

1. Actual crop water use in project countries:



This report aims to synthesize the results of a crop water use study conducted by country teams of the GEF/World Bank project, Regional Climate, Water, and Agriculture: Impacts on and Adaptation of Agro-ecological Systems in Africa. It also presents the results of the second phase of the study based on climate change scenarios, conducted by the South Africa country team. The actual evapotranspiration of five commonly grown crops-maize, millet, sorghum, groundnuts, and beans-in two selected districts were analyzed by six country teams. In addition, two country teams also analyzed other crops grown in the districts. The regional analysis shows that the actual yield of the different crops-specifically of maize and groundnuts-improves with an increase in actual evapotranspiration, although the gap remains wide between actual and potential yield and actual and maximum evapotranspiration, especially for the rainfed crops. This highlights the importance of improved water management if agriculture is to play an important role as a source of food security and better livelihoods. The report highlights the vulnerability of maize to water stress and the increased risks to the viability of rainfed farming systems based on this crop.

Corporate Author: World Bank
Subjects: Agriculture and Rural Development

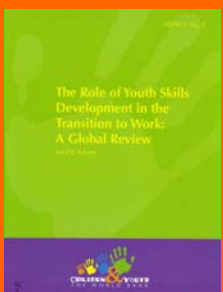
2. Health Care Spending in the New EU Member States:

Following the transition from central planning toward market-based economies, the formerly communist states of Central and Eastern Europe introduced a number of reforms in the finance, management, and organization of the health sector. While health sector reforms in these countries have involved deep structural changes, they have generally been less successful in improving efficiency, enhancing equity in healthcare financing and delivery, and managing clinical quality of health services. Total health expenditures have increased in almost all countries, especially in recent years, and with revenues not keeping pace, huge debts have accumulated in the health sector. Efficiency gains have been few and far between, and with the dynamic nature of technology and demographic changes increasing the complexity of health services and the health marketplace, further reforms are becoming even more difficult. This report takes stock of recent trends in health expenditure aggregates in the public sector and identifies specific areas of health expenditure reform consistent with the objectives of stabilizing the fiscal situation in these countries (the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia) without adversely affecting the production, delivery and utilization of health services.



Author: Mukesh Chawla
Subjects: Health, Nutrition and Population

3. The Role of youth skills development in the transition to work: a global review:



Policymakers worldwide are concerned with helping youth acquire the skills and competencies needed for entering the world of work and becoming productive citizens and providers for their families. Countries and households adopt and combine different approaches to acquiring skills ranging from formal school settings, outside schools in non-formal training programs, and in the workplace itself. This paper reviews literature from advanced and developing countries on the role played by skills in the transition to work and the economic outcomes in earnings and employment associated with the different approaches. Using results from rigorous program evaluations that control for selection bias, the paper highlights effective strategies for equipping youth with skills to make the transition to work, and for those who miss early education, it identifies programs that can offer youth a second chance to make this transition.

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