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What do we know about work and employment in agriculture in Africa? A literature review

Benoit Dedieu, Géraldine Enderli, Lionel Villard, Mohamed Taher Sraïri, Isabelle Avelange, Teatske Bakker, Eveline Compaore, Astou Diao Camara, Pape Bilal Diakate, Ibrahima Diallo, et al.

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HAL Authorization

*International Conference on the future of work and employment
in the agrifood sector in West Africa*

Dakar, January 14-15, 2025

What do we know about work and employment in agriculture in Africa? A literature review

B. Dedieu (INRAE), G. Enderli (INRAE), L. Villard (ESIEE), M. Taher Sraïri (IAV Hassan II); I. Avelange (INRAE); T. Bakker (CIRAD); E. Compaore (INERA); A. Camara (ISRA); P.B. Diakhate (ISRA); I. Diallo (ISRA); D. Fournier (INRAE); P. Girard (CIRAD); N. Hostiou (INRAE); G. Soullier (CIRAD)



What about work and employment in agriculture in Africa ?

- **The question of the employment prospects offered by a changing agricultural sector in Africa is high on the agenda**
 - with 250 million young people entering the job market by 2050
 - jobs that must be both decent and attractive
 - Work and employment : an entry point to think the future of agrifood systems
- **But what does the research say about work and employment in agriculture in Africa?**
 - employment: status, remuneration, social protection
 - work: interaction between tasks and workers and the impact of conditions on people's health and well-being
- **A systematic review of literature**

Data selection and analysis

- A corpus of 726 documents

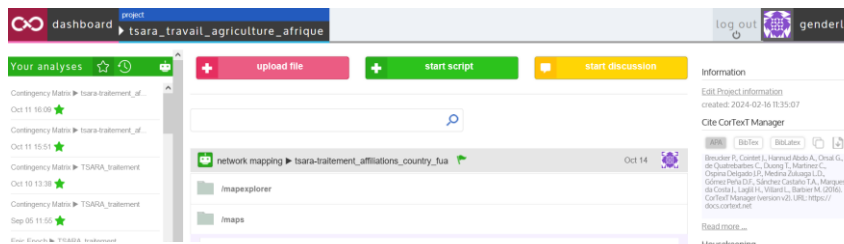
- Extracted from 2 scientific databases (mainly journal articles), over the period 2012 – 2023. **Web of Science Core Collection & Scopus**

- Selected using a thematic equation combining 2 concepts **(in English)**

- Terms and equivalents of « WORK * » and « AGRICULTURE** » in the title and/or authors' keywords ; Terms « AFRICA » or at least one country of Africa (or its equivalent adjective) in the title, abstract, and/or authors' keywords

- Final manuel check and sorting of experts

- Scientometric study of documents' metadata using Cortext Manager



<https://docs.cortext.net/>

Metadata analysis

Agrarian South • Open Access • Volume 7, Issue 1, Pages 28 - 50 • April 2018

Agricultural Policy, Employment Opportunities and Social Mobility in Rural Malawi

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^b School of Politics and International Studies, University of Leeds, Department of Political and Administrative Studies, Chancellor College, University of Malawi, Zomba, Malawi

Abstract

Despite the youth accounting for more than half of the population of Malawi, they have been marginalized and pushed to the periphery of several development policy interventions. This article interrogates the question of how the youth and policy-makers view agricultural development as a means of social mobility for youth in Malawi. The paper argues that even though agricultural production is the main occupation in Malawi, young people do not value agriculture as a means of upward social mobility. Furthermore, youth and agriculture policy frameworks provide little support to youth in terms of access to affordable farm inputs, land, extension services, value addition initiatives, and markets. It is argued that Malawi is missing the strategic policy direction by not implementing non-traditional agriculture interventions that would engage the youth in a bid to reduce massive youth unemployment. © 2018 SAGE Publications.

Author keywords

agriculture policy; employment; Malawi; social mobility; Youth

References

- Anyidoho N.A., Kayuni H., Ndungu J., Leavy J., Sall M., Tadele G., Sumberg J., Young people and policy narratives in Sub-Saharan Africa, Future Agricultures Working Paper (2012)
- Chavula J., Rush for MYP bases, The Nation, (2015)
- Chikoko R., Politicians caught pants down, The Nation, (2015)
- Chinsinga B., Poverty and food security in Malawi: Some reflections on the context of crumbling support systems, Canadian Journal of Development Studies, 25, 2, pp. 320-341, (2004)
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- Lentilo D.T., Young people in Africa (agricultural) policy processes: What national policies can tell us, IDS Bulletin, 43, 6, pp. 90-103, (2012)
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- Painter T., Sumberg J., Price T., Your 'terroir' and my 'action space': Implications of differentiation, movement and diversification for the 'approche terroir' in Sahalian West Africa, Africa, 64, 4, pp. 447-464, (1994)
- Sumberg J., Anyidoho N.A., Leavy J., te Lintelo D., Wellard K., Introduction: The young people and agriculture problem in Africa, IDS Bulletin, 43, 6, pp. 1-8, (2012)
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Metadata analysis

Journal : extraction of the disciplin(s)

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Agricultural Policy, Employment Opportunities and Social Mobility in Rural Malawi

[Chinsinga, Blessings^a](#)  ;  **Geocoding of authors' affiliation addresses**
[Chasukwa, Michael^b](#)

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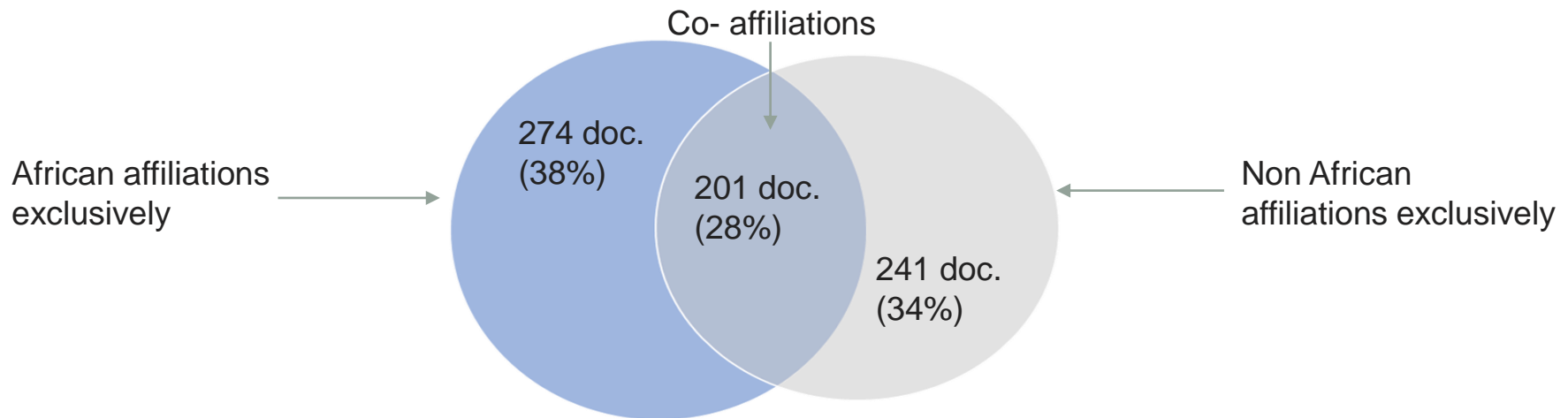
Extraction of all mentions of countries then geocoding

- Extraction of the most significant noun phrases up to 3 words
- Co-occurrence network

References

- Anyidoho N.A., Kayuni H., Ndungu J., Leavy J., Sall M., Tadele G., Sumberg J., Young people and policy narratives in Sub-Saharan Africa, *Future Agricultures Working Paper* (2012)
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Where do the authors come from ?

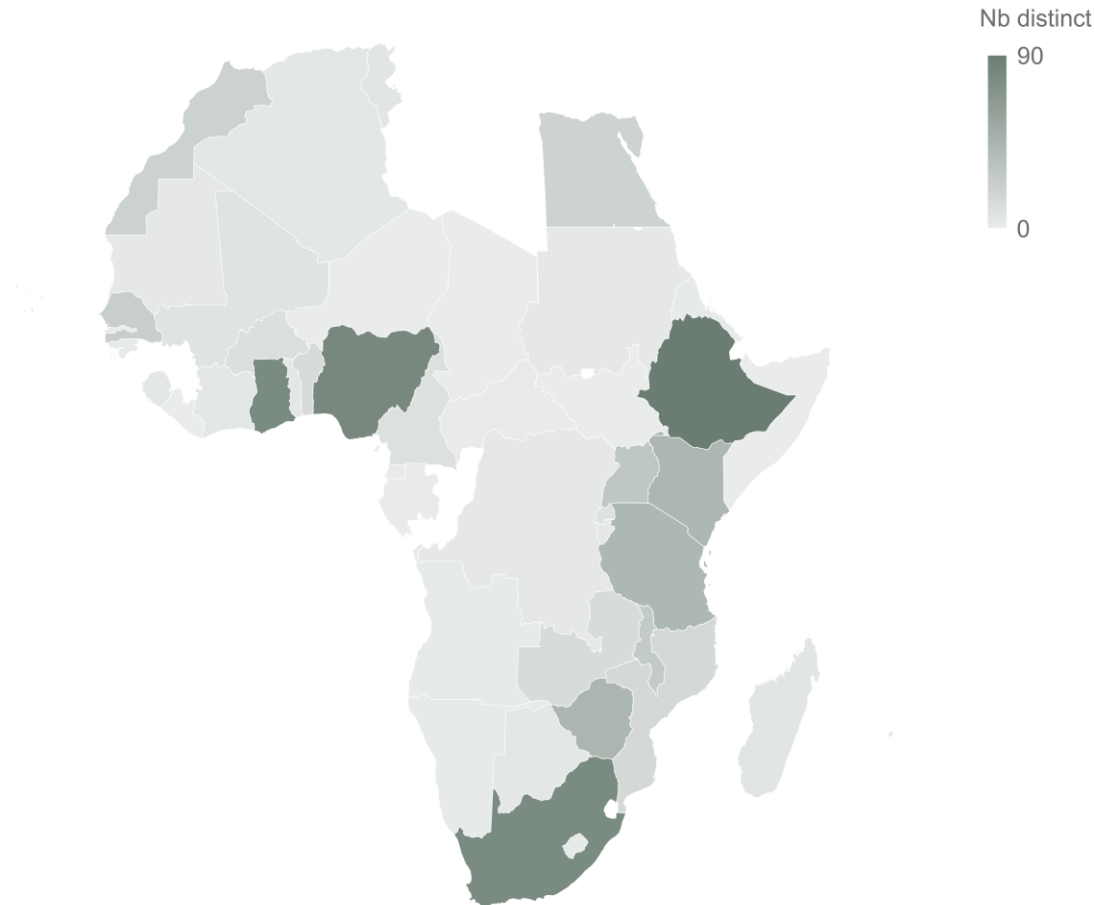


Top publishing countries

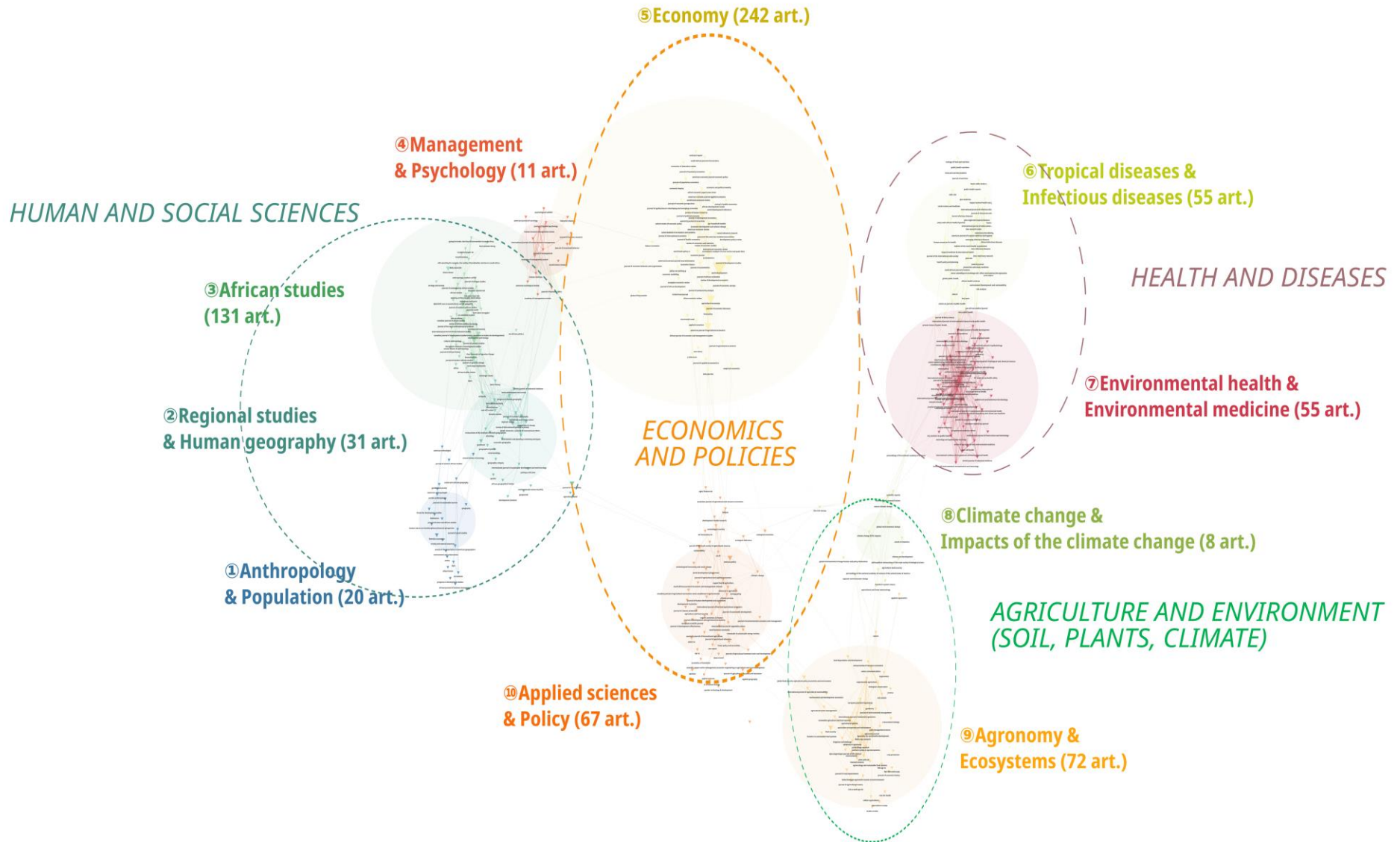
Africa		Non Africa	
Country	Nb distinct articles	Country	Nb distinct articles
South Africa	118	United States	117
Nigeria	84	United Kingdom	86
Ghana	58	Germany	54
Ethiopia	54	France	43
Kenya	38	<i>Netherlands</i>	35

Top studied countries

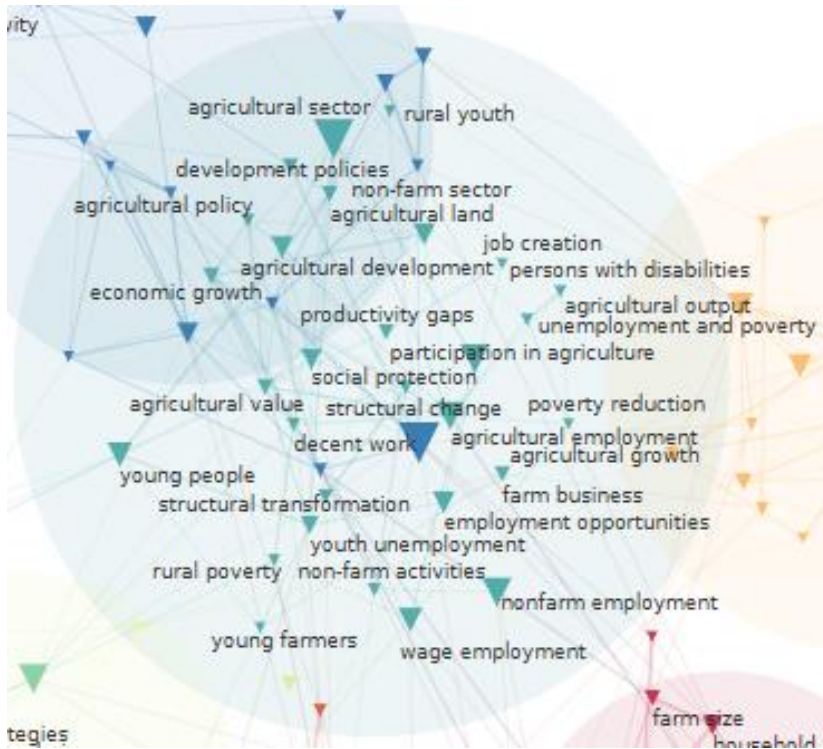
Country – Africa	
study area	Nb distinct articles
Ethiopia	90
Nigeria	81
Ghana	79
South Africa	79
Zimbabwe	44
Kenya	43
Tanzania	42



Disciplinary fields mobilized in the corpus



Main themes/researches covered



140 documents

① Youth employment, labor market & drivers of change

Specific terms

agricultural employment ; agricultural value ; economic growth ; youth unemployment ;

▪ Disciplinary fields:

Applied science & policy ; Anthropology & populations

▪ Country studied: 1 Nigeria

▪ Country Authors' affiliations: 1 Nigeria, 2 Tunisia

“Agriculture development, employment generation and poverty reduction in west Africa”
Osabohien et al. 2019

“We're ready, the system's not - youth perspectives on agricultural careers in South Africa.”
Meterletkamp et al. 2019

Main other themes

- **Agrarian changes & social relations of production** (one cluster)
land reform ; access land ; land tenure ; labor migration ; farm workers
wage labor commercial farms ; political economy

'Social Relations and Agrarian Labour': Exploring the Dynamics of Relations Between Former Farm Workers and A1 Beneficiaries in Zimbabwe's A1 Settlements KM Marevo, 2022

“How and why large scale agricultural land investments do not create long-term employment benefits: A critique of the 'state' of labour regulations in Ghana” Y. Gyapong 2020

- **Labor productivity & management of cropping system / Agronomic innovations and labor impacts** (2 clusters)

farm operations and innovations ; labor input ; labor productivity ;
production / farming systems

“Yield and labor relations of sustainable intensification options for smallholder farmers in sub-Saharan Africa. A meta-analysis” Dahlin et al. 2019

“Smallholder farmers' motivations for using Conservation Agriculture and the roles of yield, labour and soil fertility in decision making

Main other themes

- **Household / off farm /gender equity** (3 clusters)

On-off farm; rural transformation and distribution of work within the households ; child labor ; gender division of work

Gender differences in time-poverty among rural households in Southwest Nigeria Adeyeye et al. 2021

Are African households (not) leaving agriculture? Patterns of households' income sources in rural Sub-Saharan Africa Davis et al. 2019

- **Health** (4 clusters)

Risks, professional exposure (women) ; respiratory symptoms; climate change impacts ; dietary diversity & food security for workers and population

Pesticide Exposure and Health Problems Among Female Horticulture Workers in Tanzania E. Mrema et al. 2017

Does women's time in domestic work and agriculture affect women's and children's dietary diversity? Evidence from Bangladesh, Nepal, Cambodia, Ghana, and Mozambique H. Komastu et al. 2018

Conclusions – Key findings (1)

1 Countries of authors' affiliations: More than half of documents contain an African author. **Geographical spread of countries studied:** research spanning more than 60 countries; Nigeria, Ghana and South Africa emerge as the most frequently studied

2 Economics are the most mobilized disciplines with Humanities and Social Sciences disciplines, agronomy and health. **Research methods cover qualitative, quantitative and mixed**

3 Five macro themes : labor (youth) market; agrarian changes ; health, household, cropping systems

4 Health is not connected to other clusters

Conclusion – Key findings (2)

5 Youth : mainly through « youth employment, labor market and driver of changes » theme.

Gender : spread in various themes : inequality, health, off farm...

6 The corpus pay little attention to : livestock; work organisation patterns ; musculoskeletal disorders, well being & job satisfaction

7 To go on

Further explorations of the database

Key papers for clusters characterization : ideas, controversies

Other languages



Thank you for your attention

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