



RURAL EMPLOYMENT

KNOWLEDGE MATERIALS

Decent rural employment for food security: A case for action



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Introduction

Promoting decent employment is essential to achieving food security and reducing poverty. Simply put, in order to be able to access food, poor people rely on the income from their labour, because it is often the only asset they have. This was explicitly acknowledged through the inclusion of target 1.B “Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people” in the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 1 to “Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger”.

However, **policy responses have rarely addressed the employment and hunger challenges in a coordinated manner.** There has been growing attention to the importance of employment, as seen in the United Nations (UN) system’s response to the global and financial crisis. In 2009, the UN agreed on a Global Jobs Pact to boost employment, production, investment and aggregate demand, and promote decent work for all. Moreover, the UN System Wide Action Plan of the Second UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017) set “full employment and decent work for all” as a main theme.

Likewise, a variety of initiatives have been taken to increase food and nutrition security of the most vulnerable, including increasing investment in agriculture, addressing food prices increases, and reducing producers’ and consumers’ vulnerability to food price shocks and to the effects of climate change. And yet, those initiatives have rarely taken up explicit employment objectives.

This Case for Action argues that improving policy coherence between employment and agricultural initiatives and investing more in the promotion of decent rural employment contribute highly to the interlinked challenges of fighting rural poverty and feeding a growing world population in a sustainable way. Even more importantly, **decent work** is a fully fledged human right, enshrined in international human rights law,¹ to which each person is entitled as a means of personal development and socio-economic inclusion.

While the ILO leads the Global Employment and Decent Work Agenda, **FAO has a crucial comparative advantage in promoting decent work in rural areas, specifically with respect to employment in agriculture, including livestock, forestry, fisheries and management of natural resources, as well as agroprocessing and retailing.** Given its mandate to raise levels of nutrition, improve agricultural productivity, better the lives of rural populations and contribute to the growth of the world economy, FAO has a significant responsibility within this context. This Case for Action further clarifies the reasoning behind this statement and suggests entry points for increased synergies and inter-disciplinary collaboration.

1 The right to work is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and recognized in international human rights law through its inclusion in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.



1 Decent rural employment is key for food security

Achieving food security for all requires investing more in decent rural employment (DRE) and rural workforce development. First, producers and other agricultural workers directly contribute to produce food. Second, the amount of income generated from work determines the amount and quality of food that workers and their families can purchase. Given the fact that poor people may spend as much as 70 percent of their income on food (FAO, 2010b), an increase in personal income can have immediate effects on household food security. If this income is sourced from secure working arrangements, households will gain in consumption stability and quality of life. In the long term, access to *gainful* and *stable* employment also enables households to invest in better nutrition, health and education. Such an investment in human capital will contribute to improved productivity and overall economic performance, with a multiplier effect on labour demand over time.² Also, DRE can contribute to the sustainable management of natural resources by creating direct or indirect incentives for nature conservation. For all these reasons, **decent employment can be seen as one of the most sustainable and dignified means of food procurement, social inclusion and long-term food security.** According to analysis by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) of different patterns of growth, countries that have been successful in reducing poverty in relatively short periods of time went through employment-centred structural transformations, in which industrial and agricultural policies as well as active social policies were used in synergy (UNRISD, 2011, p. 30).

According to FAO estimates, even with a global expansion of food supplies by about 70 percent necessary to feed the world's population in 2050,

almost 400 million people will still lack access to adequate food (FAO, 2009, p. 13). Expansion of food availability alone cannot ensure access to food for all. Complementary efforts are required at the policy level to expand employment opportunities for the poor, by reducing levels of unemployment, underemployment and working poverty.

All this is even more compelling in rural areas, where poverty is too often associated with a disadvantaged employment status and where about 70 percent of the world's hungry live and work.

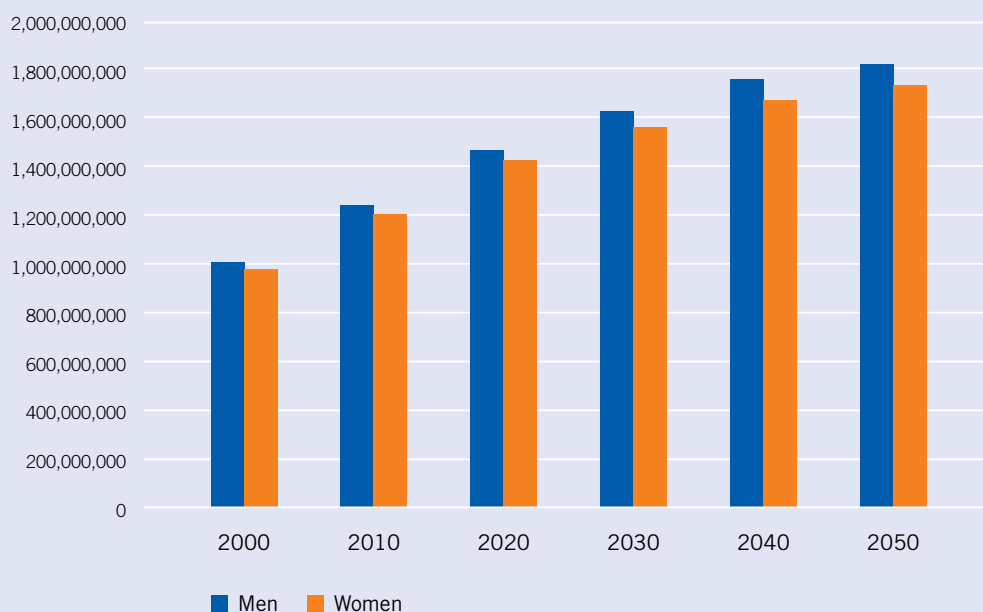
Rural employment refers to any activity, occupation, work, business or service performed by rural people, for remuneration, profit, social or family gain, in cash or in kind, or by force, including both agricultural and non-agricultural activities.

In less developed regions, burgeoning youth populations pose both challenges and opportunities. The annual growth of the youth labour force continues to increase in the poorest regions, such as South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, where an average of 1 and 2.2 million young people,³ respectively, are expected to enter the labour market every year between 2010 and 2015 with upwards trends beyond 2050 (ILO, 2010b). **Continued increases in the working-age population** can represent a significant growth potential, both from the supply side, given the higher availability of workforce, and from the demand side, given increases and changes in consumption patterns associated with younger populations. At the same time, creating job opportunities for the new generations of workers is a challenge, especially in developing economies, where employment generation is typically slower than population growth.

2 See Khan, A. R. (2008): "The Employment-MDGs Linkages", in Poverty in Focus No. 16 Jobs, *Jobs, Jobs the Policy Challenge*, International Poverty Centre (IPC) – UNDP, December 2008, pp. 14-15 [See also: Khan, A. (2007). "Employment and the MDGs – Analytics of the Linkage", *Bangladesh Development Studies*, Vol. XXXI, No. 1 and 2].

3 The UN defines "youths", as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years (See also *Glossary*).

FIGURE 1 Population aged 25-59 years in less developed regions, by sex, 2000-2050



Source: World Population Prospects: The 2010 Revision (medium variant), <http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/index.htm>

The efforts to promote more and better jobs should pay particular attention to rural areas. In addition to the lack of employment opportunities, available jobs in rural areas are often characterized by very low-return and often exploitative arrangements. Rural labour markets present high levels of informality, a prevalence of multiple job-holding and casual work arrangements, labour force fragmentation, information asymmetries, gender and age-based inequalities, and the uncertainties and specificities of agricultural production. Rural working conditions are often poor and access to social protection is limited. Furthermore, labour legislation is often not enforced, rural workers are the least organised and least protected by legislative frameworks, and social dialogue is generally weak.

Creating new jobs and upgrading the quality of existing ones, particularly in rural areas, should

be a core pillar of any development strategy to address the global hunger challenge. However, for employment to contribute to these objectives, some conditions have to be fulfilled: jobs have to empower people and provide equal opportunities to all regardless of gender, age or ethnicity; they have to guarantee labour rights, such as the right to organize; they have to ensure decent levels of income and contribute to the realization and enjoyment of all human rights that every individual is entitled to; they have to secure a safe and healthy working environment as well as social protection. **Only employment which is decent⁴ can represent a powerful driver for long-term food security, reduced inequalities and sustainable growth.** This Case for Action substantiates this through **strong arguments along the four dimensions of food security: availability, access, utilization and stability.⁵**

4 According to the ILO's definition, decent work sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives. It involves opportunities for productive work that delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families; better prospects for personal development and social integration; freedom for people to express their concerns, to organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives; and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men (ILO,2006. Decent Work FAQ: Making decent work a global goal).

5 The definition of food security embodies four dimensions, namely: (i) availability of food, which is a function of supply; (ii) access to food, largely determined by purchasing power, market integration and physical access to markets, access to other assets like land, formal safety nets and informal coping strategies, (iii) stability in food availability and access, through time, and (iv) food utilization, which relies on sufficient energy consumption and a varied diet to provide required micronutrients.

FIGURE 2 Main decent work challenges for rural areas of developing countries

Job creation	Upgrading of existing jobs	Rural workforce development	Institutionalization of rural labour markets	Social equality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases in the working age population: 1 million and 2.2 million young people in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) respectively entering the labour market annually between 2010-15 (ILO, 2010b). • Unattractiveness of agriculture for youth: due to lack of incentives and drudgery or rural life, youth are increasingly turning their backs on agriculture (IFAD, 2011). • Constant rural-out migration: 13 million migrants will move to urban areas each year over the next two decades (ODI, 2007). • Inadequate absorption capacity of urban labour markets: increased pressure to the already saturated job markets in the service sector, leading to increasing informal employment in urban areas (UNRSID,2011). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smallholders' constraints and discriminations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - tremendous gaps between actual and potential yields (IFAD, 2010a). - farming in Africa and Asia rarely generates more than US\$750 per worker a year (ODI, 2007). • Critical gaps of rural small and medium agro-enterprises (SMAEs): mostly small, informal and family based. • Low wages in agriculture and persisting wage differentials: across the rural/urban divide, and between farm and non-farm employment (35 to 40 percent) (Hertz, et al, 2009). • High working poverty rates: nearly eight out of ten working poor (below US\$1.25) live in rural areas (ILO, 2012). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistent education gaps: rural children are twice as likely to be out of school as urban ones (UN, 2010). • Poor quality and relevance of rural education: poor school infrastructure, lack of teachers and curricula often not relevant to rural needs (FAO, ILO, IFAD, 2010a). • Low investments in agricultural education and training and advisory services: range of service and information choices for poor farmers remains very limited (IFAD, 2010a). • Weak organization of the rural workforce: low level of trade union representation, particularly among non permanent agricultural workers and women (FAO, ILO, IUF, 2007). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High levels of informality: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - small-scale farms represent 85 percent of farms worldwide (FAO, 2009c), generating mostly informal jobs. - informal economy makes 50-75 percent of all non-agricultural employment. • High incidence of vulnerable employment: especially in regions where agriculture is the largest employer (South Asia, SSA and Southeast Asia). • Low access to social protection: less than 20 percent of agricultural workers have access to basic social protection (ILO, 2011e). • Weakness of many producers' organizations: often lack capacities and voice, many have issues of poor governance or representation (IFAD, 2011). • Multiple hazards and poor occupational safety and health (OSH) provisions for agricultural workers: at least 170,000 agricultural workers killed each year (ILO, 2011f). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender inequality in accessing productive resources: women represent less than 15 percent of agricultural holders in SSA (FAO, 2011a). • Gender inequality in rural labour markets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rural women tend to earn lower wages than men for performing the same work (FAO, 2011a). - labour force participation of young women is lower in all regions except East Asia (ILO, 2010b). • Staggering child labour rates: 60 percent of child labourers are in agriculture (ILO, 2010a). • Youth disadvantage in rural labour markets: young people overrepresented among the working poor (23 percent vs. 18.6 percent of non-poor workers, US\$2/day threshold) (mostly in agriculture) (ILO, 2010b and 2012).



Farmer working to sort his maize crop

1.1 Better agricultural employment for increased food availability

More productive and decent employment in the agricultural sector can increase local food availability by contributing to a sustainable increase in food production. Low-income countries remain heavily agrarian with agriculture providing employment to 1.3 billion people worldwide (FAOSTAT).

A large share of agriculture and food systems in developing countries hinges upon small-scale agriculture. **Smallholders and their families, as the main category of rural self-employed in the agricultural sector,** represent around one third of the global population and 85 percent of farms worldwide (FAO, 2009c). They farm 80 percent of the farmland in Africa and Asia (IFAD, 2010b). Their own investment in agriculture is the primary investment in agriculture in many developing countries (FAO, 2011d, p. 3). This investment is, however, far from its full capacity and smallholders face tremendous gaps between actual and potential yields (IFAD, 2010a). For instance, in the Latin America and Caribbean

region, where the vast majority of family-farms are small-scale subsistence farms, the aggregate contribution of family farming to the national value of agricultural production economy varies from 25 to 65 percent. And yet, its contribution to sectoral employment is much higher, accounting for at least 50 percent of rural employment in the region and as much as 77 percent in Brazil. This difference indicates a major gap in productivity of family farming (FAO, 2010c). Smallholders encounter a series of well-known constraints and discriminations: lack of access to natural resources, such as land, forest and water; limited access to other productive assets, such as financial and services, and reliable and stable input and output markets; lack of access to knowledge and training opportunities and adequate information about prices; fragmentation and lack of voice and representation; and infrastructure deficiencies. In transforming countries,⁶ such as most North African countries, low-capital farming continues to serve as a coping strategy in the absence of adequate social safety nets and alternative employment opportunities, while rural-urban income disparities are rising and extreme poverty continues to be concentrated in rural areas.

Closing the gender gap in access and use of productive resources and services is particularly needed to unlock the productivity potential of women as food producers. On average, women account for 43 percent of the agricultural labour force in developing countries, ranging from about 20 percent in Latin America to almost 50 percent in South-Eastern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa (FAO, 2011a). However, their productivity is constrained by various biases and discriminations. For instance, women account for less than 5 percent of all agricultural holders in North Africa and West Asia and, on average, 15 percent in sub-Saharan Africa (FAO, 2011a, p. 23).

Rural youth are the future of the agricultural sector: they often have greater capacity for innovation and entrepreneurship than adults. However, youth

6 Based on the World Development Report 2008, Agriculture for Development, there are three worlds of agriculture: agriculture-based countries, transforming countries and urbanized countries. Transforming countries are defined as countries where agriculture is no longer a major source of economic growth, and contributes on average only 7 percent to GDP growth, and yet poverty remains overwhelmingly rural (82 percent of all poor). Countries which would belong to this group are: China, India, Indonesia, Morocco, and Romania, as well as the regions of South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific and the Middle East and North Africa (World Bank, 2007a, p. 4).

participation in the agricultural sector in many developing countries is very low or declining, largely because the sector is perceived as unattractive, due to risks, costs, low-profitability and its labour-intensive nature. Also, rural youth often have limited access to educational programmes that respond to skill needs in agriculture. Difficult access to land, lack of financial services tailored to their needs, lack of incentives and poor infrastructure and utilities render agriculture and the rural setting as a whole unattractive to youth.

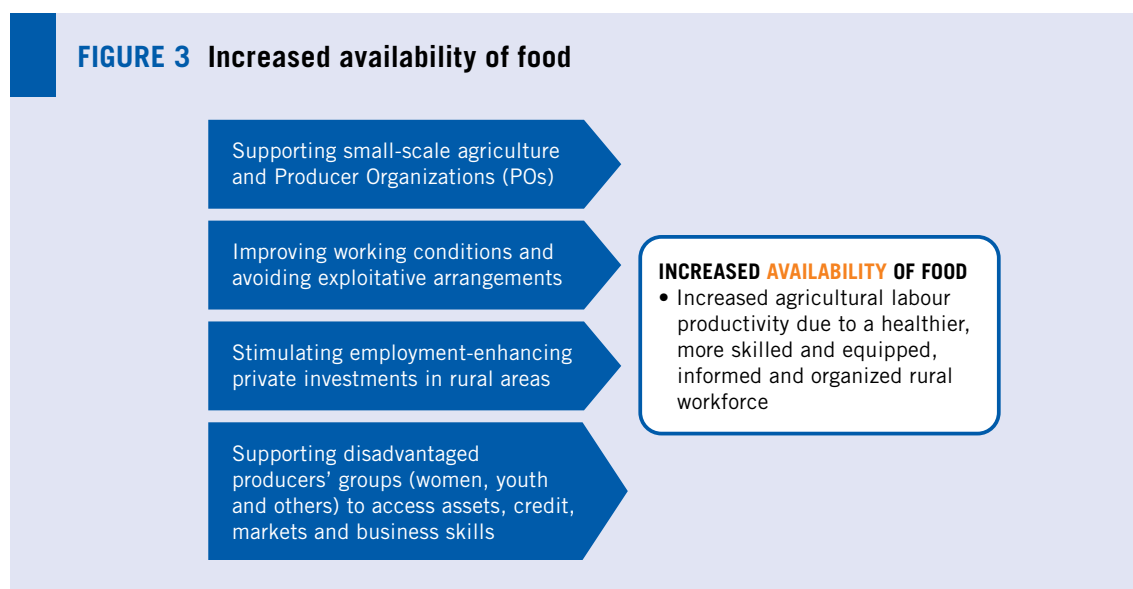
Agribusiness has a large and rising share of GDP across developing countries, typically rising from under 20 percent of GDP to more than 30 percent before declining as economies transform. The majority of agro-enterprises are small, located in rural towns, and operated by households that often have wage labour and farming as additional sources of income (WB, 2007, p. 135). Small and medium agro-enterprises (SMAEs) play a critical role in driving the modernization of the agricultural sub-sectors. However, they also face several bottlenecks and often operate in the informal economy and incur diseconomies of scale. Increasing investments to foster the sustainable intensification of agriculture and the competitiveness of SMAEs

and producers' organizations is already recognized as a priority for greater food production and rural growth. Such investments may in some cases bring productivity gains to improve labour efficiency, such as mechanisation, which may lead to job losses. It is also true that labour demand may increase as new varieties and irrigation allow farmers to double- and even triple-crop the land (Binswanger, 1986 in DFID, 2004).⁷ Furthermore, increased productivity in agriculture often feeds into growth and generation of economic opportunities in the labour intensive, non-tradable, rural non-farm sector, including food-processing and retailing (Upton and Otte 2004).

Agricultural wage workers also play a vital but largely overlooked role in food production.

Increasingly, the agricultural sector employs wage workers, which already account for over 40 percent of the total agricultural labour force. Many small-scale producers are indeed also part-time wage workers.⁸ Agricultural wage workers are often employed under informal, seasonal or casual arrangements overlooked by policy makers and employment statistics. In the future, and provided equitable and fair conditions are ensured, modern value chain development can make a positive difference to improve their employment prospects.

FIGURE 3 Increased availability of food



7 According to a recent analysis, in 25 developing countries with records of high success in reducing poverty, per worker GDP in agriculture grew where the workforce was stable or growing. This finding puts into question the necessity to reduce surplus labour in agriculture to promote poverty reduction (Dewbre et al, 2011).

8 For further information see: Quiñones, E. J., de la O Campos, A. P., Rodríguez-Alas, C., Hertz, T. and P. Winters (2009): "Methodology for Creating the RIGA-L Database", prepared for the Rural Income Generating Activities (RIGA) Project of the Agricultural Development Economics Division, ESA, FAO, Rome, December, 2009.

Given the growing demand for higher-value foods, it can be expected that more labour will be needed in modern agro-industries and in the distribution and retail segments of food markets (ILO-FAO-IUF, 2007).

In general terms, most of the rural poor, particularly women and youth, are employed in the informal low-productivity segment of the economy, mainly as contributing family workers, subsistence farmers, home-based micro-entrepreneurs, low-paid unskilled seasonal or casual workers. Overall, in most developing countries, the highest risk of extreme working poverty⁹ (those workers who live on less than US\$1.25 a day) is associated with employment in agriculture.

As this section points out, there is still an enormous potential for increasing the returns to labour for small-scale producers and within SMAEs and producers' organizations. Also, by creating more and better employment opportunities in the agricultural sector, farming can become more attractive to youth of legal working age, thus contributing to better management of rural labour mobility and increased youth participation in sustainable food production.

1.2 More and better employment in rural areas for greater access to food

Employment represents the single most important source of income for the majority of people – either directly through their participation in the labour market, or indirectly through their membership in households sustained by earnings from employment (UNRISD, 2011).

Poor rural people rely mainly on the use of their labour as their main productive asset for earning their livelihoods and gaining access to food, also because of the limited access to other productive assets and the limited coverage of social protection. The income that rural workers derive from their labour depends to a large extent on their portfolio of assets, including physical and financial assets, human and social capital, as well as on the quantity of labour with which the household is endowed. If either the quantity or the rate of return to labour is low, a worker is likely to live in poverty. **The quality of employment is also of crucial importance, since it directly influences productivity, in some cases more than the average skills of agricultural workers** (FAO, 2010c, p. 25).

Currently, several decent work deficits affect rural labour markets and jeopardize the returns to labour of rural people. **Most rural jobs simply do not ensure adequate levels of income for workers to afford access to food for themselves and their families.** Farming in much of Africa and Asia rarely generates more than US\$750 per worker per year (ODI, 2007). This is due to low productivity, low levels of pay, underemployment or various forms of exploitation. Shares of working poverty (below US\$2 a day) remain high in predominantly rural regions such as sub-Saharan Africa (62 percent) and South Asia (67 percent) (ILO, 2012a) where the workforce is mostly engaged in the agricultural sector (up to 75 percent in Eastern Africa and more than 50 percent in Central Africa and South Asia) (FAOSTAT).

⁹ The working poor are defined as those individuals who are (i) employed and (ii) living in households whose income or consumption levels fall below a poverty threshold. The working poverty rate is the number of working poor in a particular employment category expressed as a percentage of the total number of people in the same employment category. This indicates the likelihood that workers in particular types of employment will live in income- or consumption-poverty. For instance, the 2011 UN Research Institute for Rural Development (UNRISD) report “Combating Poverty and Inequality” uses Brazil and Kenya to illustrate the relationship. In both countries, working poor poverty rates tend to be higher in agricultural versus non-agricultural employment, and in informal versus formal employment. Poverty rates for self-employed workers in the formal sector and outside of agriculture are lowest, on average. Overall, the highest risk of poverty is associated with agricultural employment. For more information, see also the estimates for working poverty in the ILO Global Employment Trends 2012 and the findings of the FAO/WB RIGA project (www.fao.org/economic/riga/en/).

Work in agriculture also includes hazardous activities and exposure to poor health, safety and environmental conditions. The consequences, together with the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS, malaria, malnutrition and other major diseases in rural areas, have a dramatic effect on labour productivity and the livelihoods of the poor. At least 170,000 agricultural workers are killed each year (ILO, 2011f). In particular, exposure to agrochemicals poses a very high health risk in agricultural work. Between one and three agricultural workers per every one hundred worldwide suffer from acute pesticide poisoning, with adolescents disproportionately affected (UNEP, 2004).

Due to its largely informal nature, and other reasons, rural work is seldom covered by national labour legislation, in law and in practice. Small scale producers and rural workers, especially children, youth, women and migrant workers, suffer from limited access to social protection, such as benefits associated with unemployment or inability to work such as pregnancy, sickness, disability or age.

Globally, women benefit less than men from rural employment, mirroring a broader context of gender inequalities which negatively affect the intra-household division of labour and bargaining power, as well as the value given to different types of work. Almost 70 percent of employed women in Southern Asia and more than 60 percent of employed women in sub-Saharan Africa work in agriculture (FAO, 2011a, p. 16).¹⁰ Women constitute a significant proportion of contributing family workers. They are less likely to engage in wage employment than men, and, when they do, they are more likely to hold part-time, seasonal and/or low-paying jobs in the informal economy. Nevertheless, differences exist across regions and sectors (see also FAO-ILO-IFAD, 2010a, 2010b). For instance, women workers dominate many commercial value chains for high-value products such as fresh fruit, vegetables, flowers and livestock products, particularly in Africa and Latin America. Although



Fair trade flower industry in Ethiopia (Golden Rose Agrofarms Ltd)

equal terms of employment for women and men may still not apply, modern chains often provide better wages and working conditions for women than traditional agricultural employment.¹¹

Women have generally been more affected by the rise in informal employment resulting from economic liberalisation (UNRISD, 2011). Women also tend to be paid less than men for equivalent jobs and comparable levels of education and experience (FAO, 2011a, p. 18). Large work burdens of women also need to be accounted for: due to competing demands of care responsibility and productive work, they face limitations to the time and energy they can dedicate to economic activities.¹²

Lack of employment opportunities and high underemployment rates for rural youth are other major employment issues in rural areas with deep social equity implications. **Youth unemployment rates are almost 3 times higher than those of adults.** They range from nearly 2 times higher in sub-Saharan Africa to 5 times higher in South-East Asia (ILO 2010b). In 2011, almost 75 million youth aged 15-24 were unemployed, accounting for almost 38 percent of total unemployment (ILO, 2012a).

¹⁰ A major exception is Latin America, where agriculture provides a relatively small source of female employment and women are less likely than men to work in the sector.

¹¹ In Senegal, for instance, the growth of modern horticulture supply chains and employment in large-scale estate production and agro-industrial processing has been associated with direct beneficial effects for rural women and reduced gender inequalities, more than traditional agricultural work and high-value smallholder contract-farming in which women often provide unpaid family labour (FAO, 2011a). Similarly, in Kenya, where agricultural employment accounts for a larger share of women's employment than that of men, the rapid expansion of horticultural production spurred growth in production of smallholder farms together with an increase in the number of workers on large commercial operations. However, the absolute numbers were limited compared to the employment challenge Kenya currently faces, in addition to the fact that many of the jobs generated are casual and seasonal (UNRISD, 2011).

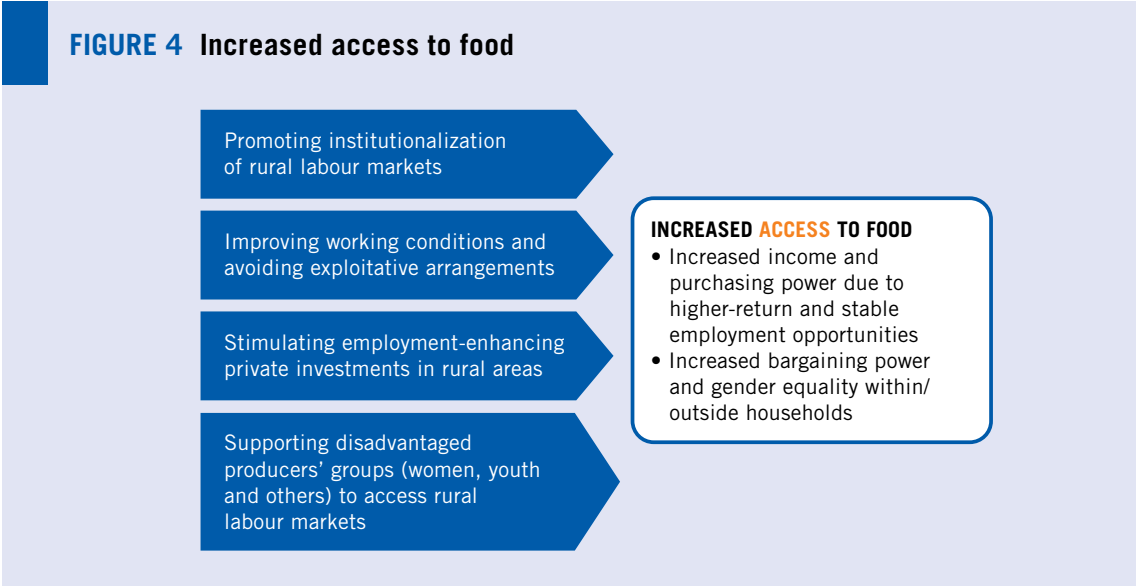
¹² Moreover, women in rural areas tend to have less access than men to productive resources (inputs, assets and services) and opportunities, as well as less education and access to social protection (See also FAO, 2011a).

In addition, young rural women and men in many developing and transition economies are particularly vulnerable to underemployment and poor working conditions. This is due to the fact that poverty and lack of social protection leave youth with little option but to accept low-productivity vulnerable employment. Across countries for which sector-level data are available, 70 percent of young people work in agriculture. Youth are often contributing family workers in subsistence agriculture. Otherwise, they tend to engage in vulnerable own-account, casual or seasonal wage work in the informal economy with low pay, low job security and no social protection. Youth have few chances of obtaining paid employment in the formal sector in rural areas (ILO, 2010b). Not surprisingly, **working poverty rates among youth exceed the corresponding adult rates** in almost all the countries for which data are available¹³ (ILO, 2012). Many young people see rural out-migration, including temporary migration and daily commuting from villages to urban centres, as their only way to escape poverty. Rural-to-urban migrants add pressure to already saturated job markets in urban areas, placing downward pressure on earnings and increasing informal employment (UNRISD, 2011). The challenge of youth employment has an important gender dimension, since **young women encounter even**

more difficulties finding decent jobs than young men (ILO, 2010b). Labour force participation rates for young women are lower than for young men in all regions except East Asia. Differentials are still huge in South Asia (37 points), and the Middle East and North Africa (around 29 points), mainly reflecting cultural traditions (ILO, 2010b).

Youth unemployment and underemployment in rural areas represent missed opportunities to harness the investment in the human capital of future generations. They prevent today's young women and men from providing decent livelihoods for their future families and breaking the poverty cycle. Harnessing the “youth bulge” energy, ambitions and capacity to innovate in the agricultural sector is a strategic choice towards any projected sustainable increase in food production.

These compelling facts show that there is a real need for more and better rural jobs to generate higher incomes and increase access to food in rural areas. Both on-farm and non-farm employment opportunities should be explored. Many workers and households already engage in diversified activities. Income gains at the household level are generally associated with a shift towards employment opportunities in the non-farm sector. Many rural households obtain their revenues both from rural and urban areas



¹³ In Bhutan, the working poverty rate among youth exceeded the adult rate by more than 10 percentage points, and the youth working poverty rate exceeded the adult rate by 5 percentage points or more in Bolivia, the Republic of Congo, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Sierra Leone, Togo and Viet Nam (ILO/WB collaboration, ILO GET Youth 2010).

TABLE 1 Key employment indicators, by regions

Region	Extreme rural poverty (<US\$1.25/day, in %)	Share of working poor (<US\$1.25/day, in %)	Employment shares in agriculture (%)	Female employment shares in agriculture (%)	Youth unemployment rate (%)	Adults unemployment rate (%)	Child labour (aged 5-17, in %)
Latin America and Caribbean	8.8	6.9	14.8	20.9	15.7	5.7	10.0
East Europe and Central Asia	3.7	4.3 ^a	9.4 ^b 20.5 ^c	28.5 ^b 41.0 ^c	20.8 ^a	8.5 ^a	...
Middle East	3.6 ^d	5.9	19.2 ^e	47.9^e	24.9	6.4	...
North Africa	3.6 ^d	16.1	28.3	42.8	23.4	6.2	...
South-East Asia and Pacific	25.6	22.6	46.8	42.5	13.9	3.1	13.3^f
South Asia	45.2	43.5	51.1	34.9	9.9	2.8	
sub-Saharan Africa	61.6	58.5	58.4	48.7	12.1	6.3	25.3
World	34.2	20.7	39.9	42.7	12.8	4.8	13.6

Sources: FAO 2011, IFAD 2010, ILO 2011; 2010

a: Central and South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) and CIS; b: Eastern Europe; c: Central Asia; d: Middle East and North Africa; e: Western Asia; f: Asia and the Pacific

and from multiple locations and countries, by engaging in temporary forms of migration, such as seasonal or circular migration.¹⁴ In Asia and Latin America, a large proportion of the rural labour force is already working full or part-time in non-agricultural jobs.¹⁵ **Until 2050, despite**

urbanization, rural populations will grow faster than employment in primary agriculture, which is typically the case in transforming countries. Highly productive non-farm work in rural areas can offer the poor a potential escape route from poverty (World Bank, 2008).¹⁶

14 The International Organization for Migration (IOM) defines circular migration as the fluid movement of people between countries, including temporary or long-term movement which may be beneficial to all involved, if occurring voluntarily and linked to the labour needs of countries of origin and destination (See also: IOM Key Migration Terms: www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/about-migration/key-migration-terms).

15 In most of the 15 countries analyzed based on RIGA data, between 30 and 60 percent of rural households depend on at least two sources of income to make up three-quarters of their total income. On-farm production is a particularly important income source in sub-Saharan Africa (between 40 and 70 percent of rural households earn more than three-quarters of their income from on-farm sources). In other regions, livelihoods are more diversified: in Asia, between 10 and 50 percent earn more than three-quarters of their income from on-farm sources (in India, for example, only 1 in 5 agricultural households now earns all of their income from agriculture), while in Latin America the rate is only 10 to 20 percent. Yet, while specialization in agriculture may be the exception rather than the rule in much of the world, agriculture continues to play a key role in the economic portfolios of rural households: in 11 of the 15 sample countries, about 80 percent of rural households continue to engage in farm activities of some sort, even if it is only part-time and to grow some of their own food requirements (IFAD, 2010, p. 54, based on RIGA data).

16 Among other factors, this will hinge also upon the achievement of higher levels of skills and education with each additional year of education increasing the probability of obtaining high productivity employment by 1 to 4 percent. Using nationally-representative data from 14 developing countries, Winters et al. 2008 (pp. 13-14) explore rural wage employment and its potential as a mechanism for improving the well being of the rural population. In particular, the evidence points to educational and infrastructure investment as critical for providing opportunities in the labour market that lead to higher wages.



Preparing food with maize and chickpeas in Bangladesh

1.3 Decent rural employment for improved food utilization

Sufficient energy and nutrient intake by individuals is the result of good care and feeding practices, food preparation, and diversity of the diet and intra-household distribution of food (FAO, 2008).

Decent work enables people to access food that is nutritious and diverse, providing healthy diets for themselves and their families.¹⁷

Low incomes and working poverty, associated with low quality jobs and vulnerable employment, hamper access to adequate and nutritious food, all of which translate ultimately into low labour productivity. These effects are exacerbated in a context of crisis. For example, opting for cheaper but less nutritious or unsafe food was one of the most common categories of behavioural change reported among the poor during the 2007/08 food price crisis (Compton et al., 2010). This is due to the fact that many vulnerable workers are also net food buyers.

Impacts of malnutrition need also to be considered in contexts of agricultural modernization. Poor nutritional status not only reduces a person's output, it may also prevent workers from carrying out

certain tasks. It can also limit productivity indirectly through absenteeism and reduced employment opportunities (FAO SOFA, 2001). The pervasive precariousness which characterizes employment in agriculture and rural areas leads to a combination of malnutrition, general and occupational diseases, and complications arising from undiagnosed and untreated diseases (ILO, 2011g, p. 9).

On the contrary, promoting decent employment in food and agricultural systems can be functional to improve nutrition. Gainful employment increases disposable income with immediate effects in improving households' access to food. A decent work approach, by promoting safe work and protecting workers' health, also contributes to redress the vicious circle of low productivity, low wages, malnutrition, ill-health and low working capacity. At the macro level, improved nutrition and better health feed back into economic growth through improvements in human capital formation and productivity.

Economic growth also has important effects in changing incomes and employment patterns and thereby in food utilization. In particular, economic growth and the likely consequent rural transformation will imply important changes with direct impact on labour issues, such as less own production, more wage employment, increased time out of the household, and indirectly also on nutrition outcomes. The effects on food utilization for workers and their families may be both positive and negative, and therefore need to be carefully monitored.

Potential negative effects on food utilization due to the increase of people's time burden should be considered, particularly with regards to women (World Bank, 2007b). There can be a possible decline in the time devoted to preparation of food and child care. In fact, women are increasingly active in the labour market, but they are also responsible for the bulk of unpaid care work across all economies and cultures.¹⁸ Time-use surveys across a wide range of countries estimate that women provide 85- 90 percent of the time spent on household food preparation (FAO, 2011a). These

¹⁷ While it is acknowledged that intra-household food distribution patterns and practices are often influenced by other variables too, for the purposes of the present document, focus is on aspects related to employment.

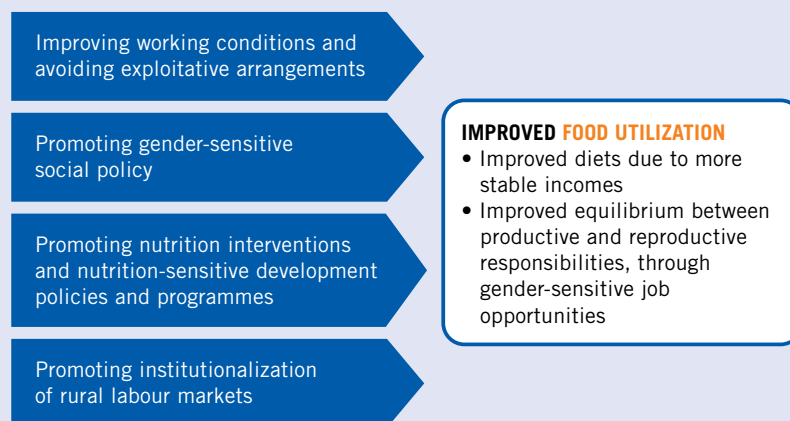
long hours dedicated to unpaid care work are often undervalued even if they are crucial to wellbeing and fuel economic growth through the reproduction of a healthy and active labour force. If such work was assigned a monetary value, it would constitute between 10 and 40 percent of a country's GDP (UNRISD, 2011).

If rural growth promotes the incorporation of women into paid work without ensuring quality jobs, adequate social services and infrastructure, and a fairer distribution of care work within the household, there is a serious risk of generating care deficits that negatively affect food utilization. Women's access to employment outside the family farm can significantly contribute to their own empowerment and greater status and power within the household. It also has a higher probability of increasing the share of household expenditures devoted to collective goods benefiting all household members (in particular

children and the elderly) than income earned by men, who tend to use it more often to meet personal needs (FAO-ILO-IFAD, 2010a, 2010b). For these potential positive effects on food utilization not to be cancelled out by care deficits, rural employment creation has to be gender-aware and complemented with adequate social protection and care services in order to reduce women's domestic and care burden.

Good jobs do not always automatically ensure good nutrition outcomes. Hence, policies and interventions aiming to promote DRE should optimize synergies with nutrition-enhancing interventions. In particular, such synergies could be established with interventions directed to ensure food safety and quality along the food chain (especially if they include skills upgrading for workers) and also through joint targeting of vulnerable households and population groups, such as women and children.

FIGURE 5 Improved food utilization



18 Increased work effort both in productive and care activities can be detrimental to their nutritional status if there is no increase in their caloric intake corresponding to the energy needs required to undertake this increased work effort (Higgins and Alderman, 1997).



Woman worker in a sardine factory in Morocco

1.4 Decent and secure rural employment for food stability over time

Too often, employment arrangements for rural people fail to offer basic social protection and safety nets. Along with generally low returns to labour, this makes rural households particularly vulnerable to shocks, undermining their ability to maintain a stable level and quality of food consumption. Decent work is a compulsory step for any strategy to build household resilience and thus improve food stability.¹⁹

Better and more secure employment is a powerful means to reduce poor people's vulnerability by reducing the risks faced by households and enhancing their capacity to manage risks and disruptive events. Households can thus avoid coping strategies that entail reducing expenditure in other basic needs (such as education, health and housing) and selling important assets (such as cattle), as such strategies can have negative and irreversible impacts in post-crisis recovery and future well-being.

Enhancing and securing the incomes of households is crucial for them to meet their overall livelihood needs. In particular, access to high-return non-farm employment opportunities can improve households' ability to stabilize food supplies where income and production are seasonal. Diversification through participation in the rural non-farm economy is an increasingly important element of the risk management strategies of rural households. Jobs in the rural non-farm economy are an important route out of poverty for growing numbers of rural people, particularly for youth (IFAD, 2010). More dynamic rural labour markets can support families in quickly regaining an adequate food supply in case of a shortfall. For instance, in the context of the 2007/08 food price spike, over a quarter of the households surveyed in various countries reported to be working harder, sending more family members out to work or looking for additional jobs (Compton et al., 2010).²⁰ **Similar coping strategies entail high risks of creating care deficits with negative impacts on nutrition outcomes.** Situations of economic strain tend to push poor rural women into hard, agricultural, informal and casual wage work. This can also have potential negative effects on food utilization due to the increase in women's total time burden.

Furthermore, **promoting DRE involves enhancing access to basic social protection, including safety nets schemes.** According to ILO estimates, around 80 percent of the world population lacks access to adequate social protection and more than half lack any coverage at all.²¹ The current lack of adequate access to social services and buffer mechanisms, faced by the majority of rural workers, can make a sudden reduction in income catastrophic for their survival. The lack of social infrastructure and remuneration for unpaid care work undertaken mainly by women and girls hamper their current and future participation in formal labour markets. Hence, access to and coverage of social protection is crucial for the rural poor to better cope with income fluctuations. Social protection can thus enable farmers to make more productive

¹⁹ Stability refers here to the need of a population, household or individual to have access to adequate food at all times. This means they must not risk losing their access to food as a consequence of sudden shocks (economic or climatic crises) or cyclical events (seasonal food shortages) (Stamoulis and Zezza, 2003). Considering food stability shifts attention to risk and vulnerability and to finding ways to make households and food systems more resilient in contexts of uncertainty.

²⁰ During the recent crisis, in countries as diverse as Burkina Faso, Nepal and Cambodia, some poor people turned to hard and poorly-paid tasks like cutting firewood, making charcoal, breaking stones or carrying sand (Compton et al., 2010. p. 38).

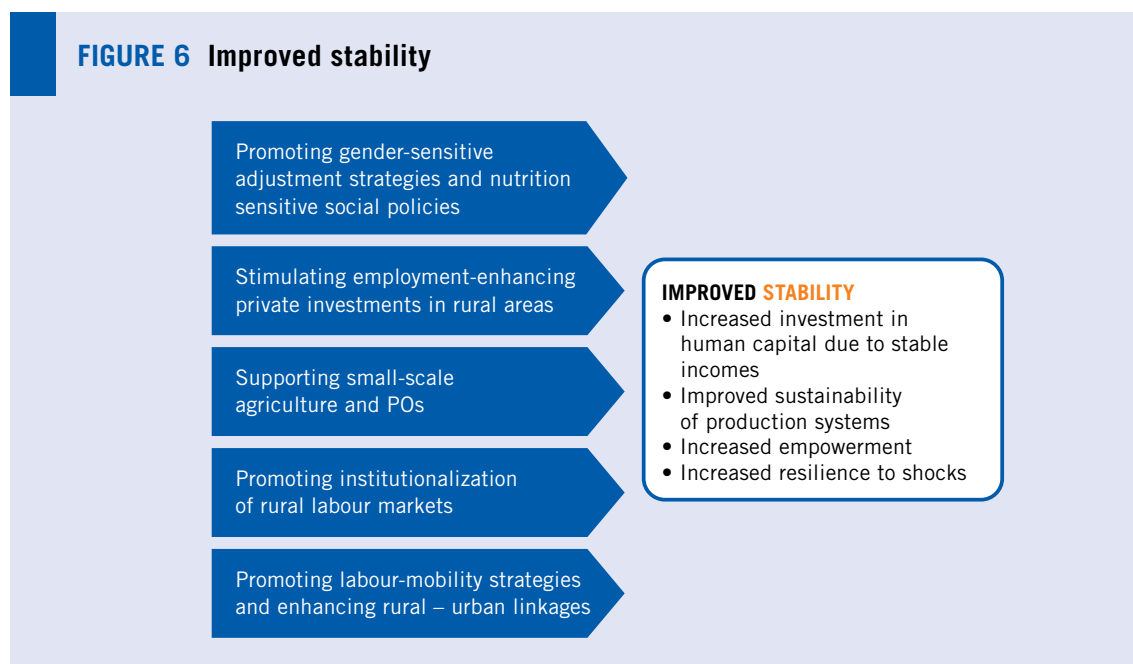
²¹ In the context of the global economic and financial crisis and growing food price volatility, there has been increasing interest in establishing universal provision of social protection, as a right. This is of outmost importance to ensure an equitable structural transformation, to reduce gender inequalities and protect all segments of the population that cannot or should not participate in paid employment. Even when employment levels are high, complementary social policies need to be in place. For more information on Social Security and Social Protection Floor (SPF) visit the Global Extension of Social Security (GESS) platform, developed and run by the [ILO Social Security Department](#).

investments that will translate into asset building and increased productivity,²² and ultimately into longer-term benefits of poverty reduction and better environmental management (Slater and Mc Cord, 2009, pp. 24-25).

For instance, **employment-based safety nets, such as public works**, give households access to some buffer mechanism to reduce temporary food-supply deficits. By integrating more developmental objectives into the conception of employment-based safety nets which are guided by principles of justice and equity, governments can also reach longer term impacts in terms of food security. For instance, by establishing guarantee programmes like in South Asia (see blue box on page 30), by supporting capacity building, by actively promoting women and youth engagement or fostering group cooperation and by facilitating access to credit and other productive resources.

In the long term, a crucial aspect to take into account is that the manner in which food is procured should not reduce the productive capacity of the household. **A dramatic example of disinvestment in human capital, which precludes the social sustainability of smallholder production, is child labour.** Worldwide, 215 million children aged between 5-17 years²³ are child labourers. A staggering 60 percent of them **work in agriculture** (ILO, 2010a). Furthermore, around 59 percent of *hazardous*²⁴ child labour is estimated to be in agriculture (*ibid*). When child labour occurs as a cheap alternative to adult labour, this leads to low-paying jobs and low bargaining capacity for adults as well. Involvement in child labour is detrimental to investment in human capital in the short-run, and in the medium and long run decreases the chances of decent youth and adult employment and perpetuates low agricultural

FIGURE 6 Improved stability



22 Social protection, and in particular cash transfers, prove to have a significant impact on enhancing productivity and market integration of smallholders. Cash transfers influence the livelihood strategies of the poor, who in rural areas usually depend on smallholder agriculture. Cash transfers are increasingly one of the most important types of safety net programs in sub-Saharan Africa. In view of that, FAO's programme "From Protection to Production" is drawing relevant evidence for policy about the impacts of six cash transfers schemes in Africa on investment and production. For more information see: www.fao.org/economic/PtoP/en/

23 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child defines "children" as persons up to the age of 18. For the purposes of legal age for employment, the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) specifies that the general minimum age for admission to any employment should be not less than 15. Where the economy and educational facilities of a country are insufficiently developed, it may be initially reduced to 14. Main exceptions to this general rule are: (a) Light work, which is permissible on a set of conditions and for which the minimum age may be set at 12 or 13 years; (b) Hazardous work for which a higher minimum age is required (18). Child labourers are therefore a subset of children in employment. For child labourers in the age group 15-18, accessing decent employment opportunities would mean moving out from child labour into youth employment (e.g. through interventions that make their work safe instead of hazardous or through providing them with alternatives in non-hazardous work).

24 Hazardous work is often known as the "3Ds" – dirty, difficult and dangerous jobs. Occupational deaths, injuries and work-related illnesses as a result of hazardous work take a particularly heavy toll in developing countries, where technical and occupational capacities to maintain effective Occupational Health and Safety (OSH) systems are often inadequate. (ILO, Hazardous work webpage www.ilo.org/safework/areasofwork/hazardous-work/lang--en/index.htm)

25 See also section on Child labour in the joint FAO-ILO website: www.fao-ilo.org/fao-ilo-child/

productivity. This is a huge waste of productive resources and a personal tragedy for millions of young people. Working long hours in the field undermines children and young people's ability to attend school or skills training and prevents them from gaining education, compromising their future productivity, employment prospects and general wellbeing.²⁵

Beyond the household level, employment-centred responses are necessary to build long-term resilience at the macro level, to contribute to more performing rural economies and ultimately to achieve more sustainable global food security. **Stability relates to sustainability and therefore to social change and future generations, as well as to the need for sustainable natural resource management. It is linked with systemic capacity of auto-reproduction, innovation and growth in order to protect and increase future productivity.** DRE can contribute to enhancing such systemic capacity. It is an investment in the human capital of a society which can lead to a more educated, skilled, healthy, fulfilled and therefore productive workforce.

Also, DRE can contribute to the sustainable management of natural resources, for instance, by creating alternative sources of subsistence and contributing to reduce overexploitation of the natural resource base. When livelihoods derive from increasing the value of natural resource-based activities, this can directly contribute to protecting and restoring ecosystems and/or creating incentives for community based nature conservation (UNEP, 2004b; SCBD, UNEP, 2011). Furthermore, transitioning to a green economy is projected to generate more employment. Investments aimed at greening agriculture are expected to create 47 million additional jobs compared with the *business as usual* scenario in the next 40 years (UNEP, 2011). Applying green agricultural methods can become a key driver to reduce both environmental degradation and poverty, by increasing farm yields and return on

labour, while improving ecosystem services – thus also securing the livelihoods of poor people who directly depend on them. To truly contribute to sustainability, the greening of economies should however ensure a “just transition”.²⁶ It should not only result in a positive net balance in terms of employment creation, but also be relevant in terms of decent work enhancement. Priority areas to be addressed include ensuring living wages, occupational health and safety, social protection and freedom of association, and reducing and preventing child labour (ILO, 2011c).

Finally, employment is a main channel through which additional income generated by growth can be widely distributed throughout a population (UNRISD, 2011), thus contributing to reverse the trend of rising inequalities. Inequality inhibits poverty reduction even when economies are growing, since exclusion limits poor people's self-reliance in accessing food, as well as their potential contribution to growth and aggregate demand, reducing the potential size of the domestic market and hindering the potential for industrialization (ibid).

Figure 7 synthesizes the role played by DRE as a nexus between agriculture and rural growth and food security, as described in the previous sections. A vibrant and dynamic agriculture sector is considered as a necessary *precondition* for any employment-centred rural transition. Due to increasing backward and forward linkages²⁷ between the farm and the non-farm sectors as well as between rural and urban areas, the Rural Non-Farm Economy (RNFE) flourishes. Access to markets and linkages between rural areas and urban areas are expected to increase over time opening to competition and also to new opportunities. The employment implications of this process are multiple and should be adequately harnessed to foster inclusive structural transformations and food security. Employment-centred policies for agriculture and rural development (blue arrows

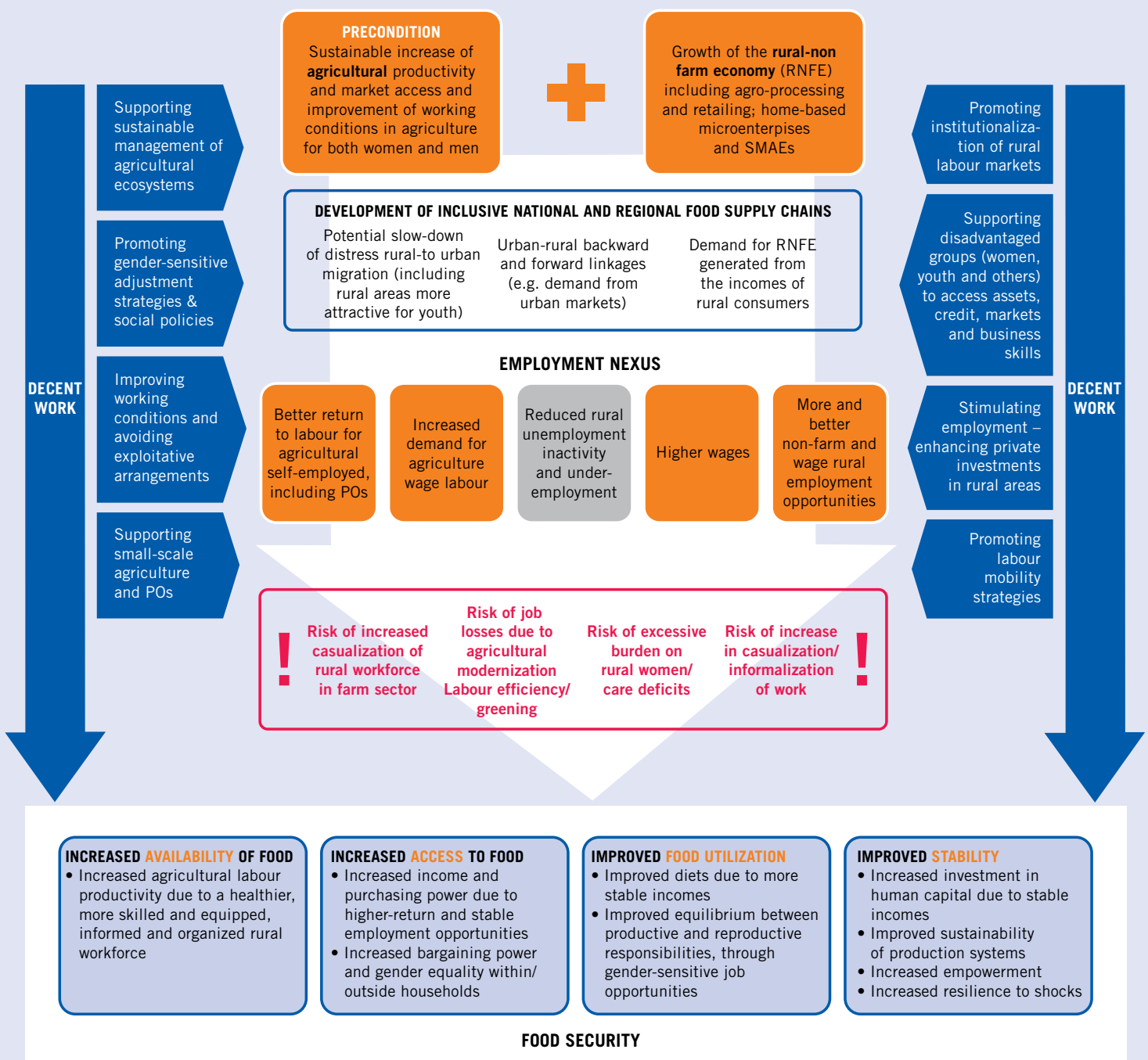
26 The “Just Transition” strategy originated in the trade union movement and has now been adopted by other community and NGO groups, UN agencies and governments, among others, as an instrument for workers and communities to claim and ensure attention for their transitional needs in the transformations towards a low-carbon and climate-resilient society (ILO, 2010c).

27 There are two major types of farm/non-farm linkages: production and expenditure. Production linkages can be further divided into backward and forward linkages. Backward production linkages refer to linkages from the farm to the part of the non-farm sector that provides inputs for agricultural production, for example agrochemicals. Forward production linkages refer to the part of the non-farm sector that uses agricultural output as an input, such as the distribution and processing of agricultural outputs. Expenditure linkages refer to the fact that households deriving income from one type of activity, farm or non-farm, are likely to spend that income on products of other activities. Farmers buy non-farm products with income generated from agriculture. Local entrepreneurs and wage earners use income from the sale of non-farm products to buy food and other agricultural outputs. Expenditure linkages can be divided into consumption and investment linkages. Consumption linkages refer to expenditures related to household consumption; investment linkages refer to expenditure used to finance farm or non-farm activities. Investment linkages can be particularly important within households. Returns on farm activities may be invested to initiate or expand non-farm activities and vice versa (FAO, 2002).

on the sides) can be crucial drivers to increase returns to labour, lower unemployment and underemployment, and higher wages (centre of the graph). There are also risks to be considered, which if not adequately addressed by policies, may hinder the potential of DRE for achieving food security. For instance, interventions must take into account the risks of increased casualization of labour and of

excessive burdens on rural women. **This Case for Action strongly argues that by carefully factoring in employment aspects, agriculture and rural development policies, strategies and investments can have a tremendous potential to positively affect the four dimensions of food security and lead to a significant reduction of poverty and greater levels of social and gender equality.**

FIGURE 7 Promoting employment-centred rural growth for food security





2 Leveraging decent rural employment for food security and poverty reduction: Opportunities for expanding FAO's engagement

Ensuring the access of both women and men to decent employment opportunities in rural areas is one of the greatest challenges facing governments and development partners, including FAO. To address it, increased investments in sustainable agricultural production should go hand-in-hand with comprehensive environmental, industrial, employment and social policies for more integrated approaches to rural development, which tackle the root causes of food insecurity. Good governance and territorial approaches are increasingly required to link the macro level with the intermediate and local ones. Involving the private sector, supporting

inter-ministerial and multi-stakeholder mechanisms to foster more inter-sectoral approaches, empowering civil societies and their organizations, and promoting UN-wide coherent approaches will be of foremost importance.

A strategic approach on decent rural employment (DRE) promotion is needed to address all these dimensions in a holistic manner. It should build on Agricultural and Rural Development (ARD) stakeholders', including FAO²⁸, comparative advantages and existing work, taking due account of the diverse priorities and challenges across regions.

FIGURE 7 Priority themes

- 1 Promotion of **employment-centered responsible agro-investments** towards sustainable rural development and food security for all
- 2 Support to **gender and age-disaggregated analysis** of rural labour markets and conditions of employment in the informal rural economy
- 3 Promotion of **decent work conditions in agriculture** by pooling and increasing current efforts of the organization towards more socially sustainable agricultural production
- 4 Advocacy for the centrality of DRE promotion for adapting and coping with **disasters, economic crises and other emergencies**

28 Looking at FAO, in particular, many of its interventions already promote decent work standards in rural areas. FAO supports the adoption of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), and other voluntary standards and inclusive business models for small farmers and SMAEs to avoid being trapped in subsistence production and to participate more in modern value chains. The Market Analysis and Development (MAD) approach for forest and tree-based enterprises focuses on those small entrepreneurs who are trying to make a decent living of the natural resources around them. FAO provides policy advice and capacity development on how to foster gender equality in agricultural and rural development. FAO works to strengthen national capacities to reduce and prevent child labour in agriculture.



Women's cooperative preparing and canning olives.

Four priority themes are here suggested. They have been identified based on the challenges in rural labour markets identified in the first part of this document and considering FAO's core functions, comparative advantage and its work to date on rural employment and decent work.

The priority themes suggested here are aligned to the conclusions of the recent Evaluation of FAO's Role and Work in Food and Agriculture Policy (2011), which called on the Organization

to strengthen the delivery of its policy work at the country level. The main aim of the entire strategic plan is to transform knowledge (global and country-level) into policy assistance and action in order to promote DRE for food security.

2.1 Priority theme 1

Promotion of employment-centred responsible agro-investments towards sustainable rural development and food security for all

- Investments in agriculture can significantly contribute to reducing poverty, ensuring food security and promoting growth that is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. For agricultural investment to reach this potential, it is important to favour programmes with large impacts on decent employment. To achieve that, **social analysis for responsible agricultural investments should make explicit all relevant employment-aspects.**
- Ensuring equitable access between women and men producers to productive resources and services would raise total agricultural output in developing countries, while contributing to poverty reduction, improved health, wellbeing and nutritional status. **Closing the gender gap in agriculture and in rural labour markets therefore represents a major priority in the FAO DRE plan of action.**

Closing the gender gap in agriculture and rural labour markets

Unleashing rural women's socio-economic potential involves tackling a number of decent work deficits: low productivity and low income jobs, lack of social protection, lack of basic work rights, and insufficient voice and representation. FAO is committed to promoting gender-equitable and decent employment in rural areas. Gender equality is mainstreamed in all activities related to rural employment and decent work. In collaboration with IFAD and the ILO, FAO released in 2010 a comprehensive publication entitled "Gender dimensions of agricultural and rural employment: Differentiated pathways out of poverty" and a set of policy briefs on gender and rural employment. This effort is a first step in providing policy makers, development practitioners, civil society and private sector organizations, workers' and employers' organizations, the UN, donors and researchers, up-to-date analyses of these issues, examples of innovative success stories and a menu of policy options.

Furthermore, FAO's 2010-11 flagship publication "State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA) – Women in agriculture: Closing the gender gap for development" demonstrated that achieving gender equality and empowering women is particularly crucial for agricultural development and food security. The SOFA findings confirm that one of the reasons for the underperformance of the agriculture sector in many developing countries is that women do not have equal access to the productive resources, education and extension services they need to be more productive. Also, female-headed households face more severe labour constraints than male-headed households because they typically have fewer members but more dependants.

For further information: www.fao-ilo.org and www.fao.org/publications/sofa/en/

- Furthermore, there should be a balance between investment in physical capital and human capital. Investment in the latter is necessary for small scale producers and rural workers to have the requisite skills to uptake modern agricultural technologies. **Hence, rural education, vocational training and agricultural extension services** need to be upgraded, with a special eye on the different needs of rural women and men, youth and adults. In particular, improved training opportunities, which match labour demand needs, can help to attract young people to a modern agricultural sector which is linked with the non-farm economy and prioritizes innovation and sustainability.
- Employment-centred agro-investments can also contribute to the sustainable management of natural resources. For instance, they can contribute to diversify the sources of subsistence among the rural poor and to reduce overexploitation of the natural resource base, and also enhance community based nature conservation. Hence, an emerging area of work will be examining the **important linkages between labour, environmental sustainability, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and the management of natural resources** (e.g. exploring the linkages between access to land and labour productivity in a context of increasing climate hazards).

Promoting small and medium agro-enterprises

An increasingly important aspect of FAO's work is to support SMAEs, given their importance for linking farmers to markets and creating non-farm employment opportunities for the rural poor. However, the role of firms in rural development and job creation is often not given due credit and recognition. In addition, the regulation of SMAEs often falls between policy mandates and therefore receives little attention from the ministries of agriculture and trade and is often overlooked by development agencies that tend to primarily focus on more disadvantaged groups. To understand more specifically the challenges faced and the strategies required to overcome the constraints experienced by small and medium agro enterprises (SMAEs), FAO organized a number of regional "Agribusiness Roundtables" with SMAEs managers in developing countries, with interesting lessons:

1. SMAEs usually start as family-type businesses, using personal savings and loans, based on a vision and the need to generate income and wealth for the nuclear and extended family. Capitalization and access to finance is always an issue since there are few commercial banking options to choose from and unreasonably high interest rates and loan criteria.
2. Large seasonal variations in employment and pressure from extended family and friends for jobs are daily stresses but also motivating factors for owners and managers. The overregulation and bureaucracy that SMAEs face, however, discourage them from formalizing their businesses.
3. Women family members are often involved in management decisions and the overall running of the family business. In bigger firms women also form a large percentage of the workforce and receive a higher wage than from on-farm or village work.
4. The inadequacy, unreliability and cost of utilities infrastructure (power and water) is a major source of unforeseen costs affecting long-term competitiveness that needs to be addressed under policies to create an enabling environment for business.
5. Smallholder inability to produce, plan and market collectively is a serious procurement impediment for small firms wanting to do business with small farmers. To address this issue, some firms have invested their own resources in small farmer-organization schemes and on-farm technical assistance to improve supplies.
6. SMAEs often operate in a niche market internationally but may have a lot of potential domestically. As such, they are often threatened by cheaper international imports and require support with market development in developing brands to build up a reliable and loyal customer base.
7. Business is also highly dependent on a minimum standard quality product, but small companies cannot afford the certification fees charged to large firms. Yet, with assistance, locally customized quality-management schemes can be put in place.
8. Operations and transport can be a company's highest cost factor. With support to post-harvest and logistics systems, a small company can nonetheless address a great deal of waste and inefficiency, transforming this aspect of the business into a comparative advantage.

- Agro-investments should favour opportunities for agribusiness development which foster job creation and **inclusive business models** in rural areas, especially linking smallholders, SMAEs and producers' organizations to modern value chains. Comprehensive analyses are needed of the social effects of value chain development (on gender equality, employment, poverty reduction, youth involvement, etc). Enabling women and youth entrepreneurship and group cooperation will also be of particular importance to materialize their economic potential (e.g. by promoting technical skills and business training to empower them, supporting their access to financial and non-financial business services as well as promoting inclusive standards and labels as a means of adding value).
- Overall, creating more and better **employment opportunities for rural youth**, both in agriculture and in the non-farm economy, should be identified as a priority in ARD strategies and programmes. Constraints such as difficulty in accessing land, credit and productive assets are stark for young people and particularly for young women, who often face the additional constraint of reproductive duties and domestic work burdens. These constraints call for support to young farmers and entrepreneurs through comprehensive approaches which integrate training and skills development with access to markets and support to access to business networks and groups.

Integrated country approach in Malawi and Tanzania

The FAO DRE Team (DRET) in ESW has developed an Integrated Country Approach (ICA) for the promotion of DRE. The first phase of the approach is being implemented in Malawi and Tanzania since January 2011, within the context of a three-year programme funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). In the future, the adaptation of the approach to different country and regional contexts will allow further systematization of the institutional mechanisms, methodologies and tools developed (e.g. analytical framework for policy analysis and advice; methodologies for mapping and capacity assessment; training tools for DRE strategic planning and monitoring and evaluation; institutional mechanisms for youth employment promotion; etc.). The approach has three main interlinked components: (i) Knowledge, awareness raising and mainstreaming, (ii) National capacity development and (iii) Youth employment promotion and child labour prevention. The ICA is an integral part of FAO's broader intervention logic on DRE promotion. It directly correlates to normative work, since it benefits from the production of knowledge documents and guidance materials, and enables their application in a given country context. Furthermore, the lessons learnt gained at the country level aim at improving FAO's overall promotion and mainstreaming of DRE at the global and FAO corporate levels. Partnerships are established with other UN agencies, particularly with ILO, and national and regional programmes (e.g. AU NEPAD/CAADP). Operational mechanisms are put in place for youth entrepreneurship promotion using the Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS) methodology, as well as for child labour prevention through capacity development support, under the International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture (IPPCLA).

2.2 Priority theme 2

Support to gender and age-disaggregated analysis of rural labour markets and conditions of employment in the informal rural economy

- A richer and **deeper insight into labour market complexity in rural areas** represents a major priority. Aside from generic 'gaps' relating to the quality, accuracy and timeliness of data, specific challenges limit the current analysis of rural labour markets. They relate to the lack of

workplace information in the context of small-scale agricultural settings, lack of information on under-employment and vulnerability in rural labour markets (e.g., hidden unemployment, under-utilization of skills, multiple job-holding, informal recruitment practices and networks), lack of data on rural migrants and migration flows; lack of gender and age disaggregated information and/or analysis, particularly by agricultural sub-sectors. Over the past two decades, there has been progress in

the collection of agricultural data which includes relevant socio-economic and gender information. However, much effort is still needed to take into account **gender²⁹ and age differentials**, particularly at sub-national and sub-sectoral level.

- Applied research should be further promoted on informal employment in agriculture and rural economy and on the dynamics in rural labour markets, which looks at employment patterns in key rural growth sectors. Research findings should be directly linked to employment and labour issues high on the policy agenda.

Fighting the precariousness of the rural labour market in Latin America

FAO, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the ILO teamed up to support countries in Latin America to address the precariousness of their labour markets. Despite the agricultural boom in Latin America for much of the last decade, more than half of the rural population remains poor. The three UN agencies have recently collaborated to produce a study entitled *Políticas de mercado de trabajo y pobreza rural en América Latina*. The study, which was presented in November 2010 at a regional seminar on *Labour Markets and Rural Poverty* at the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, highlights the need to enforce labour standards and to formalize employment in order to reduce poverty. The seminar brought government officials and regional leaders from agricultural workers' and employers' organizations together with experts from FAO, the ILO, ECLAC, the Latin American Center for Rural Development (RIMISP) and the Regional Unit for Technical Assistance PATH, a programme of technical cooperation in Central America with the participation of seven international development agencies (MAEC, IFAD, ADA, IDB, FAO, IFPRI and IICA). The seminar placed the issues surrounding rural labour markets firmly on the region's political agenda, by highlighting the role these issues play in the reduction of rural poverty and the importance of having strong institutions and public policies for labour markets to function better.

For further information (in Spanish) visit: www.rlc.fao.org/es/publicaciones/politicas-mercado-trabajo-y-pobreza-en-al-tl

Agricultural labour statistics

The FAO Statistics Division (ESS) compiles time-series data to support rural policy formulation and analysis. Collaboration with the ILO Department of Statistics includes both methodological work as well as preparation of statistical datasets on rural and agricultural labour. The development of a structured agricultural labour statistics framework was a joint undertaking and is currently being populated with statistics from the ILO database of labour statistics (LABORSTA) and other international or national sources.

Specifically, the World Programme for the Census of Agriculture (WCA 2010) recommends a modular approach and provides guidelines on modalities for the coordination of agriculture censuses with the population censuses. Employment concepts have been amended in line with standards of the ILO to better reflect the structure of employment in rural areas. The approach proposed by FAO for the latest round of agricultural censuses is expected to further enhance the production and use of age and sex disaggregated agricultural data, and encourages countries to provide greater insight into the roles and responsibilities of men and women in agricultural production. Countries can also refer to the Agri-Gender Toolkit and the Gender and Agricultural Statistics Framework (GASF), which both provide statistical guidelines for the production of sex-disaggregated agricultural data.

²⁹ **The Agri-Gender Toolkit** has been developed as part of FAO's general support to strengthening the capacity of national statistics systems in the framework of the 2010 round of the World Programme for the Census of Agriculture. It represents the product of a joint effort by the FAO Regional Office for Africa (FAORAF) and the FAO Statistics Division in Rome. The toolkit provides examples of questions/questionnaire components and table formats for the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated agricultural data that reflect socio-economic conditions of men and women operating in the agricultural sector. Among the items treated, some are directly related to the employment dimension of Agricultural Censuses, e.g. *Access to productive resources*, *Production and productivity*, and *Labour and time-use*. Most questions relate to subsistence and commercial farming activities carried out in small-scale agricultural production given their predominance in most African countries. A French version of the database will be available shortly and further editions will include examples from Asia and Latin America and Central and Eastern Europe. The Gender and Agricultural Statistics Framework (GASF) is a framework designed to help guide both producers and users of statistics through a series of standard stages for producing sex-disaggregated data. It comprises five steps: (1) identification of gender and agriculture issues/topics for investigation; (2) listing of relevant statistics/indicators; (3) identification of appropriate data sources; (4) data production and analysis; and (5) presentation and dissemination. The GASF draws on several existing frameworks and toolkits designed for gender and agricultural statistics, including the Agri-gender toolkit/database. In particular, the GASF builds on the Agri-gender toolkits in step 2 (listing of relevant statistics/indicators). Three National Gender Profiles of Agricultural Households of Cambodia, Lao and Vietnam (FAO, 2010) have been produced through the implementation of the GASF (www.fao.org/gender/gender-home/gender-resources/gender-publications/en/). The Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (FAOREU) will be implementing the GASF in three central Asian countries in 2012.



Training of FFS facilitators in Burundi

2.3 Priority theme 3

Promotion of decent work conditions in agriculture by pooling and increasing current efforts of the organization towards more socially sustainable agricultural production

- Of the 215 million children estimated to be child labourers, 60 percent of them are working

in agriculture. The overwhelming majority contributes to family undertakings reflecting the situation of many families and communities trapped in a vicious cycle of poverty and child labour. The ILO and FAO are founding members of the International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture. The high prevalence of **child labour in rural areas**, the under-regulation of the agriculture and domestic-work sectors, the hazardous nature of some of their work and its long-term cost, require urgent attention.

- Strengthen Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) in farm and non-farm activities to protect rural workers while improving enterprise performance will represent a key technical priority area. This would strengthen FAO's current support to sustainable intensification of production (CA, IPM, GAP, etc.) and pests and pesticides management, by strengthening its OSH dimension. Potential interventions include the introduction of community-based risk assessment mechanisms to identify and better address OSH hazards and the promotion of safer and labour-saving technologies for poor households in areas affected by HIV/AIDS and other diseases, and for reducing women's domestic burden and child labour.

Addressing child labour in fisheries and aquaculture

FAO's Fisheries and Aquaculture Department is taking the lead in collaboration with the ILO and ESW on tackling child labour in fisheries and aquaculture. A global workshop in 2010 laid the groundwork by providing a forum to exchange and discuss knowledge, experiences and good practices and to agree on a set of recommendations. Based on these recommendations, FAO and the ILO have developed a [joint Good Practice Guide for addressing child labour in fisheries and aquaculture in policy and practice \(preliminary version\)](#). They are also partnering at the national and local levels, and bringing fisheries and labour stakeholders together in workshops and training to take an integrated approach to sustainably tackle the problem. The **Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS) module on child labour prevention** will also be adapted to fishing communities in the future.

Promoting better working conditions for fishermen

Fishing at sea is probably the most dangerous occupation in the world with a fatality rate of 80 lives per 100,000 fishermen affecting the livelihoods of fishing communities. The consequences of loss of life have a profound impact on family dependents. In many developing countries, these consequences can be devastating; widows often have a low social standing, there is no welfare state to support the family and with lack of alternative sources of income, the widow and children may face destitution. Through its field programmes, FAO has been addressing the safety at sea issue which has resulted for example in: global and regional studies; promotion and awareness raising; and publications on safety at sea and related matters. FAO is also cooperating with the ILO and the IMO in developing international safety standards for fishermen and fishing vessels. The FAO safety-for-fishermen website www.safety-for-fishermen.org/en is a practical source of information and material on safety at sea in the fisheries sector that is also useful for fishermen in rural areas.

- Transitioning to a green economy is projected to generate a positive net balance in terms of employment creation. However, the new jobs will need to be also of a better quality in order to guarantee a “just transition”. FAO needs to play a major role, in collaboration with the ILO, to ensure that **climate-smart agriculture and decent work considerations are part of the same approach**.
- As a major development partner in ARD processes, FAO could also play a major role and collaborate with the ILO, in **ensuring that rural small producers and workers, particularly agricultural workers, are covered under national labour and other relevant laws and regulations, and are protected in practice**. In particular, it should be ensured that the rights of particularly vulnerable groups of rural workers, such as small farmers, migrant and casual workers, and indigenous peoples, especially girls and women, feature on the policy and programme agenda and are effectively protected.
- By capitalizing on its close relationships with main producers’ organizations and cooperatives, FAO could support the **increase of the collective organization and action of rural workers**, with a specific focus on enhancing rural women’s and youth representation. In general, FAO could have a major role in supporting governments in fostering territorial approaches and better governance, by promoting empowerment, group cooperation and collective action of rural people.
- Finally, specific strategies to **extend social protection** to small-scale producers and other vulnerable rural workers will be crucial. The current lack of adequate access to social services and buffer mechanisms faced by the majority of rural workers can make a sudden reduction in income that is catastrophic for their survival. The lack of social infrastructure and remuneration for unpaid care work undertaken mainly by women and girls hamper their current and future participation in labour markets. In agrarian economies, the strength of social policies will rely in particular on their capacity to protect and promote producers’ livelihoods and therefore to support agricultural objectives.

Bioenergy and rural employment

The bioenergy sector can create a new market for producers and offer new forms of employment, especially in the framework of small-scale, livelihood-oriented initiatives. However, large-scale bioenergy developments have become a cause for concern due to the potentially negative impacts that these developments can have on food security and the environment (mainly through resource competition), if sustainable practices are not implemented. Furthermore, the potential of biofuels to generate rural employment is still controversial, as employment opportunities have been targeted mainly to low-skilled workers employed on a seasonal or casual basis and have been linked, in some cases, to unfair employment conditions, health and safety risks, child labour and forced labour (Rossi and Lambrou, 2009).

FAO’s Bioenergy and Food Security (BEFS) Project has developed an approach to assist governments in assessing the potential for biofuel production and the risks involved. Within this approach, governments can define which actual biofuel production chains are economically viable and can have positive benefits, while highlighting potential tradeoffs. Through a detailed set up of the sector and the involvement of smallholders in the value chain, biofuel production can lead to employment generation, training of skilled and unskilled labour, and capacity building.

Biofuels *per se* are neither good nor bad, what matters is the structural set up of the sector. The **FAO Bioenergy and Food Security Criteria and Indicators (BEFSCI) Project** is developing a set of criteria, indicators, good practices and policy options on sustainable bioenergy production that foster rural development and food security, including employment and decent work considerations. These activities have informed on-going international discussions and processes on bioenergy sustainability, such as the Roundtable on Sustainable Biofuels (RSB) and the Global Bioenergy Partnership (GBEP). In May 2011, GBEP endorsed a set of 24 voluntary sustainability indicators for bioenergy including: jobs in the bioenergy sector; change in unpaid time spent by women and children collecting biomass; and incidence of occupational injury, illness and fatalities.

The entire set of indicators is available at www.fao.org/bioenergy/en

World Banana Forum (WBF)

Bananas are the world's most exported fresh fruit, both in volume and value. They are an essential source of income and employment for hundreds of thousands of households in developing countries, especially in Latin American, the Caribbean, Southeast Asia and West Africa. However, agrochemical-intensive banana production on large-scale plantations, distortions along the value chain and declining producer prices have given rise to environmental and social challenges. **FAO's Trade and Markets Division (EST)** hosts the Secretariat of the **World Banana Forum (WBF)**, a permanent space of assembly for participants representing the global banana supply-chain, such as producers, trade unions, retailers, labeling organizations and research institutions, among many others. Government representatives and international organizations also participate regularly in the WBF meetings. The aim of this **public-private partnership** is to promote open dialogue to jointly address the different challenges facing the banana sector. The WBF is a results-oriented forum that operates through the activities of three permanent working groups. One working group focuses on sustainable production systems and environmental impact. Another works on distribution of value along the supply chain and labour rights. The remaining group deals mainly with freedom of association, gender equity, and health and safety at the workplace. The Forum identifies best practices used worldwide to promote their dissemination and implementation. Expected outputs of pilot projects will lead to a reduction in agrochemicals use and a wider respect of labour rights or a methodology to define 'decent work' in the context of the banana sector.

More information on the WBF is available at: www.fao.org/wbf

FAO's assessments of South Asian practices of Employment Guarantee Schemes in South Asia

Both in India and Bangladesh, FAO engaged in consultations with government authorities and other relevant stakeholders to analyse their Employment Guarantee Schemes. India's National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) and Bangladesh's 100-day Employment Generation Programme (EGP) provide guaranteed employment for the rural poor for 100 days per year. Bangladesh's intervention targets the poor and jobless nationwide and represents a direct response to the soaring food price situation. India has taken its employment programme beyond guarantees: the scheme is backed by an Act (NREGA), emphasizing the right to work, and at least a third of the potential workers offered employment must be women. If employment is not provided, an allowance is paid. During the period 2010-11, 48 percent of the beneficiaries (26 million) of NREGS were women. In Bangladesh (2008-09 FY), estimates indicate that during the first phase, 28 percent of the EGP were women (560,000) who received an employment opportunity for the first time in their lives. In Bangladesh, FAO found that more women had enrolled in the programme than expected, reporting positive long-term impacts. However, in some cases women faced specific barriers, such as not having the physical capacity to perform the work offered by the programme, feeling inappropriate working alongside men due to socio-cultural norms, their inability to bring their children to work due to a lack of transportation and the absence of toilets and safe drinking water facilities and food. FAO's study recommendations included adopting an approach to address gender constraints particularly by: (i) ensuring that the type of work can be physically performed by women and that ward members (supervising officers) are convinced as such; (ii) reserving some work exclusively for women to encourage female participation in more conservative areas; and (iii) providing facilities at the work place like those present in NREGS (crèche, drinking water, shade for children, etc).

2.4 Priority theme 4

Advocacy for the centrality of DRE promotion for adapting and coping with disasters, economic crises and other emergencies

- The **centrality of DRE for increasing households' resilience to disasters and crisis** should be strongly advocated. When promoting strategies for **Disaster Risk Management**, for instance, the promotion of more and better rural jobs should be considered a major strategy to increase resilience. Participation in the rural non-farm economy is an increasingly important element of the risk management strategies of rural households (e.g. more dynamic rural labour markets can support families in quickly regaining an adequate food supply in case of a shortfall, avoiding coping strategies that entail selling important assets). In the short-term, employment-based safety nets, such as public works programmes, can assist the most vulnerable consumers when food prices rise. Producer safety-nets can offset low incomes, thereby maintaining their ability to purchase inputs and maintain production.
- DRE can also contribute in increasing the role of forestry and agriculture in mitigation and adaptation to climate change and in the sustainable management of natural resources, for instance, by upgrading workers' ecological skills or by creating alternative sources of subsistence and contributing to reduce overexploitation.
- Low quality of jobs and high rates of vulnerable employment are linked to high risks of malnutrition. Low incomes hamper access to adequate and nutritious food, which translates into low quality food intake and ultimately to lower labour productivity. These linkages are exacerbated in a context of high food prices and increasing food price volatility, and given that many people in vulnerable work situation are net food buyers. Furthermore, the increasing incorporation of women into paid work could have negative effects on nutrition (e.g. reducing mothers' time for child care and feeding) if **quality jobs, adequate social services and infrastructure, and a fairer distribution of care work within the household are not guaranteed**. Among the alternative policies and strategies **to improve nutritional outcomes, FAO should therefore advocate for the centrality of decent work conditions and gainful rural employment**.
- In general, the integration of a **DRE dimension in emergencies intervention** needs to be further explored thus providing a foundation for long-term development. To make the most of the potential of future rural generations, the specific needs of **rural youth must be considered**. All this is especially relevant for countries in protracted crises where DRE promotion would offer a constructive path to inclusive and sustainable recovery.

Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS)

Agriculture plays a pivotal role in the rural economy of most developing countries. Support to rural youths and young farmers has been part of FAO work for the last four decades. In order to enable rural youths to become active partners in the achievement of economic and social goals, they must receive adequate support and access to resources that allow them to reach their maximum potential. To address the specific challenges faced by youth in rural areas, ESW initiated the Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS) approach in 2004, which to date has been expanded to 16 countries in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. The JFFLS combine support to vocational educational training opportunities with employment promotion. They are a concrete manifestation of the important linkages that exist between rural employment, poverty reduction and food security. The high adaptability of the learning approach to different countries' needs makes it suitable to address different contexts and populations, and it has been included as one of the main activities in various United Nations Joint Programmes (UNJP) for "Youth Employment and Migration" as well as emergency projects and Technical Cooperation Programmes (TCPs). Field evaluations have shown that the approach has supported the development of entrepreneurial and agricultural skills of the youth as well as their self-esteem, helping them to become healthy and positive young adults. Furthermore, it strengthened national institutions' capacities to address rural youth employment at both the operational and policy levels. The main partners in the countries involved in the JFFLS are: Ministries of Agriculture, Education, Labour, Youth, and Trade, Producers' and Farmers' Organizations and Unions, Trade Unions, Fair Trade and Youth Organizations as well as sister UN agencies such as the ILO, UNEP and UNIDO.

JFFLS link on the web: www.fao-ilo.org/fao-ilo-youth/fao-ilo-jffls/en

3 Conclusion and way forward

Decent rural employment is essential for sustainably increasing agricultural productivity and improving rural poor people's access to food. Based on the strong linkages between employment and the four dimensions of food security, namely availability, access, utilization and stability, this Case for Action demonstrates the urgent need for increased policy coherence between employment and agriculture interventions in the fight against hunger.

FAO has a crucial complementary role in promoting decent work for food security in rural areas. While the ILO leads the Global Employment and Decent Work Agenda, the two organizations share a long history of collaboration, formalized by a Cooperation Framework Agreement undersigned in 1947 and then by the Memorandum of Understanding of 2004. FAO's role within this collaboration has been in particular focused on promoting employment in agriculture, including livestock, forestry, fisheries and management of natural resources, as well as in agroprocessing and retailing. FAO's technical comparative advantage lies in its historical support to food security and agricultural and rural development. Furthermore, FAO has strong expertise in small-scale, self-employed and informal agricultural occupations where the majority of food insecure workers in developing countries are found.

Given its mandate to raise levels of nutrition, improve agricultural productivity, better the lives of rural populations and contribute to the growth of the world economy, **FAO also has a significant responsibility within this context.** In the framework of the *global and regional partnerships* in which it is engaged, as well as under the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-17) "Full employment and decent work for all". FAO has a crucial comparative advantage in promoting decent work in rural areas. FAO also has the capacity and responsibility to bring rural employment concerns to the global arena, for instance through the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), the foremost inclusive international and intergovernmental platform dealing with food security.

At the country, sub-regional and regional levels, all of **FAO's decentralized offices (DOs)** can capitalize on their close collaboration with other development partners active in promoting decent work, especially the ILO, and with national agricultural and rural stakeholders, namely line agriculture ministries and regional organizations, initiatives and fora, as well as with producers' organizations and cooperatives. These longstanding collaborations enable FAO DOs to foster inclusive networks supporting the holistic approach needed to address this complex development issue successfully.

In all regions, many food security, agricultural and rural development interventions, including those supported by FAO,³⁰ already contribute to one or more of the dimensions needed to promote decent rural employment, such as enhancing job creation or income generation, reducing the gender gap in agriculture, increasing the attractiveness of rural areas for youth, improving the quality of existing rural jobs and upgrading the skills of rural people. **The task ahead is to strategically move towards employment-centred interventions to promote food security, agriculture and rural development.** Such a move will set the path to more just transitions and more inclusive and sustainable rural growth, and thus directly contribute to attaining food security and a world free of hunger.

30 See Annex for more information on on-going FAO programmes under each DRE priority theme.

Annex

On-going FAO programmes under each DRE priority theme

Priority theme	Existing programmes and actors within FAO
<p>1. Promotion of employment-centred responsible agro-investments towards sustainable rural development and food security for all</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible agricultural investments work (TCI, EST, TCSP, NRL) • FAO's work on agribusiness development, rural infrastructure, market linkages and value chains towards inclusive business models (AGS, EST) • Regional processes fostering investment in agricultural and rural development such as NEPAD/CAADP for AFRICA • Green jobs and Green Economy with Agriculture Initiative (lead by NRC, IDWG on Rio+20) • Food safety and quality capacity building programme for market access and consumer protection (AGND) • Innovative practices for access and empowerment: Gender and rural Youth • <u>ICT in agriculture development toolkit</u> • <u>Education for Rural People toolkit</u> • FAO Country Programming Frameworks Planning (TCSP) and all departments involved in policy support for rural development (and particularly ES, ESA, ESW and technical departments/regional offices depending on sector) • IDWG on Rural and Territorial Development (Coordinated by TCSP) • Participatory and Negotiated Territorial Development (NRL) • <u>Programme on quality linked to geographical origin (AGND)</u> • <u>The Forest Connect International Alliance (FO)</u> • <u>The Growing Forest Partnerships programme (FO)</u>
<p>2. Support to gender and age-disaggregated analysis of rural labour markets and conditions of employment in the informal rural economy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agri-Gender Toolkit (FAORAF, and now being adapted by FAOREU) • Gender and Agricultural Statistics Framework (GASF) (in South-East Asia and forthcoming in Central Asia) (FAOREU) • FAO Country Profiles (Malawi, Tanzania, Ghana) (ESW) • Collaboration on child labour data and beyond (ESS/ESW) • Studies on rural labour markets and poverty (FAOLAC) • Capacity building and collecting gender disaggregated data through agricultural censuses (FAORAP)
<p>3. Promotion of decent work conditions in agriculture by pooling and increasing current efforts of the organization towards more socially sustainable agricultural production</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good agricultural and manufacturing practices, Sustainable Crop Production Intensification and Climate Smart Agriculture (AGP, AGA, AGND, NR, AGP, FI, FO) • Integrated Production and Pest Management Programme and various FFS programmes (AGP) • JFFLS approaches for capacity development and employment creation (ESW) • World Banana Forum (EST) • Work on voluntary standards (cultural, environmental and social standards) and certification (EST, AGND, AGS, AGA, FI, NRC) • EU-funded All ACP Agricultural Commodities Programme (AAACP) programme (EST) • FAO Country Programming Frameworks (TCSP) • Initiatives addressing labour dimension of different agricultural sectors (Work on sustainable fisheries and child labour in fisheries (FI), Analysis of governance and labour issues in the livestock sector (AGA)) • Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security (Right to Food Guidelines) (ESA) • Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land and other Natural Resources (NRC) • Sustainable bioenergy development (NRC) • <u>Community Based Forest Enterprise Development (CBED) programme (FO)</u> • Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition (FSN Forum) (ESA)
<p>4. Advocacy for the centrality of DRE promotion for adapting and coping with disasters, economic crises and other emergencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAO's <u>Initiative on Soaring Food Prices: Policy Guide for Policy and Programmatic Actions at Country Level to Address High Food Prices</u>, regional and subregional policy seminars and <u>Food and Agriculture Policy Decision Analysis Tool</u> (TCSP and decentralized FAO Offices) • Analyses of costs and benefits of rights-based social protection including employment guarantees and cash transfers for food and nutritional security (FAORAP, ESA) • Reviewing the Food Crisis with a Gender Lens analysis (ESW) • Disaster risk reduction and Emergency relief and rehabilitation towards the protection and rehabilitation of agricultural livelihoods (TCE, ESW)

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Glossary

Agricultural employment: includes on farm self employment and wage employment in the agricultural sector (FAO, 2011)

Agricultural off-farm employment: includes agricultural wage employment and non-farm employment (WB, 2008).

Agricultural on-farm employment: refers to self-employed farming, including crop and livestock production (Valdés *et al.* 2009).

Agriculture: includes cultivation of crops and animal husbandry as well as forestry, fisheries, and the development of land and water resources (FAO TERM).

Child labour: A child is defined as any person under 18 years of age. Child labour is defined based on a child's age, hours and conditions of work, activities performed and the hazards involved. Child labour is work that interferes with compulsory schooling and damages health and personal development. The ILO Minimum Age for Employment Convention No. 138 (1973) sets the minimum age for children to work at 15 years of age in general (the convention allows for certain flexibilities in specific circumstances). For work considered hazardous, the age is 18. The ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention No. 182 (1999) defines worst forms of child labour as all forms of slavery, trafficking of children, forced recruitment for armed conflict, use of children in illicit activities, sexual exploitation, and hazardous work. Hazardous work should be listed nationally. It is work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children (FAO, 2010). Child labourers are therefore a subset of children in employment. They are those children working under the minimum age for work in their country (14-15-16) (excluding those children in permissible light work from 12-13) as well as those children up to the age of 18 years who are engaged in the worst form of child labour (such as hazardous work), which is only possible from 18, or all forms of slavery, trafficking of children, forced recruitment for armed conflict, use of children in illicit activities and sexual exploitation. This definition excludes therefore all children under the minimum age undertaking light work for a few hours a week and those above the minimum age and not in hazardous work. Within the context of family farming and other rural family endeavours, it is especially important to recognize that some participation of children in non-hazardous activities can be positive as it contributes to the food security and the inter-generational transfer of skills.

Decent work: involves opportunities for productive work that delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families; better prospects for personal development and social integration; freedom for people to express their concerns, to organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives; and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men (ILO, 2006).

Food security: the definition of food security embodies four dimensions, namely: (i) availability of food, which is a function of supply; (ii) access to food, largely determined by purchasing power, market integration and physical access to markets, access to other assets like land, formal safety nets and informal coping strategies, (iii) stability in food availability and access, through time, and (iv) food utilization, which relies on sufficient energy consumption and a varied diet to provide required micronutrients.

Gender equality: Gender equality is when women and men enjoy equal rights, opportunities and entitlements in civil and political life. Gender equality is equal participation of women and men in decision-making, equal ability to exercise their human rights, equal access to and control of resources and the benefits of development, and equal opportunities in employment and in all other aspects of their livelihoods (FAO Gender webpage: www.fao.org/gender/gender-home/gender-why/why-gender/en/; FAO-IFAD-ILO, 2010, p. x; FAO 2011/SOFA).

Informal employment: includes the following types of jobs: (a) own-account workers employed in their own informal sector enterprises; (b) employers employed in their own informal sector enterprises; (c) contributing family workers, irrespective of whether they work in formal or informal sector enterprises; (d) members of informal producers' cooperatives; (e) employees holding informal jobs in formal sector enterprises, informal sector enterprises, or as paid domestic workers employed by households; where they exist, employees holding formal jobs in informal sector enterprises should be excluded from informal employment; (f) own-account workers engaged in the production of goods exclusively for own final use by their household, if considered employed (Delhi Group, 2011-forthcoming; ILO, 2003. www.ilo.org/global/What_we_do/Statistics/events/icls/lang--en/docName--WCMS_087568/index.htm).

Non-agricultural employment: includes non-farm self employment and wage employment (FAO, 2011).

Rural employment: refers to any activity, occupation, work, business or service performed by rural people for remuneration, profit or family gain, or by force, in cash or kind, including under a contract of hire, written or oral, expressed or implied, and regardless of whether the activity is performed on a self-directed, part-time, full-time or casual basis. Rural employment is comprised of **agricultural** and **non-agricultural employment**, and it includes production of economic goods and services for own and household consumption (FAO, 2011).

Small and Medium Agricultural Enterprises (SMAEs): are non-subsidiary, independent firms which employ less than a given number of employees. Small farms are generally family-run, may be subsistence-based or market-oriented, using few or many external inputs, working manually or with machinery, and tend to be more labour-intensive. Medium and large agro-enterprises are mainly urban based because of the requirements for economies of scale and infrastructure. The large enterprises are often dominated by multinational corporations that have consolidated through vertical and horizontal integration (WB, 2007; IFAD and IIED 2010; OECD 2005).

Small-scale producers: there is no unified definition of “small-scale producers”. Using farm size as a criterion, farmers with less than 2 hectares of land are usually characterized as small-scale. However, the distribution of farm sizes can be very different among countries. However this criterion ignores a number of other dimensions. Therefore, FAO adopts a broader definition of small-scale producers, and includes those who produce low quantities and yields, have low capital and education levels, and lack the skills to participate in markets, produce primarily for home consumption and rely heavily on family labour. Indeed, it is generally understood as involving production units that rely essentially on family workforce and only occasionally on casual labour (FAO, 2010; FAO, 2011).

Social protection: is one of the four pillars of the Decent Work agenda. Extending social protection to small producers and rural workers includes mechanisms to address occupational safety and health, social security, working conditions, HIV/AIDS and other major diseases. Recognizing the importance of ensuring social protection for all, the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (UNCEB) adopted, in April 2009, the Social Protection Floor initiative. The Social Protection Floor is a global social policy approach promoting integrated strategies for providing access to essential social services and income security for all. It emphasizes the need to implement comprehensive, coherent, and coordinated social protection and employment policies to guarantee services and social transfers across the life cycle, paying particular attention to the vulnerable groups (ILO, 2011).

Vulnerable employment: refers to the sum of unpaid contributing family workers and own-account workers. Contributing family workers and own-account workers are less likely to have formal work arrangements, and often carry a higher economic risk, which allows for the usage of the indicator on vulnerable employment in an assessment of decent work. If the proportion of vulnerable workers is sizeable, it may be an indication of widespread poverty. Vulnerable employment shares are indicative for informal economy employment, particularly for the less developed economies and regions. Nevertheless, vulnerable employment numbers should be interpreted in combination with other labour market indicators such as unemployment and working poverty (ILO, 2009).

Working poverty: the working poor are those individuals who are (i) employed and (ii) living in households whose income or consumption levels fall below a poverty threshold. The working poor poverty rate is the number of working poor in a particular employment category expressed as a percentage of the total number of people in the same employment category (OECD Glossary of Statistical Terms; UNRISD, 2010; Key Indicators of the Labour Market, 7th Edition).

Youth: the UN defines ‘youths’, as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years, (without prejudice to other definitions by Member States). The definition was endorsed by the General Assembly (see A/36/215 and resolution 36/28, 1981). For the purposes of legal age for employment, the ILO Minimum Age Convention adopted in 1973 is to be considered. This convention specifies that the general minimum age for admission to any employment should not be lower than the age of completion of compulsory schooling and, in any case, no less than 15. Where the economy and educational facilities of a country are insufficiently developed, it may be initially reduced to 14. Main exceptions to this general rule are: (a) Light work, which is permissible on a set of conditions and for which the minimum age may be set at 12 or 13 years; (b) Hazardous work for which a higher minimum age is required (18). While, for the agricultural sector, the provisions of the Convention shall be applicable as a minimum to plantations and other agricultural undertakings mainly producing for commercial purposes, a temporary exclusion can be justified for family and small-scale holdings producing for local consumption and not regularly employing hired workers (UNDESA, <http://social.un.org/index/Youth/FAQs.aspx>).

Acronyms

AGA	FAO Animal Production and Health Division
AGND	FAO Food Safety and Quality Unit
AGP	FAO Plant Production and Protection Division
AGS	FAO Rural Infrastructure and Agro-industries Division
ARD	Agricultural and Rural Development
ASD	Age and Sex Disaggregated Data
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
BEFS	FAO Bioenergy and Food Security Project
BEFSCI	FAO Bioenergy and Food Security Criteria and Indicators Project
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme
CBED	FAO Community Based Forest Enterprise Development Programme
CEB	Chief Executive Board
CFS	Committee on World Food Security
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DOs	FAO Decentralized Offices
DRE	Decent Rural Employment
DRET	FAO Decent Rural Employment Team
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EGP	Bangladesh's Employment Generation Programme
ES	FAO Economic and Social Development Department
ESS	FAO Statistics Division
EST	FAO Trade and Markets Division
ESW	FAO Gender, Equity and Rural Employment Division
FAO REU	AO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FAORAF	FAO Regional Office for Africa
FAORAP	FAO Regional Office for Asia
FFS	Farmer field schools
FI	FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department
FO	FAO Forestry Department
FY	Fiscal Year
GAP	Good agricultural practices
GASF	Gender and Agricultural Statistics Framework
GBEP	Global Bioenergy Partnership
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GESS	Global Extension of Social Security
GET	Global Employment Trends
GMP	Good Manufacturing Practices
HLTF	High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IDWG	Inter-Departmental Working Group
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IICA	Instituto Interamericano de Cooperación para la Agricultura
ILO	International Labour Organization of the United Nations
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPCCLA	International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
IPM	Integrated pest management
IUF	International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Association

JFFLS	Junior Farm Field and Life Schools
KILM	Key Indicators of Labour Market
MAD	Market Analysis and Development
MAEC	Spain's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NR	FAO Natural Resources Management and Environment Department
NRC	FAO Climate, Energy and Tenure Division
NREGA	India's National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
NREGS	India's National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
NRL	FAO Land and Water Division
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OIE	World Organisation for Animal Health
OR	Organisational Result
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
POs	Producer Organisations
RAI	Responsible Agro-Investment
RCM	Regional Coordination Mechanism
RE&DW	Rural employment and decent work
RIGA	Rural income generating activities
RIMISP	Latin American Centre for Rural Development
RNFE	Rural Non Farm Economy
RSB	Roundtable on Sustainable Biofuels
RUTA	Regional Unit for Technical Assistance
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SIMPOC	Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour
SMAE	Small and Medium Agro-enterprise
SO	Strategic Objective
SOFA	State of Food and Agriculture
SPF	Social Protection Floor
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
TCE	FAO Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division
TCI	FAO Investment Centre Division
TCP	Technical Cooperation Programme
TCSP	FAO Policy Assistance Support Service
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Social and Economic Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNJP	United Nations Joint Programme
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
WB	World Bank
WBF	World Banana Forum
WCA	World Programme for the Census of Agriculture
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WIEGO	Women in Informal Employment Globalising and Organising
WIND	Work Improvement in Neighbourhood Development
YFA	Young Farmers Association



**Food and Agriculture Organization
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Viale delle Terme di Caracalla
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Phone: + 39 0657051
www.fao.org

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