



Bern University
of Applied Sciences



Rural youth and agriculture in the Midelt Province, Morocco

Realities, viewpoints, challenges, opportunities and aspirations

SFRAS meeting | October 26, 2017 | Alessandra Giuliani, Bastian Mengel

► School of Agricultural, Forest and Food Sciences HAFL

Agenda

- 1. About the research**
- 2. Findings**
- 3. Implications**


1. About the research


Background

- ▶ Research study commissioned by the CGIAR Research Program (CRP) on Dryland Systems
- ▶ Organized through Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD)
- ▶ Coordinated by BFH-HAFL
- ▶ Conducted between September 2015 and June 2016
- ▶ Carried out in the Midelt Province, Morocco

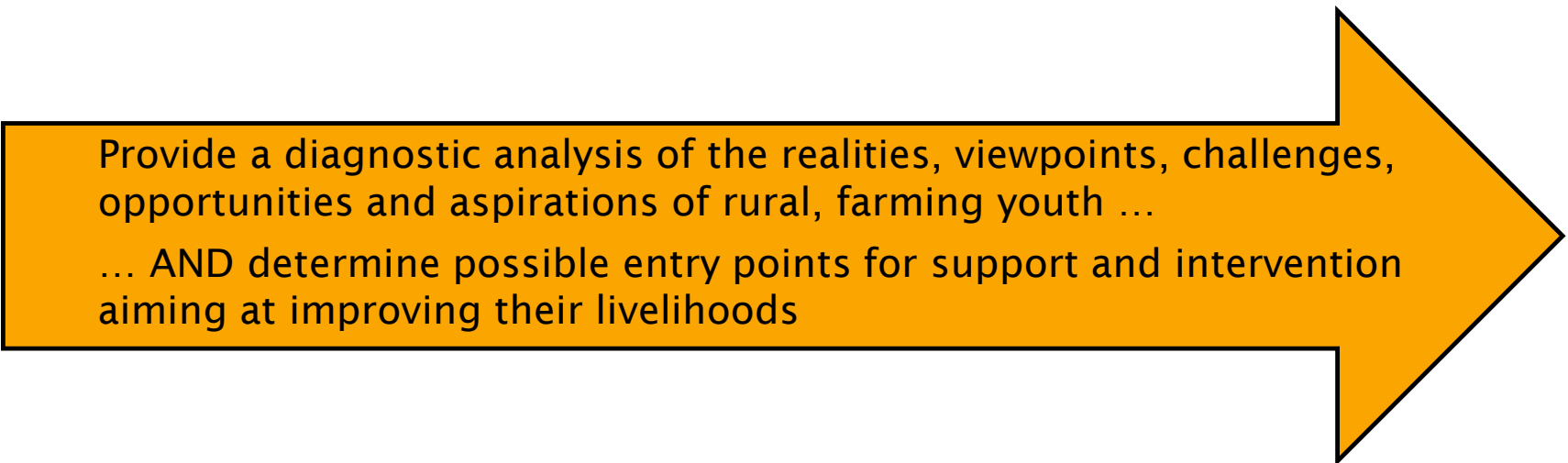


Rationale – why?

- 
- ▶ Insufficient knowledge/research around youth and agriculture
 - ▶ General assumption that farming is unattractive ...
 - ▶ Neglecting of agriculture, ageing farming system
 - ▶ Increasing youth populations
 - ▶ Rural outmigration of youth
 - ▶ High youth unemployment
 - ▶ Particularly dry areas affected
 - ▶ ... BUT the sector's future depends on young people's engagement
 - ▶ Youth are too heterogeneous to be seen as one 'social category'

- 
- ▶ Youth must be seen as opportunities
 - ▶ Agriculture and related sectors as an opportunity:
 - ▶ Employment
 - ▶ Reducing rural outmigration
 - ▶ Inclusive economic growth
 - ▶ What are the aspirations of youth? Is agriculture part of it? How?
 - ▶ Context-specific knowledge about different youth needed to account for different situations
 - ▶ Close 'gaps' between realities and aspirations to engage youth in the agricultural sector

Goal – what?

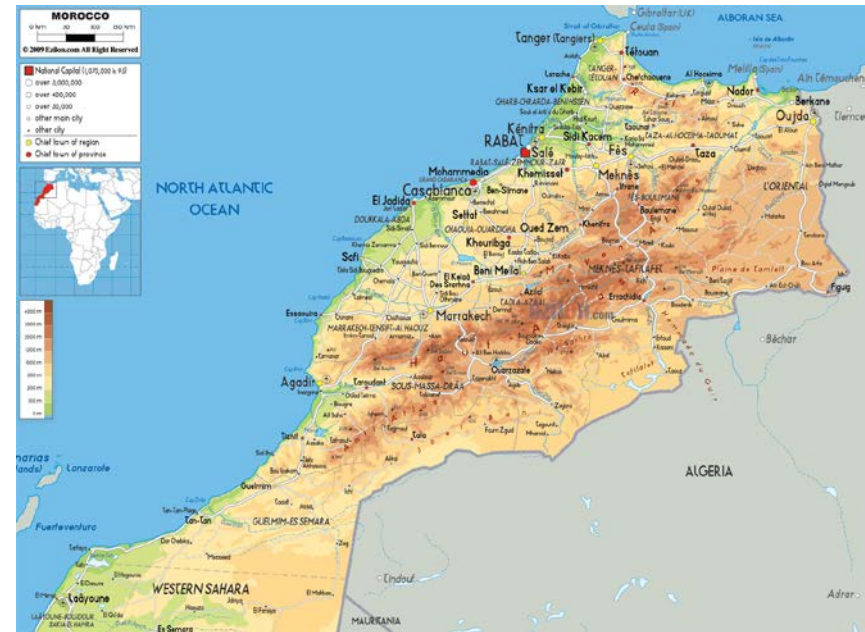


Provide a diagnostic analysis of the realities, viewpoints, challenges, opportunities and aspirations of rural, farming youth ...
... AND determine possible entry points for support and intervention aiming at improving their livelihoods

- ▶ Covering all three agricultural livelihood systems (ALSs) of dry areas:
 - ▶ Pastoral
 - ▶ Irrigated
 - ▶ Rainfed

The research site

- ▶ Midelt Province, Morocco:
 - ▶ Population: 50,000/250,000 (town/province)
 - ▶ Rural area between Middle and High Atlas Mountains → rain-sheltered position
 - ▶ Agriculture is main employer
 - ▶ Fragmented smallholder farming systems
- ▶ “All” three ALSs very important



Source: Ezilon.com Regional Maps 2015

MOROCCO

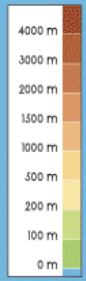


© 2009 Ezilon.com All Right Reserved

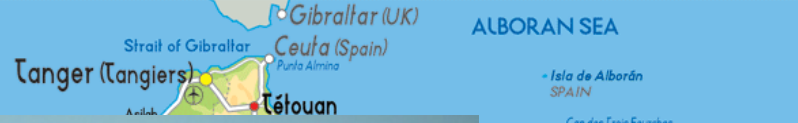
- National Capital (1,070,000 In 95)
- over 3,000,000
- over 400,000
- over 50,000
- other main city
- other city
- Chief town of region
- Chief town of province



NORTH A
OCEAN



Canarias
(Ilands) Lan
Fuerteventura



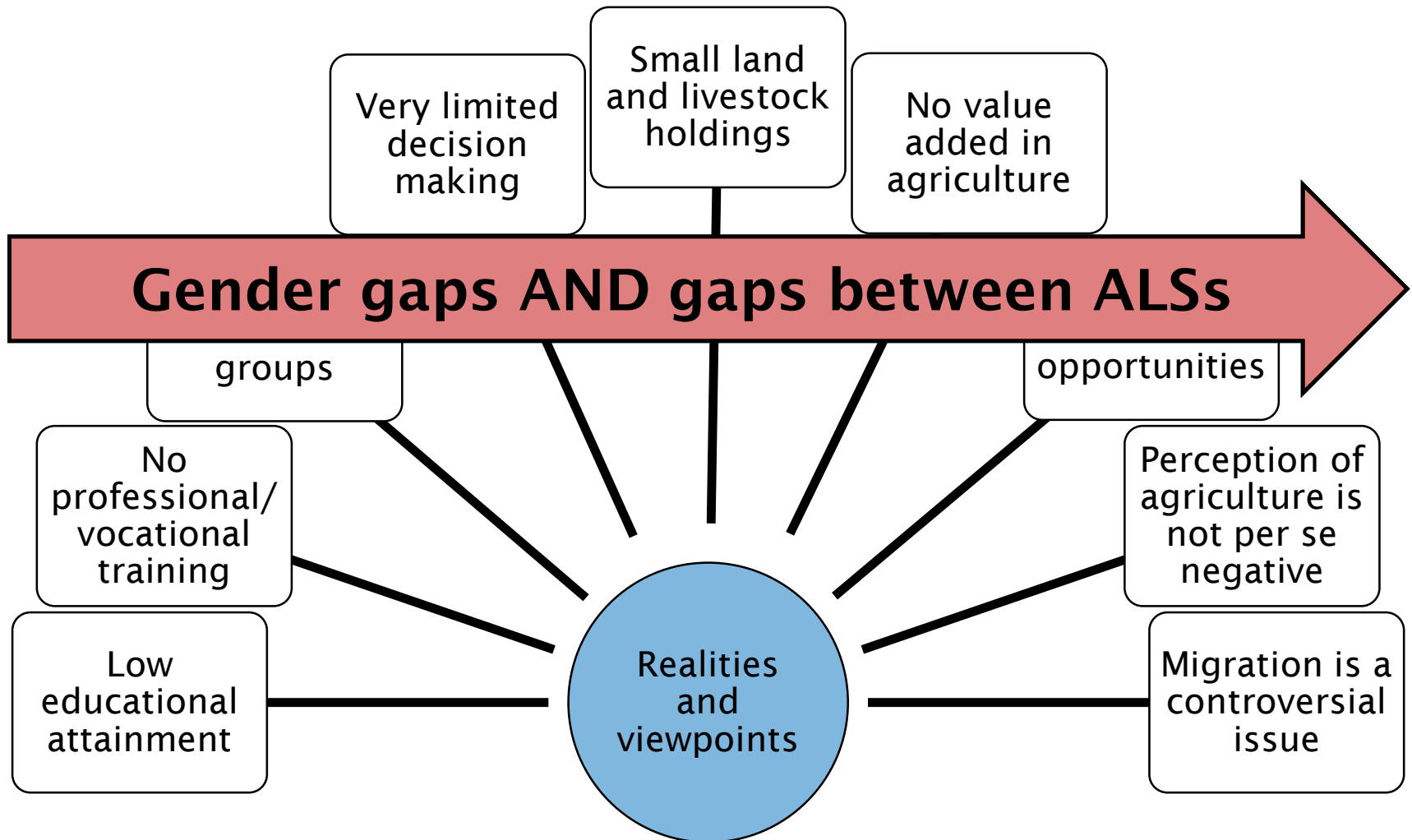
Methodological tools of the research



2. Findings

Findings:

“What are the realities and viewpoints of youth in the three agricultural livelihood systems?”



Findings:

“What are the challenges faced by youth from the three agricultural livelihood systems and which solutions/opportunities do they perceive?”



Challenges

- ▶ The unfulfilled basic needs:
 - ▶ Low educational attainment, no professional/vocational training
 - ▶ Absence of rural infrastructure – above all roads – has multidimensional impacts
- ▶ State of and limited access to productive resources, i.e. land, water, finance
- ▶ No formal interest groups means that support remains inaccessible
- ▶ Social inequalities and limited decision making confine the youth

Solutions/opportunities

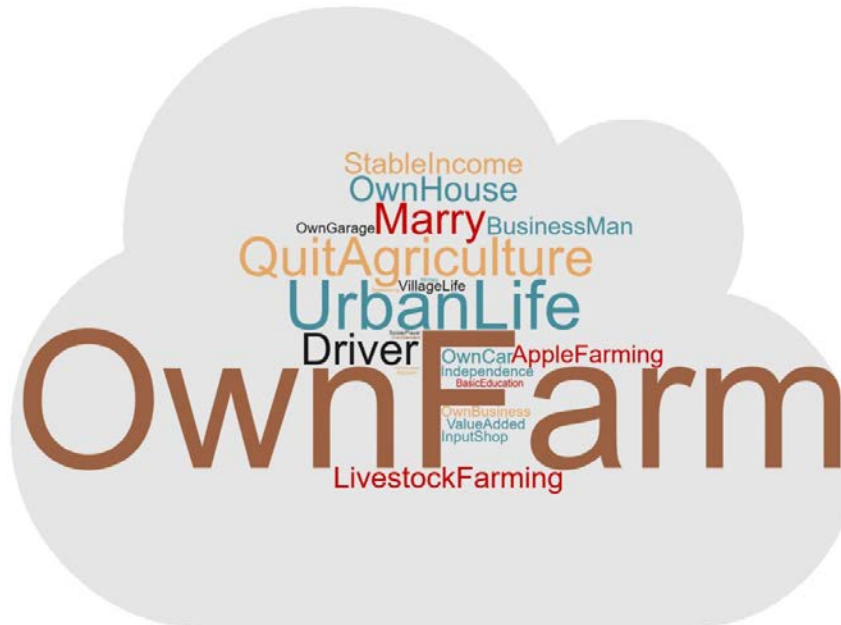


- ▶ Directly linked to challenges
- ▶ Fundamental requirements for any other opportunity:
 - ▶ Fulfillment of basic needs
 - ▶ Securing/improving productive resources
- ▶ Youth’s identified opportunities:
 - ▶ Development of post-harvest infrastructure and value added activities based on local agricultural production
 - ▶ Rather vague ideas

Findings:

“What aspirations do youth from the three agricultural livelihood systems have and do their aspirations correspond to the perceived/existing opportunities?”

Male youth



Female youth

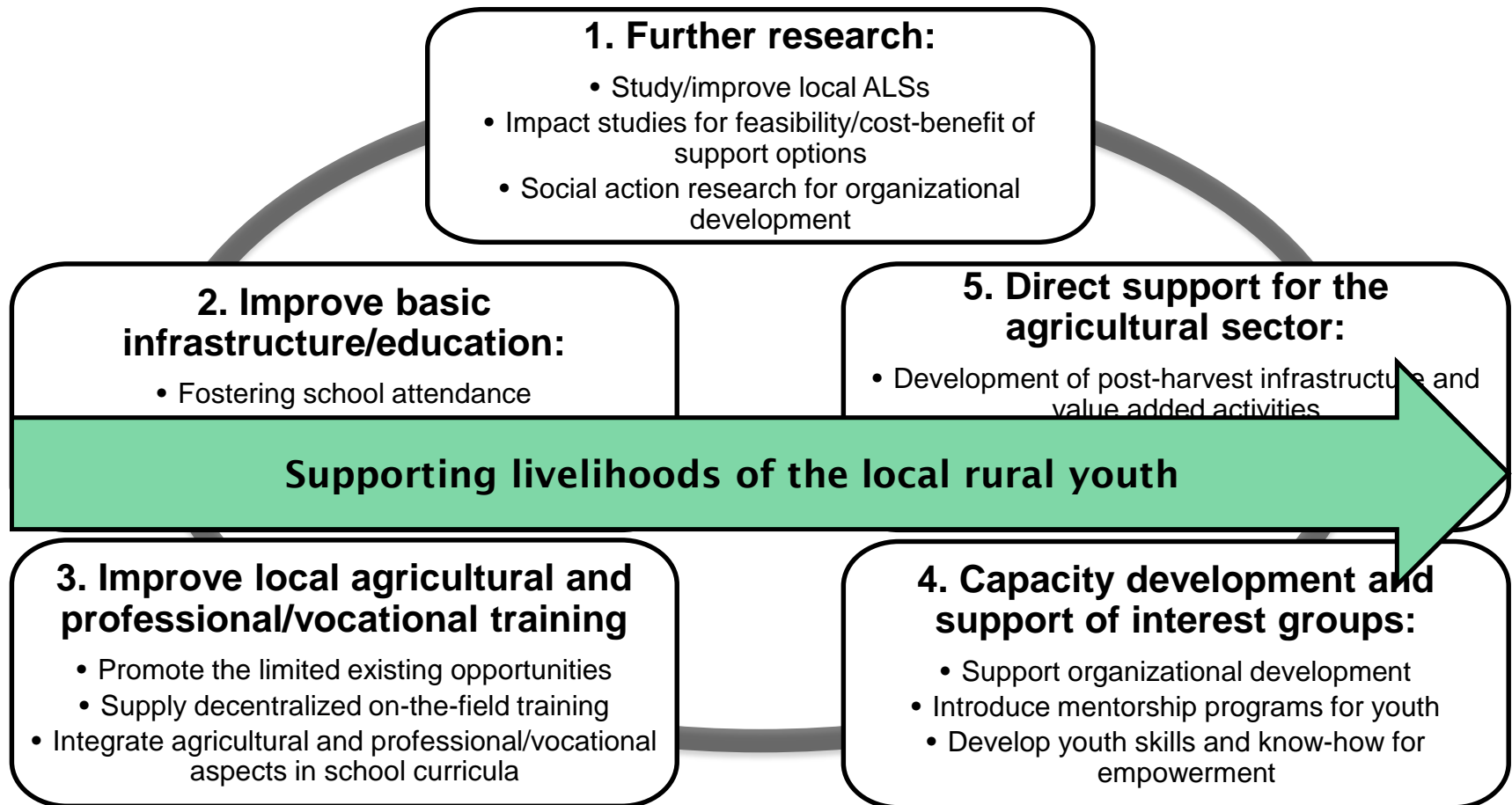


- ▶ Youth may want to combine rurality with modernity – i.e. envision viable farming futures – but are unable to overcome current challenges
- ▶ Opportunities – structural organization of the local agricultural sector, post-harvest infrastructure and value added activities, crop and market diversification – may be matched with youth’s aspirations, but require support

3. Implications

Implications

Context-specific conclusions and recommendations



Implications

General conclusions and recommendations

- 1. Findings highlight the diversity of youth – research, policy and decision makers and support programs must take account of that diversity:**
 - ▶ Different youth must be recognized
- 2. Research was a first and context-specific assessment only:**
 - ▶ Further research recommended
 - ▶ Impact, success and sustainability of possible actions remain unclear
- 3. Similar approaches to be replicated and scaled up and out:**
 - ▶ Inform decision and policy makers about requirements in other contexts
 - ▶ Young people must have a say how they envision their futures
 - ▶ Enable cross-comparisons
 - ▶ Further scientific experiences – achieve best practice to draw from
- 4. Categorically pair diagnostic assessments with concrete actions**

Thank you for your attention

–

Time for questions

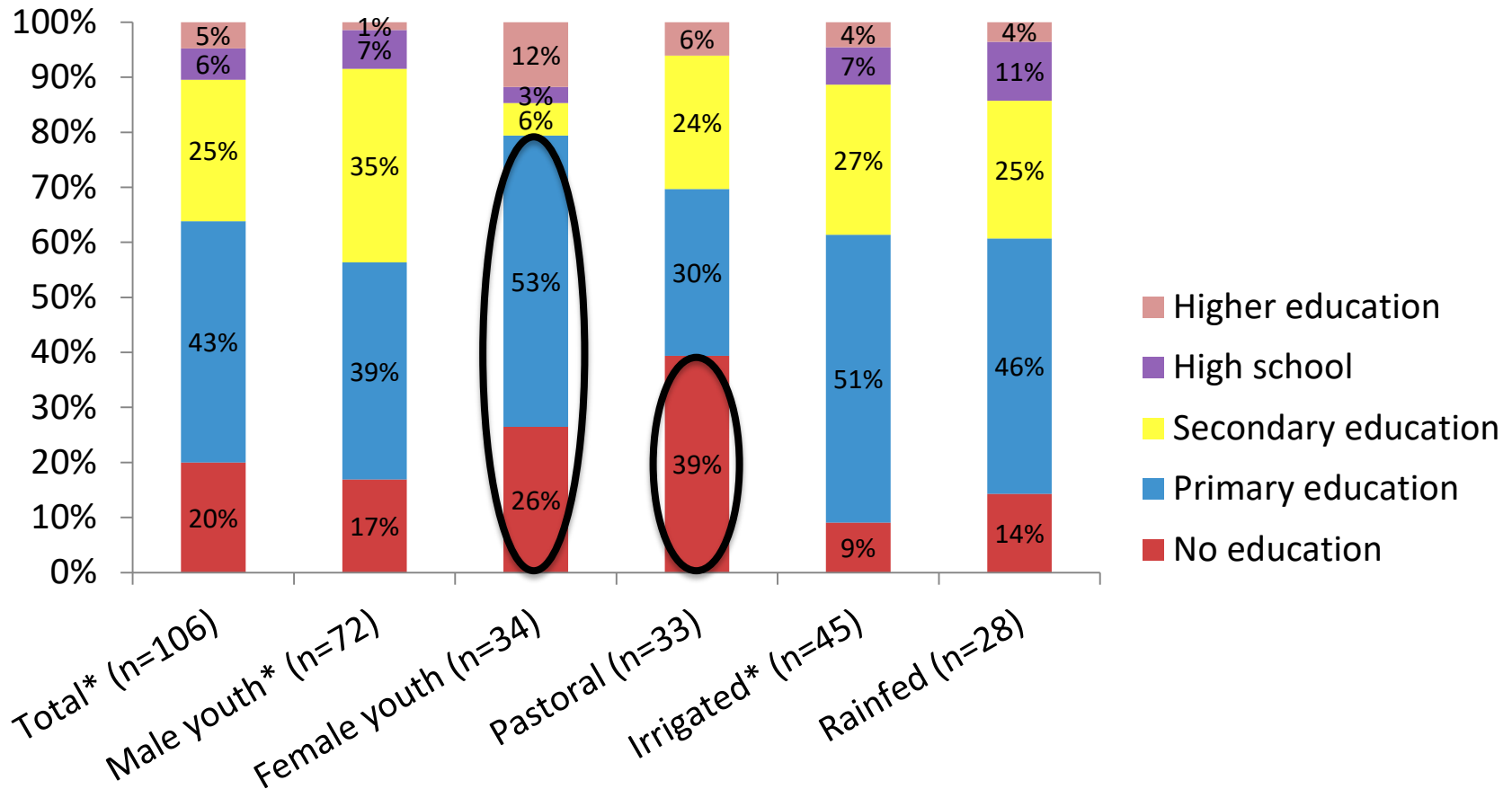


Short film



Findings:

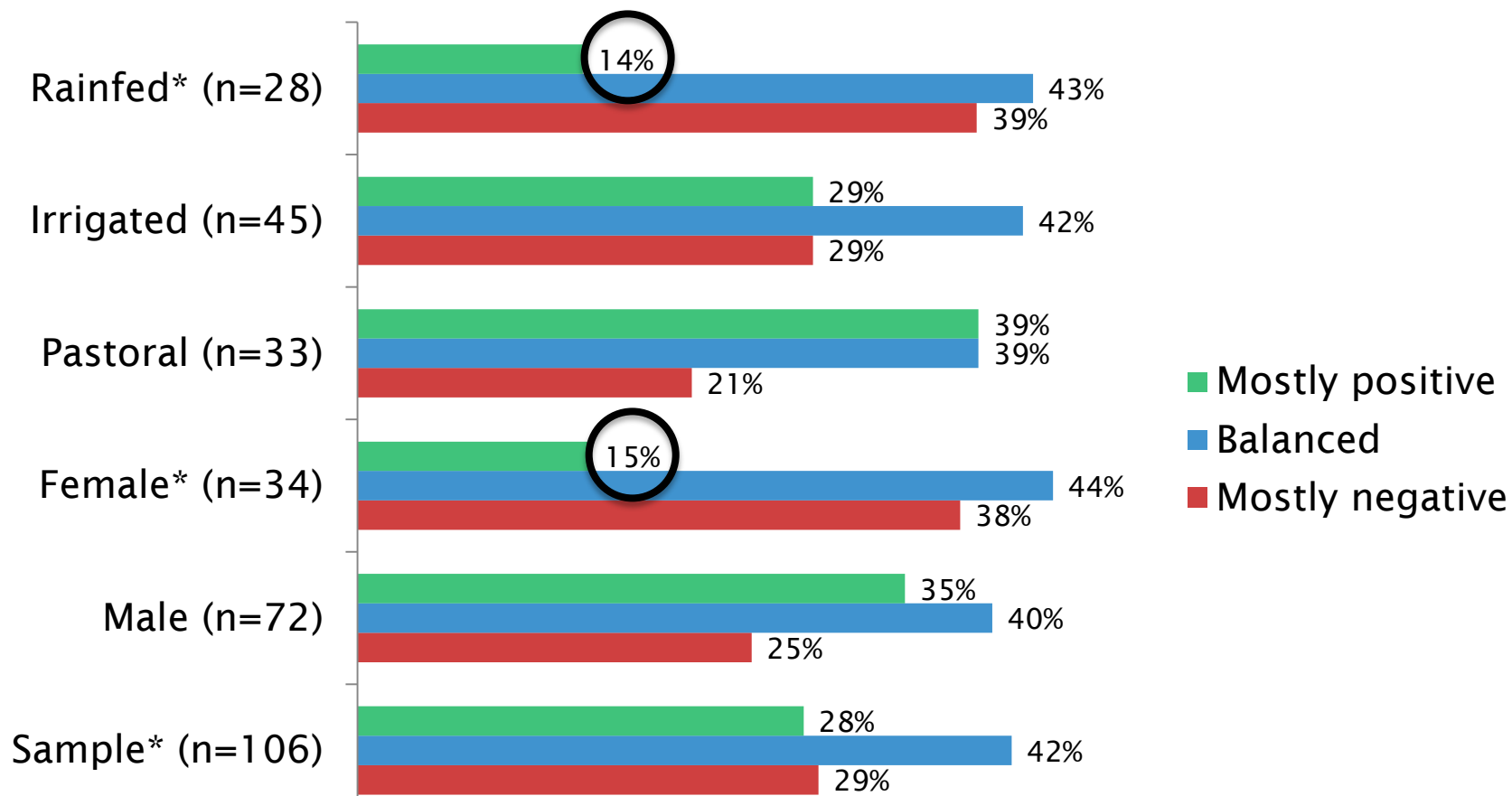
Example for heterogeneity: Youth's educational attainments



*One missing value from a male irrigated youth

Findings:

Example for heterogeneity: Youth's perception of agriculture



*One missing value from a female rainfed youth