

Category	: International Rice Research Conference
Select Theme	: Social inclusion and gender equality
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Keyword 1	: Engaging youth
Keyword 2	: Women entrepreneurship
Keyword 3	: Farmers' perspectives
Title of Entry	: Youth in Indian agriculture: their involvement and career preferences across rice sector
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Select only one type of presentation	: 15 minute oral presentation

Abstract : The ageing of farmer communities and youth abandoning agriculture is a serious problem in developing world. Youth can play a vital role in transforming agriculture and in nation's food security and poverty reduction through adopting new ideas and technologies. In this context, it is important to attract and retain youth by understanding their perception and reason for moving out from agriculture. This paper made an attempt to study the existing involvement of youth in rice farming and its value chain, and their willingness to opt rice sector as future career. A gender-sensitive rural youth survey was conducted in three eastern Indian states – Bihar, Odisha and West Bengal in 2015, making a total sample of 2238 respondents from the rice farming households. The result reveals that less than one-fifth of the youth is currently involved in rice farming and negligible participation in rice value chain. While around seven out of ten youth expressed that their willingness to take up rice farming, and little more than one-third of the youth is willing to take up rice value chain as their career given the supports reported by them is addressed. At present, it is evident that the youth involvement is negligible in rice sector and rice farming is in risk. The impact of youth involvement in rice farming on career preference was found to be statistically significant. The average treatment effect was 8.1%, that is, youths involved in rice farming were 8.1% more likely to choose agriculture as their career than those who were not involved, ceteris paribus. To engage and retain youth in rice production, the supports to be addressed are 'credit linkage' for enhancing affordability agricultural inputs and services, development of need based 'irrigation infrastructure', cost-effective and high profit 'innovating rice farming', appropriate actions with strong monitoring mechanism that will ensure on time quality 'agri-inputs' supply and bring 'farm mechanisation' to field. Similarly, the major supports reported by youth to take up rice value chains are subsidised credit for investment in the business, business and technical training as applicable and gender specific report was on market intelligence to be ensured.

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