

# Who are the Young Agricultural Entrepreneurs of Southern Benin?

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### Background

- The agricultural sector in the Republic of Benin has the potential to employ more youth, produce more food, raise food security and enhance economic development.
- However, youth unemployment persists despite numerous initiatives in the sector of employment.
- It is critical to understand and assess the needs of end-users for the success of any initiative.
- Yet, the study reveals the designers and directors of Benin's agriprenuer initiatives might not have much information about the young farmers and agribusiness people in Benin.
- Hence, the need to fill that gap with the research work.

### The Approach

- 600 young people and agricultural entrepreneurs in six southern departments: Atlantic, Littoral, Ouémé,

Plateau, Zou and Mono; including eleven ethnicities: Adjias, Aizos, Fons, Gouns, Guins, Holis, Houedas, Ouatchis, Toffins, Yoruba, and Xwlas were surveyed in 2018.

- 58% of the group were engaged in crop production.
- 19% were involved in animal husbandry and agricultural process.
- 3% provided agricultural services.
- 1% were engaged in other services.

### Characteristics of young agripreneurs

- The young agricultural entrepreneurs in Southern Benin are predominantly male.
- Those in agricultural sector employment, have fewer years of education than those in non-agricultural sector employment.
- Agripreneurs are more willing to take risks and compete, enjoy more autonomy, and more proactive



compared to their counterparts in non-agricultural employment.

- Agripreneurs are more optimistic than their counterparts in non-agricultural jobs.
- Agripreneurs are polyvalent - They engage in different agribusiness activities.
- They engage in other economic activities to improve their standard of living.

### Income opportunities in agriculture

- The three main reasons for choosing to engage in agripreneurship among the youth are:
  - to earn money;
  - to escape unemployment; and
  - to pursue an opportunity.

The study revealed that the agricultural sector does offer youths opportunities to earn higher incomes compared to non-agricultural employment.

### Implications

- Encourage young women to take leadership roles in the agricultural sector. Take care to remove gender biases from land ownership, credit, and employment practices. Facilitate female agripreneurship networks. Target funding to agribusinesses owned by women.
- Encourage partnerships between university educators and agripreneurs to upgrade agricultural education and research, emphasize entrepreneurship skills, and keep course content modern and relevant over time. Highlight innovative production practices. Showcase successful young agripreneurs.
- Don't wait until it's too late: Include agriculture in primary and secondary school curricula. For example, teach organic gardening to school children; modern farm record-keeping or management to teenagers.

