

The diversity of young farmers in Chiang Mai and Prachinburi Provinces: orientations, problems faced and engagement with support programs

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1. Introduction

As many countries of Asia, Thailand is facing an unprecedented ageing of its population (Oizumi, 2013). A study of two villages in the Northeast of Thailand showed that over 25 years (1982–2008), the average age of the farmers increased from 36 to 55 years (Rigg, 2012). Another study in one village of the same region showed a wide gap in the age pyramid: young people (between 20 to 40 years old) were absent, and elder farmers were often living with their grandchildren. Moreover, two thirds of the households were receiving remittances, which were on average the largest sources of income (Nilsen, 2014). In these villages, farming is not the main source of income anymore. Moreover, cultural preferences have changed and many rural inhabitants (both younger and older generations) see now farming as a hard and low-status activity (Rigg et al., 2012).

These studies prove, without describing it as such, the presence of an increasingly present vicious circle. Aging farmers are less inclined to innovate and to look for more productive farming practices (which often require investing time and capital and taking risks). This leads to low-profitability farming. Because of low profits, young people are not attracted by farming, and thus the average age of farmers is increasing (Figure 1).

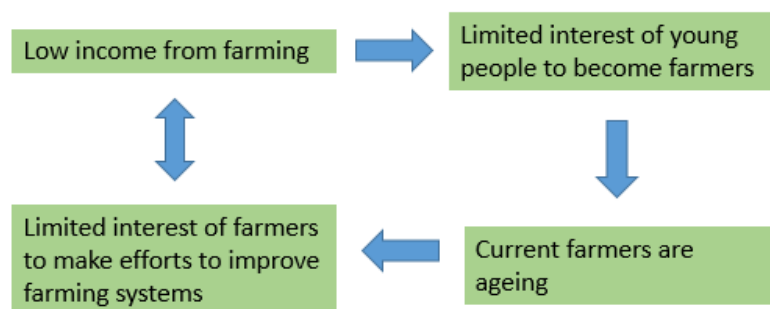


Figure 1. Vicious circle of low profitability farming

¹ The present document is a summary of the main results of the study. A more complete document in English can be provided by authors. More information: kassirinp@gmail.com and cecile.cochetel@supagro.fr. Comments are welcome.

The Thai government is more and more aware of the issues related to an ageing population. The 10th National Economic and Social Development Plan (NESDP) (2007-2011) mentions that Thailand is becoming an aging society. In the 11th NESDP (2012-2016), this issue is related to the agricultural sector: “Labor shortages are rising in the agricultural sector, as Thailand becomes an aging society.” The document points out that the labor shortage in the agricultural sector will come from two trends: the ageing of the society and a shift of workers to the industrial and service sectors (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, 2011). In order to attract young farmers and skilled labor to engage in farming, the plan proposed three directions: 1) to provide arable land ready for cultivation to young farmers; 2) sources of funds should be easily accessible to them; and 3) there should be a good image of the profession of farmers. The 12th NESDP (2017-2021) confirmed the aim of supporting a new generation of farmers (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, 2016).

As a consequence of this increased interest, a series of pilot programs have been launched over the past decade. For instance, the Agricultural Land Reform Office (ALRO) provided land and support to several young farmers. The “Young Smart Farmers” programs help farmers’ networking and access to markets.

However, in order to design, implement and assess these programs, there is still a lack of studies on young farmers in Thailand. The present study aims to contribute to filling this gap by providing a preliminary assessment of who ***are the young farmers in Thailand, what constraints they face in the beginning and how they actually benefit from existing support programs.*** This study took place in Prachinburi and Chiang Mai provinces.

2. Methodology

2.1. Framework

We consider that a young farmer is someone that has **at least 6 months of farm experience and that is under 45 years**. We chose this age limit as it is the one used by most of specific programs that support young farmers in Thailand. We did not consider any restriction regarding the kind of production, the size of the farm or the time dedicated to farming (we interviewed both part-time and full-time farmers). We included young farmers that still work on their parents’ farm and have not yet their own farms. We decided to **be quite wide in our target because we wanted to represent the diversity of the young people that are farming**. However, we did not interview young people who stopped farming neither people who were about to start farming.

We interviewed farmers and assessed to what extent they benefitted from support programs. These programs can be specific to young farmers (e.g., with a criterion on age for being able to get involved) as well as non-specific (any farmer can benefit from them). Governmental bodies (i.e., a public agency or a university) or private organizations (NGO, foundation, company) implement these programs.

2.2. Data collection

We interviewed 83 farmers. This number is limited: the purpose was not to achieve any form of statistical representativeness of young farmers in the two studied provinces, but rather to characterize the diversity in the “profiles” of young farmers.

The interviews were made at the farm, at market places or during seminars. Interviews included the following issues:

- the trajectory of the farmer (level of education, previous work, reasons to start farming);

- the general characteristics of the farm (size, type of agricultural production, for which purpose, land access);
- the main constraints farmers faced during the first 5 years of their farming experience and, for farmers that have started more than 5 years ago, the constraints they currently face.
- farmers' involvement with support programs (and if not, why) and how they benefitted from these programs;
- the organization of the work on the farm; access to capital, information and marketing channels; vision of the type of farming that can make it worthwhile to spend life in rural areas; projects for the future and expectations regarding the future; and more generally the future of young farmers in the area where the young farmer lives.

We also interviewed 12 staff from 12 different support programs (7 from Chiang Mai Province and 5 from Prachinburi Province). The staff members were interviewed about the history and objective of the programs they implemented, the criteria for being involved, and the support provided. In the present study, we considered only support programs in which some of interviewed young farmers had been involved.

Interviews took place between June and September 2017. A workshop was organized in October 2017, in Chiang Mai University, with 8 farmers and 12 staff of support programs, to present and discuss the preliminary results of this study.

We interviewed **young farmers** (as described above) and **former young farmers**. The latter are farmers that are above 45 years old (and less than 55) but who started as young farmers. We chose to interview former young farmers in order to identify: 1) the trajectories they had followed and 2) possible evolutions in farming systems. Numbers of interviewed farmers in each category are described in Table 1.

Table 1: Number of interviewees for Prachinburi and Chiang Mai province per category

Farmer type	Chiang Mai	Prachinburi
Young farmers that are involved in a program	22	10
Young farmers at the time of the interview that are not involved in any program	18	10
Farmers that started as young farmers and that are involved in a program	1	10
Farmers that started as a young farmers and that are not involved in any program	2	10

2.3. Definition of the typology

We **did not build** a typology based on the kind of agricultural production (such as farming using chemical inputs versus organic farming) or based on farm size. Instead, we chose to use a typology based on the general orientation of farms: **the linkage between farm characteristics and the objective of the farmers**. This typology was based on the following questions: **what is the farming system** (e.g., farming of only one crop versus farming a diversity of crops), **what is the vision of the farmer regarding farming** (e.g. self-sufficiency, farming in the same way as the parents, coming back to live in the community, living in an environmentally-friendly way, etc.) and **how both are related**. In practice, two main criteria were used to build the typology: the type of farming system and the involvement in off-farm activities.

3. Results

The first part of this section describes the typology designed in order to analyze the diversity of the young farmers. The second part assesses the main constraints mentioned by the young farmers when they started farming and the ones they currently face. The last part presents the support programs and the kind of benefits that farmers got from them.

3.1. Typology

Based on the above-mentioned methodology, five farmers' groups were identified (Figure 2 and Table 2). We provide hereafter a short description of each type and, in a box, an example of farmer for each of these types.

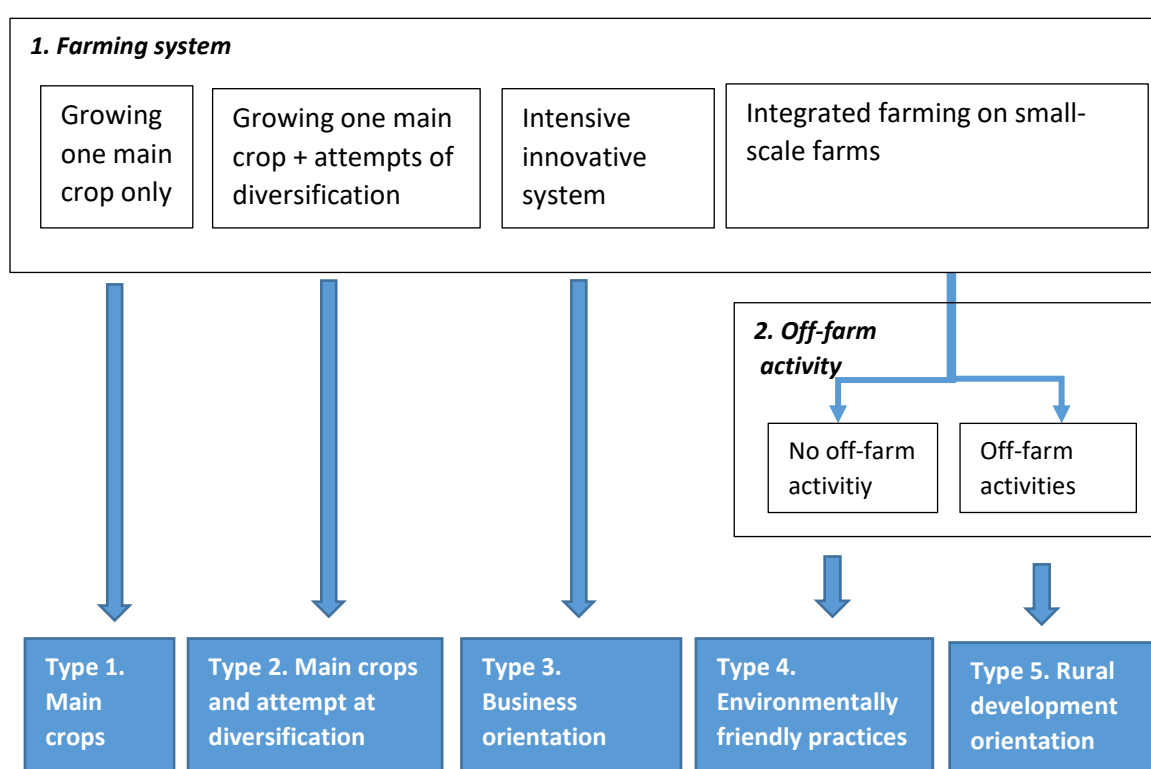


Figure 2. Typology of young farmers

Table 2. Number of farmers in each type

Type of young farmers	Prachinburi	Chiang Mai	Total
Type 1. Main crops	21	0	21
Type 2. Main crops and attempt at diversification	12	9	21
Type 3. Business orientation	5	4	9
Type 4. Environmentally-friendly practices	2	18	20
Type 5. Rural development	0	12	12

Type 1. “Main Crops” farmers

This group involves farmers that focus one or two types of production: rice and/or shrimp or fish. This group encompasses only farmers from Prachinburi Province. They are sons of farmers and most of them stopped formal education after finishing primary or secondary school. They have not diversified their farm activities and they do not plan to change their farming system. Two subtypes can be characterized: 1) some farmers get income from farming that they consider sufficient and for that reason they do not want to change; 2) other farmers get income from farming that they consider as unsatisfactory but they have another job so they do not want to put much efforts in changing their farming systems.

Box 1. Khun Thidarat, a Type 1 farmer

Miss Thidarat lives in Srimahapot District, Prachinburi Province. She is 41 years old. Her parents were rice farmers. After she graduated from senior high school, she worked in a factory as a sewer for 15 years. She decided by herself to do farming because her parents passed away so she had to come back and take over the management of her parents' farms.

She is a full-time farmer and she considers that she earns a satisfactory income from rice production. Currently, she owns 40 rai² of land and she rents 22 rai from one relative. She has to pay 5,000 baht per year to rent these 22 rai. She grows rice twice a year. She does not invest in any farm machinery because she hires everything for rice production. She does that because she considers that she still lacks farming skills.

She decided to get involved in a Young Smart Farmer program in 2014 in order to increase her rice production skills. In the future, she would like to keep growing rice in the same way as now.



Photo 1. Khun Thidarat at her farm

Type 2. “Main crops and diversification” farmers

Farmers of the “Main crop and diversification” type are focusing on one type of production (as farmers of Type 1), such as rice, shrimp, fish or vegetables. Contrary to farmers of Type 1, they want to change their farming system, this for two reasons: they want to get a better income and/or they want to increase their self-sufficiency. As a consequence, they have initiated attempts to diversify their farming systems. They have done so by initiating a small fruit and vegetable garden for family consumption (in order to reduce the living costs of the household) or they have started a new production (such as fish or shrimp in Prachinburi Province). Both Type 1 and Type 2 farmers face marketing issues, for instance they have a limited number of marketing channels (e.g., only middlemen and rice mills), and this limits their profits.

² 1 rai = 0.16 ha

Box 2 presents Khun Santi, a farmer of this Type 2. This farmer considers **that the income he gets from farming is not sufficient** and he has an off-farm job. Therefore, he **has initiated a diversification of his products and of his marketing channels** in order to increase his farming income.

Box 2. Khun Santi, a Type 2 farmer

Khun Santi lives in Mea Taeng District, Chiang Mai Province. He is 42 years old; he is married and has 3 children. His wife is working with him on the farm and he has a second job (he works in a tourist site). He started farming with his parents, on their farm, after he completed high school.

His parents did not own any land and had to rent it. He started his own farm on rented land when he got married, about 15 years ago. He used to **rent between 15 and 22 rai each year**. The farmed area depends on what he plans to grow and what he earned the previous year. He focuses on one or two **main crops** such as sesame, corn, rice and he uses chemical products.

In 2012, he joined the “New Farmer Development Program” managed by ALRO in order to get his own land. This National Program provides land to farmers if they meet some criteria (and if some land is available, see description in Part 3.3 “Presentation of programs”). He got 2 rai from ALRO in 2013, though till 2017 he did not get a formal land title. He started integrated farming of fruits and vegetables (such as eggplant, banana, melon, passion fruit, avocado, guava, morning glory, stevia, etc.) on these two rai.

Khun Santi plans to stop renting the land and to live only from the 2 rai from ALRO by selling directly to consumers and processing some products such as sun-dried banana or stevia tea. He will stop renting the land when he will earn enough money from farming the land obtained from ALRO. He is also trying to build a group of farmers that obtained land from ALRO in order to be able to meet the demands of intermediaries, who ask for large quantities of products.



Photo 2. Khun Santi at his farm, on land obtained from ALRO

Type 3. “Business oriented” farmers

These farmers have started farming because they think that it is a promising way to earn a satisfactory income. None of interviewed farmers of this type is a farmer since high school. They have graduated from university with a Bachelor or Master degree and half of them are not children of farmers. Moreover, several of them have a past work experience in cities. They are doing “innovative farming”, which involves capital-intensive investments, such as greenhouses equipped with dripped irrigation or hydroponic farming. Interviewed farmers of this type may be interested to share information with other farmers, but they are not willing to initiate collective actions for joint production or marketing.

Box 3. Khun Em, a Type 3 farmer

Khun Em lives in Doi Saket District, Chiang Mai Province. He lives with his parents, who are also farmers, but he has his own farm. He is 27 and graduated from Chiang Mai University with a **Bachelor degree in Economics**. After graduation, he worked for nearly 3 years for CP Company, a major agribusiness company in Thailand. He was then buying corns from farmers for animal feed. He decided to quit his job because he was travelling often and he wanted to spend more time with his family.

He started farming at the beginning of 2016. His parents gave him 4 rai. His main agricultural production is **mushrooms**. He also grows bamboo, mango and longan. Before starting farming, he contacted farmers by himself and asked to visit their farms in order to decide what kind of crops he could do to earn a good income.

He faced many difficulties when he started farming. He is the **only young farmer in his village and his parents did not understand** why he decided to quit his job and to start farming. Therefore, he decided to join a **program called “Brave man return home”** in order to build his network and to exchange about farming with other young people. This 5-month program involved seminars and meetings. He met some Young Smart Farmers at a meeting of this program and decided to **join the Young Smart Farmer program** (see description in Part 3.3) in 2015 in order to have access to new marketing channels. However, he did not attend any seminar afterwards because he was not interested in the topics that were proposed.

He grows mushrooms in 6 greenhouses and gets one harvest every 20 days, during the whole year. He manages to earn a **very good income** (about 53,000 baht per month of net income). His Bachelor degree helped him in studying the market and in designing a business plan. His parents now positively consider his success and his mother helps him sometimes by selling his mushrooms at the market when he is too busy.



Photo 3: Mushroom green houses at Khun Em's farm

Type 4. Farmers aiming at “Environmentally friendly” practices

Farmers of this group are mainly doing organic or chemical-free agriculture (sometimes they still farm part of the farm using chemicals). They grow mainly fruits and vegetables on small-scale farms (less than 20 rai), in an integrated way. They sell their products through specialized channels:

organic/chemical-free markets or organic products selling groups. They do not have major investment plan for their farm. Their main goal is to reduce their part of chemical farming (if not already done) and/or to diversify their production.

Box 4. Khun Pee Chai, a Type 4 farmer

Khun Pee Chai lives in Mea On District (Chiang Mai Province) and is 42. He started to work on the farm of his parents since he was young. He has his own land since 2012. He inherited land from his father. He worked two years as a mechanist in Chiang Mai City but he was bored and preferred to come back in his hometown in order to help his parents.

He grows 2 rai of paddy fields, whose harvest will be used for the consumption of the extended family (including his parents). He also grows 5 rai of organic farming (fruits, vegetables, bamboos, herbs, teak) for the benefit of his own family (wife and 2 children). He does only farming and sells his products to an organic selling and packaging group. He has obtained a group organic certification. In the future, he plans to build his own house on his land and to decrease his living costs by installing more solar panels on his farm in order to pump water and to get electricity for domestic consumption.



Photo 4. Khun Pee Chai at his farm

Type 5. "Rural Development" farmers

"Rural development" farmers are located in Chiang Mai Province. Similarly as Type 4 farmers, they grow organic fruits and vegetables. Some of them also grow rice and breed animals. They do integrated farming on small-scale farms. Less than half of them are full-time farmers because they are involved in other activities, which relate to rural development or more specifically to the development of their village. For instance, they run an agro-tourism business (coffee shop to sell local products, homestay) or they are involved (sometimes as leader) in a processing, packaging and selling group. None of them are farmers since their childhood: they have a past working experience in cities before doing farming or they studied at university.

Box 5. Khun Sarawut, a Type 5 farmer

Khun Sarawut lives in Mea On District (Chiang Mai Province) and is 31. He started farming 11 years ago after working 3 months in a factory. He could not stand working in a factory: he wanted to be his own boss and to be autonomous.

He farms 8 rai since he started farming: he got 2 rai come from his parents and he bought 6 rai. He managed to buy some land thanks to a loan from the EarthNet Foundation. The loan is 10-year long, without interest. He grows 3 rai of fruits (bananas, longan), 3 rai of vegetables and 2 rai of rice. He also breeds cows and goats.

Khun Sarawut is a member of a community enterprise situated in his village. This community enterprise involves young people and processes, packages and sells the organic products of the villagers. Young members of the enterprise meet every week to do the processing and the packaging, using machines bought by their community enterprise. They also opened a coffee shop where they process and sell products of the organic group. Khun Sarawut is also processing some products on his own. For instance, he makes yogurt and cakes from goat milk. In the future, Khun Sarawut wants to breed more animals in an organic way and he wants to get certification for processed products to be able to sell to supermarkets.



Photo 5. Khun Sarawut and his wife in their farm

Main characteristics of young farmers per type

Table 3 describes the main characteristics of young farmers on average per type. Type 1 and Type 2 farmers have, on average, completed High school (12 years of study). The group who has the highest education level is the Type 3, with an average of 17 years of study (more than a Bachelor degree). The farm size of Types 4 and 5 farmers is relatively smaller than Types 1 and 2, but they often produce much more capital and labour intensive crops than the latter types. Apart from some farmers of Type 2 that initially started as Type 1, generally young farmers have kept the same type of farming systems and orientation as initially.

Table 3. Characteristics of the types

	Type 1. Main crops	Type 2. Main crops and diversification	Type 3. Business orientation	Type 4. Environmental- ly friendly practices	Type 5. Rural development
Average number of years of studies	11	12	17	14	15
% of farmers that farm since their childhood	34%	34%	0%	10%	0%
% of children of farmers	100%	95%	50%	90%	84%
% of full-time farmers	43%	33%	44%	90%	42%
Average size of the farm (rai)	31	36	62	14	8

3.2. Initial and current constraints

Table 4 presents the constraints that young farmers specifically faced to start farming during the first 5 years. More than half of Type 1 “Main crops” and Type 2 “Main crops and diversification” farmers reported that they did not face **any constraints specifically related to start farming**. Indeed, most of these farmers are children of farmers and started farming along with their parents: they faced the same general constraints as their parents, such as water related problems and marketing (see below). Similarly, 75% of farmers from Type 5 “Rural development” did not face any constraints when they started farming. One possible explanation is that these farmers previously worked or went to university. They often took time to plan their business plan before starting farming and sometimes they had experience from their previous job. Farmers of Type 3 “Business” and Type 4 “Environmentally friendly practices” faced two main kinds of difficulties: 1) **technical difficulties** such as a lack of knowledge or the necessity to work hard in the first years and 2) **social difficulties**: the misunderstanding of their parents (who often asked them why they had quit their jobs in cities) and/or the skepticism of the villagers regarding their innovative way of farming. This can be linked with the fact that they are people doing innovative farming: capital-intensive farming based on innovation for Type 3 farmers and organic farming for Type 4 farmers.

Table 4. Main constraints faced to start farming

	Type 1: “Main Crops”	Type 2: “Main crops + diversification”	Type 3: “Business”	Type 4: “Env.- friendly”	Type 5: “Rural development”
Non-understanding or skepticism of parents and villagers	0	0	2	6	1
Access to land	3	2	0	0	0
Difficulty with agricultural production (lack of knowledge, pest and diseases)	2	2	3	2	1
Environmental difficulty (flooding or lack of water)	2	2	0	1	0
Work hardness	0	3	1	4	2
Funding	0	1	0	3	0
Marketing	0	1	1	0	0
No issue	14	10	3	4	8
Total	21	21	10	20	12

Table 4 also shows that **access to the land does not appear as a main issue**. It is probably because when young people decided to start farming, they had already solved the issue of land access. Indeed, 76 % of the interviewed farmers got access to at least some land thanks to their family (they inherited land or their parents gave a part of their land). This is a main difference with the young farmers in Europe who may start an installation process even when the issue of land access is not solved. Because of this, land (to buy and to rent) is the most important general constraint for young farmers throughout the European Union (Zondag et al., 2015).

Table 5 presents the current constraints for farmers that have more than 5 years of experience in farming. The main difficulty of farmers of Type 1, 2 and 3 is **marketing**. For farmers of Type 1 and 2,

the price is decided by rice mills and by middlemen, and they often face a lack of alternative channels to sell products. Marketing is not an issue for Type 4 and 5 farmers. Indeed, Type 1 farmers have on average of **1.1 marketing channels** whereas **Type 5 farmers have on average 2.2 marketing channels**. The “social difficulties” are no longer mentioned here as young farmers have generally successfully got involved into local social networks.

Table 5. Main current constraints faced by farmers (farmers who have more than 5 years of experience)

	Type 1. “Main Crops”	Type 2. “Main crops + diversification”	Type 3. “Business”	Type 4. “Env.- friendly”	Type 5. “Rural develop- ment”
Number of farmers having more than 5 years of experience in farming	17	19	6	8	8
Non-understanding or skepticism of parents and villagers	0	0	0	1	0
Access to land	0	0	1	0	0
Difficulty with agricultural production (lack of knowledge, pest and diseases)	6	4	0	4	2
Environmental difficulty (floods, drought)	7	9	0	2	3
Work hardness	0	1	0	0	2
Funding	4	1	1	0	1
Marketing	13	10	4	1	1
No issue	1	2	0	1	1
Total	31	27	6	9	10

3.3. Programs that support interviewed farmers

Programs implemented at national level and specific to young farmers

Young Smart Farmers

In 2008, the Department of Agricultural Extension launched an initiative to install young farmers. At that time the program aimed to build the capacities of young people in terms of farm production, business management, and information technology. In 2014, the program title was changed from “Young Farmers” to “Young Smart Farmers” and focused more on sharing farm experiences and building networks thanks to farm visits and seminars (Department of Agricultural Extension, 2016). Since 2014, this program trained approximately 25 farmers per year in Chiang Mai Province (so approximately 100 young people were trained till the end of 2017). In Prachinburi Province, 94 farmers have been trained since the program was launched in 2014.

New farmer development program

This program was launched at national level in 2008 by the ALRO (ALRO, 2008). The aim was to provide land to farmers, after a 6-month training course. There are two types of allocated farmland: public land reform area (then farmers do not have to pay anything) and private land reform area (farmers

have to pay a rental fee). In Chiang Mai Province, the program was launched in 2012 and from the beginning of the program till October 2017, 21 farmers got access to land. On average each farmer received 2 rai. In Prachinburi Province, the program was also launched in 2012 and 7 farmers got some land. They obtained on average 4.2 rai per person.

These two programs are the two national programs especially designed for young farmers. Till 2017, they had benefitted a relatively limited number of young farmers in both provinces.

Other programs specific to young farmers

Maejo University (located in Chiang Mai City) implements the “**Volunteers return home**” program. This training program exists since 2013. This program has two main goals: to help young people to come back to their hometown and to train farmers on organic agriculture. By October 2017, the program had trained approximately 30 farmers and is now working with groups of young farmers since 2016. Maejo University also runs a similar program called “Soil, water, forest, intelligence and career”, which provides support in terms of organic farming by giving free farm inputs and training. However, this program is not specific to young farmers.

Programs non-specific to young farmers in Chiang Mai Province

The **Chiang Mai Safe Food program** is implemented under the supervision of the Provincial Public Health Office since 2007. The aim is to reduce the use of chemicals in agriculture for a better health of both customers and farmers. In October 2017, there were 346 farmers participating in the program. This program does not focus on young farmers, but it can be a way for them to receive a training and more importantly, to get access to an interesting market.

The **Institute for Sustainable Development Education and Promotion (ISDEP)** manages 3 programs to support farmers. The first one is a partnership with Maejo University for the “Volunteer return Home” program. ISDEP provides funds during two years after the training in Maejo University. During the first year after training, they provide 9,000 baht/month for 11 months. During the second year, they provide 7,000 baht/month for 11 months. They also provide funds to farmers’ groups. The amount depends on the activities of the group. The second one is “Mae Wan” program. ISDEP has been working in Mae Wan subdistrict for 12 years. They help communities in developing collective work and innovative farming (e.g., organic farming, new crops). The third one is the “Organic community” program in partnership with Keaw Suay Hom Network. The two NGOs help the farmers sell their products directly to consumers.

The “**Organic farming in sustainable agriculture system and fair market system**” is a training program handled by the Institute for a Sustainable Agriculture Community (ISAC). ISAC is a local NGO that trains farmers and build consumers’ awareness about organic agriculture. The aim is to develop organic agriculture and to increase farmers’ self-sufficiency (farmers should produce for their family consumption as the first priority and the surplus is to be sold on the markets). ISAC supports farmers to sell their products directly to the consumers by creating market places in Chiang Mai city. It also assists both farmers and consumers in building groups and networking. Since 2007, ISAC supported more than 3,000 farmers.

All these programs are not focused on young farmers but some young farmers use them to get access to markets and to meet other young farmers in order to create networks.

Programs non-specific to young farmers in Prachinburi Province

A series of program are proposed to farmers in Prachinburi Province. In particular, Community Development Office implement the **Self-Sufficiency Economy Philosophy program** since 2006. The total number of villages that have been involved in this program increased from 160 villages in 2009 to 5,427 villages in 2014 (at least 6-7 villages per district). The programs supports farmers in terms of training and farm inputs. Moreover, Community Rice Centers were established in 2000 with support from the Department of Agricultural Extension. These centers have 3 objectives: 1) supporting farmers to produce rice seeds of high quality, 2) being the learning center of community for rice production, and 3) strengthening farmers and farmer organizations.

Benefits from participating in support programs

Among interviewed farmers, 43 farmers (20 from Prachinburi and 23 from Chiang Mai) had been involved in at least one program. The other 40 farmers had not been involved in any program, for the following reasons: farmers preferring to spend time on their farms (mentioned 17 times), farmers already satisfied with their farm management (mentioned 10 times), farmers had not heard about programs (mentioned 7 times), and the opinion that the programs are not useful (mentioned 4 times).

Table 6 presents the benefits that farmers obtained from the programs in which they are or they were involved. For the farmers involved in more than one program, we asked about the benefits they got from each of the programs they were involved in.

Table 6. Benefits that farmers got from participating in support programs

	Type 1. “Main Crops”	Type 2. “Main crops + diversification”	Type 3. “Business”	Type 4. “Env.- friendly”	Type 5. “Rural development ”
Access to land	0	0	0	1	4
Free farm inputs	2	2	0	2	0
Technical knowledge	9	6	4	8	5
Networking (meeting farmers/sharing experience)	0	2	2	5	5
Access to funding	0	0	0	5	0
Access to market	0	3	0	2	0

The most common benefit for all types is the technical support. Most Types 1, 2 and 3 did not benefit from financial support. Type 4 farmers have obtained a wide diversity of support, because a majority of programs supports organic farming, especially in Chiang Mai Province.

Table 7 identifies the linkages between the main constraints expressed by the farmers and the main benefits they got from participating in support programs. This table shows a rather incomplete overlap between constraints expressed by young farmers and the type of support provided by programs.

Table 7. Connection between the main constraints faced when starting farming and main benefits

	Main constraints when starting farming	Main benefits from programs
Type 1. Main crops	Difficulty with agricultural production, access to land, water	Technical support
Type 2. Main crops and diversification	Work hardness, difficulty with agricultural production, access to land, water	Technical support, access to markets
Type 3. Business orientation	Difficulty with agricultural production, social acceptance	Technical support, networking
Type 4. Environment friendly practices	Social acceptance, work hardness, funding	Technical support, networking, funding
Type 5. Rural development	Work hardness	Technical support, networking, land access

4. Conclusion

This study shows first that there is **no one type of young farmer but a diversity of profiles**. Current programs do not explicitly take into account this diversity. This diversity may be acknowledged in the design of support programs: farmers have different origins, characteristics and they want to achieve different things. Support programs may be improved by **addressing the diversity of the constraints they face and by taking into account the diversity of profiles**.

This study was based on 83 young farmers. It would be of interest to expand the study with a larger number of farmers, in particular in order to consider differing farming systems in other provinces of Thailand. Moreover, the present study focused on already established farmers. It may be completed by another study, which could focus on young people that would be interested to start farming but who have not started yet and on young people that have tried farming but later stopped.

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