the agricultural value chain consists of more than on-farm work, and arguments that the manufacturing and retailing sides of the agrifood sector will become increasingly important in coming years, will simultaneously address the issue of sustaining agriculture while giving young people room to follow their aspirations and fulfil their potential.

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