

Policy Brief

RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION PROFILE OF YOUTHS IN NIGERIA

Executive Summary

This policy brief focuses on rural-urban migration profile of youths in Nigeria, and the impacts on the welfare of the rural households. Research shows that unemployment has been the main reason why rural youths are migrating to the urban areas. Despite the importance of remittance, yet only a few households are receiving it since majority of the youths are not gainfully employed in the cities. The policy brief posits that government of Nigeria and development partners must consider and embrace the creation of enabling environment for private sector to invest in the rural areas.

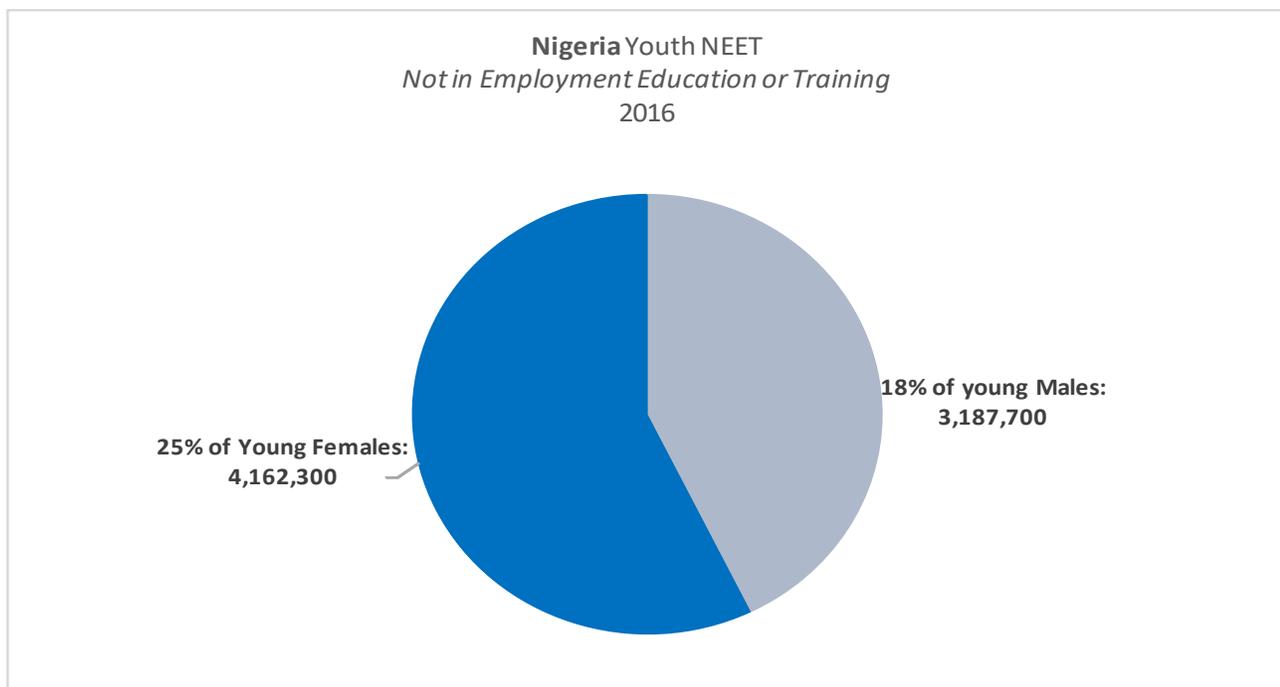


Figure 1. Youth Unemployment in Nigeria

Data Source: ILOSTAT

Background to the Study

The research assessed the impacts of rural-urban migration of youths on households' welfare. Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS) data for Nigeria was used along with focus group discussion which was conducted in each of the geo-political states in the country. The data captured various information such as: household income, food expenditure, assets and as well as migration details within the household.

Effect of Rural-Urban Migration of Youths on Welfare Outcomes

The welfare effect of rural-urban migration of youth was examined, and it was evident that rural-urban migration of youth is associated with lesser food expenditures and total expenditures of the originating household. In addition, the incidence of poverty appears to have increased as a result of the youth migration. Per-capita total expenditure decreased by 27.94%. Likewise, per-capita food expenditure decreased by 24.62%. The results further show that, without rural-urban migration of youth, the poverty headcount ratio would have been lower by 15%. This suggests that the 27.94% decrease in per-capita total expenditure is translated into a 15% increment in poverty headcount ratio. Taken together, this clearly emphasize that rural-urban migration of youth is associated with reduced productivity and consumption-based welfare outcomes of rural households with youth migrants.

Effect of Rural-Urban Migration of Youths on household farm income

The study shows that rural-urban migration of youths causes household farm income to be reduced by \$88. This is as a result of shortage in family labour, and thereby increase the cost of hired labour.

Profile of rural migrant's youths in Nigeria

More than half (57%) of the youth migrants are male, while 43% are female. Education plays a key role in both finding and keeping a job. Comparing the educational level of both migrant youths and non-migrant youths, it was evident that the migrant youths are a liittle bit more educated than those that did not migrate.

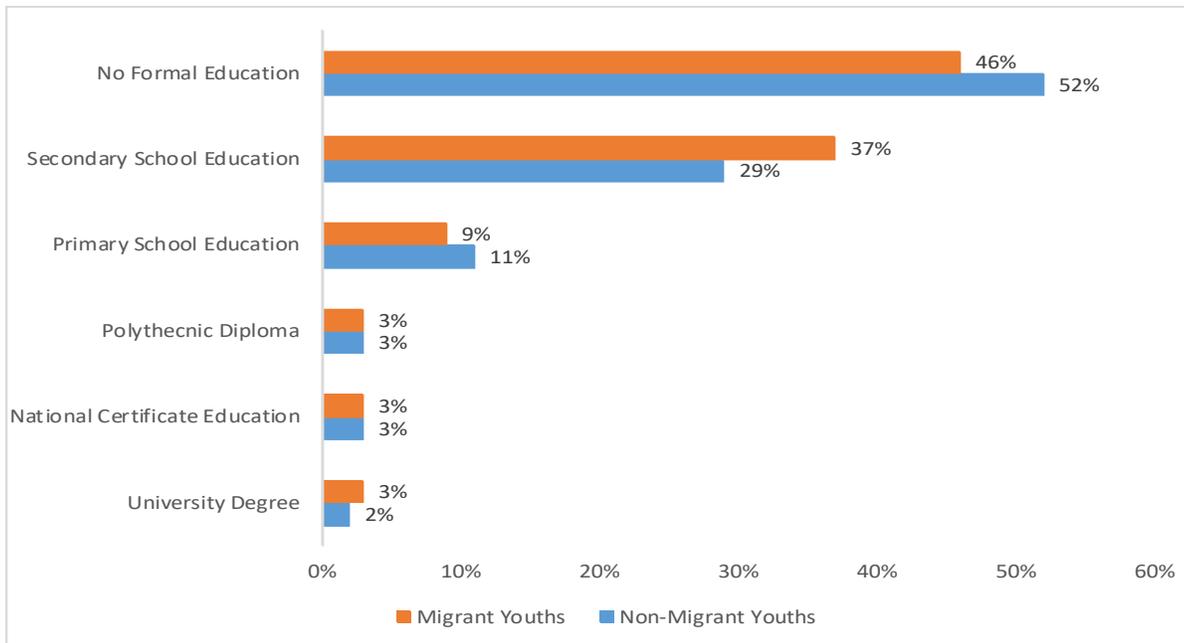
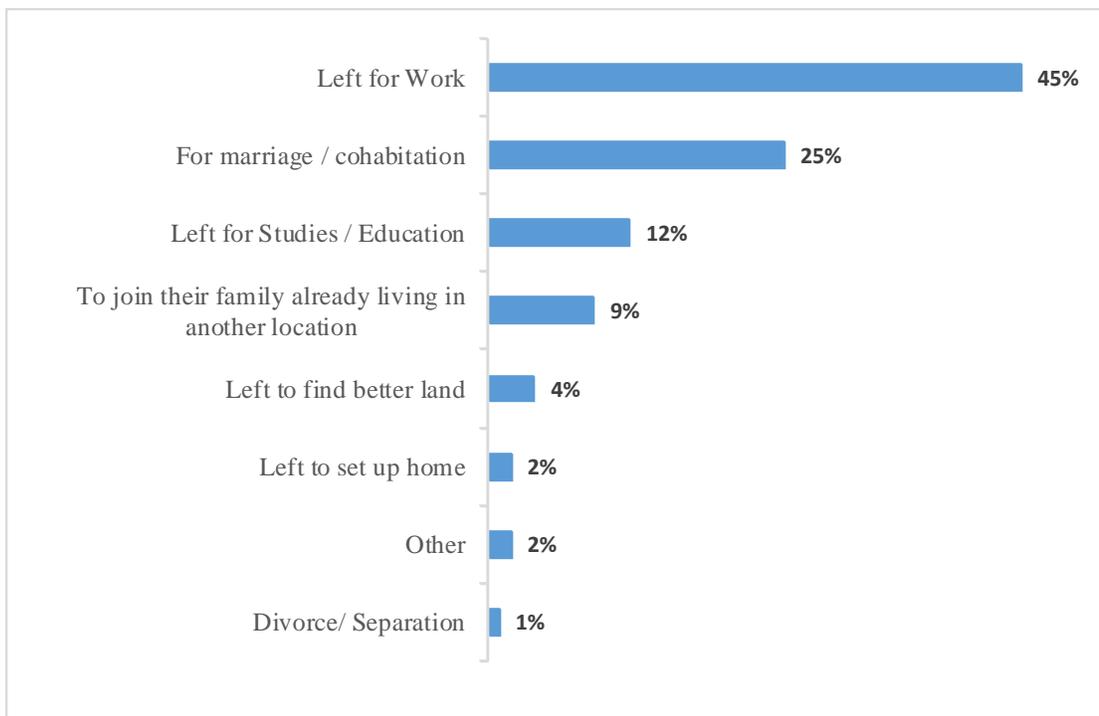


Figure 2. Educational Status of youth in Nigeria.

Data Source: LSMS (2015-2016)

Reason for migration

The study identified various reasons why youths are migrating such as; leaving to find a better land, educational opportunities, and marriage. However, the main reason why they are leaving their rural areas is to get job.



POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The overall recommendation is that the government of Nigeria and development partners must consider and embrace the creation of the conditions necessary for domestic business and entrepreneurs to operate and invest in the rural areas.

This can be achieved by taking action in two key ways: creating business enabling environment, and sensitization on prospect of Agribusiness.

Sensitization on prospect of Agribusiness

Many youths are leaving the rural areas because of unemployment, and they see agriculture as a poor man's job. The government together with development partners can redress this by:

- Creating awareness on professionalization of agriculture activities and making it less of a 'hard work, low paid job' and more of a 'profit- making business'.
- Access to services and resources such as improved varieties and new technologies to increase productivity and efficiency respectively.
- Giving access to finance and providing training on credit utilization so that it could have positive influence on their farming activities.

Creating business enabling environment

The government of Nigeria could unlock the potential in its rural development by:

- Creating infrastructures that are directly related to private sector development, such as building roads to facilitate market access.
- Promoting labour force such as vocational training and technical capacity building targeted at increasing the skills of local labour force.

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The research for this policy brief has been supported by IITA under the Capacity for Applied Research and Evidence programme funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)