

Navigating the Digital Divide: Technological Change and the Future of Youth Agricultural Entrepreneurship in Morocco

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INTRODUCTION & AIM

This research investigates the implications of digital transformation on youth agricultural entrepreneurship, addressing both transformative opportunities and systemic risks. Accordingly, the study examines the impact of technology on the multidimensional construct of agricultural productivity, by analyzing material yield optimization via precision tools, strategic market positioning via data analytics and logistics, and structural barriers to equitable adoption.

METHOD

This qualitative multiple-case study investigates the impact of digital transformation on youth-led agricultural startups across three regions: Béni Mellal-Khénifra, Fez-Meknès, and Souss-Massa, grounded in the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Value Chain Theory.

- 25 semi-structured interviews conducted with 12 entrepreneurs, 6 government officials, 4 agritech executives, 3 NGOs.
- Systematic policy document review.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework: Digital Transformation → Youth Entrepreneurship Outcomes

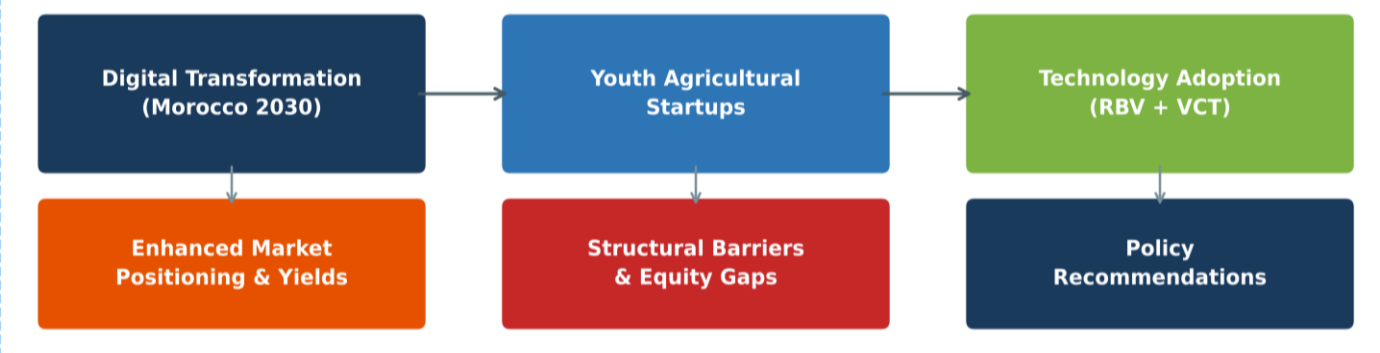
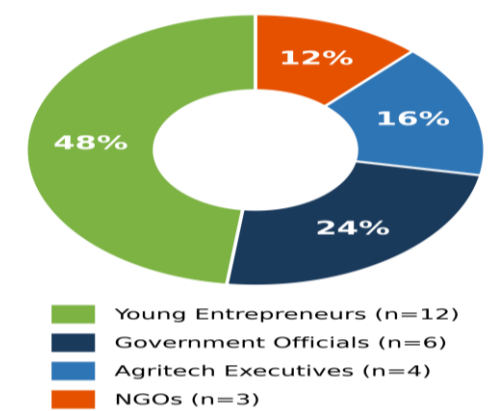


Figure 2. Sample Composition (N=25, 3 Regions)



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Figure 3. Perceived Business Impact by Technology Category (n=12)

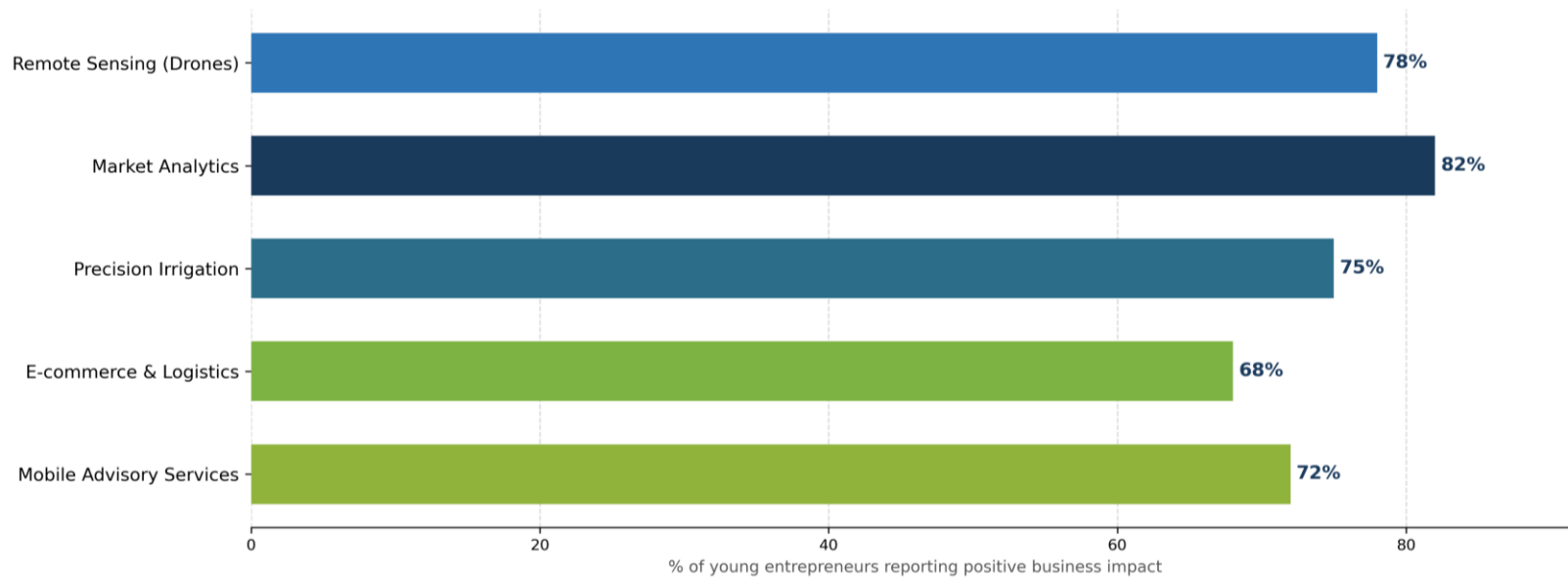
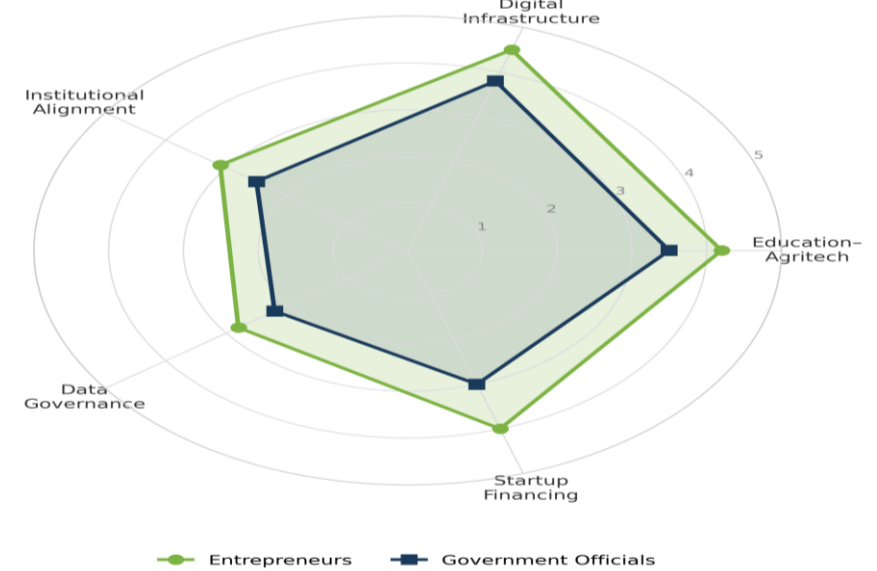


Figure 4. Barrier Severity (Scale 1-5)



Finding 1 — Productivity Dichotomy

Entrepreneurs prioritize market-entry & value-added processing; institutions focus on material crop yields — a critical support misalignment.

Finding 2 — Digital Differentiation

Startups adopting remote sensing & analytics show enhanced business viability; drone monitoring cut scouting time; analytics improved market timing.

Finding 3 — Equity Gaps Persist

Rural connectivity deficits, education-agritech mismatch, and absent startup financing collectively widen the digital divide.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Technology holds transformative potential for Moroccan youth agricultural entrepreneurship. Institutional support must align with entrepreneurs' market-oriented productivity logic to bridge the structural divide.

Policy Recommendations:

- Integrated digital agri-ecosystem (precision tools + market platforms + logistics)
- Vocational curricula reform: data literacy, agritech, e-commerce
- Risk-adjusted startup financing mechanisms

"Technology must be viewed not as a production tool, but as a strategic catalyst for entrepreneurial growth and sustainability."

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