

Overcoming Barriers to Youth and Women's Land Access and Tenure Security to Increase Efficiency, Equity, and Economic Empowerment Across Ghana's Agricultural Value Chains

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SUMMARY

In Ghana, as in many countries across Africa, while young men and women generally have access to land, this access is often not secure or sufficiently long-term for them to participate effectively in commercial agriculture, especially in high-value tree-crop cultivation. Customary norms and practices limit young men's and women's tenure security, and limited documentation of rights further undermines their ability to efficiently use the land or their willingness to make investments in it. These factors prevent young men and women from effectively participating in agricultural value chains and propelling the country's sustainable economic development.

Government, private sector, and development partner stakeholders engaged in agricultural value chains in Ghana cite insecure tenure as a known impediment to sustainable and equitable growth in the sector, yet efforts to address tenure issues through documentation often fail to adequately record the complexity of Ghanaian tenure systems, resulting in incomplete documentation and risking further entrenching discriminatory norms and disenfranchising young men and women. This paper draws on findings from a nationwide diagnostic assessment of opportunities and barriers for young men and women's dignified employment in Ghana's agricultural sector to show how young men's and women's tenure insecurity undermines the effectiveness of donor and government interventions, disrupts supply chains, and perpetuates rural poverty and inequality. The paper goes on to share a promising approach for addressing these barriers through increased knowledge and understanding among traditional leaders, private sector and multistakeholder groups, and land administration professionals, and targeted efforts to achieve inclusive and participatory land administration processes to enhance young men's and women's land tenure security and thereby enable their participation in dignified employment in value chains.

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