

Rural employment and decent work at FAO

News from the web



“Eradicate poverty and hunger” is the first Millennium Development Goal (MDG) set out by world leaders in the United Nations Millennium Declaration (2000). It includes the target 1.B “Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people”. Decent rural employment is key to achieving food security and alleviating poverty. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has committed, through its Strategic Framework, to ensure that decent rural employment creation is integrated into agricultural and rural development policies, programmes and partnerships.

This issue shares some of the work that FAO carried out in the second half of 2012 on gender-equitable decent rural employment (DRE) for poverty reduction and food security, in terms of normative work, technical cooperation and capacity development, as well as advocacy and strategic partnerships.

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Highlights

Decent rural employment and FAO's newly revised Strategic Framework

FAO's Director-General José Graziano da Silva launched a Strategic Thinking Process last year to help determine the Organization's future direction. In December 2012, the five Strategic Objectives (SOs) of FAO's revised Strategic Framework were endorsed by the Council. Within this Framework, promoting decent rural employment will feature explicitly under SO3: “Reduce rural poverty” – Organizational Outcome 2: “The enabling environment in member countries is created or improved to increase access by the rural poor to decent farm and non-farm employment”.

This is an important step for the Organization, acknowledging that both the quantity and the quality of employment are essential for achieving food security and reducing poverty. Promoting decent work involves addressing poor working conditions and extending the outreach of International Labour Standards to rural areas. Improving access to decent farm and non-farm employment therefore requires vigorous awareness-raising and advocacy with governments and development partners. FAO will provide technical

advice and capacity building to better integrate DRE concerns in policies and programmes. To support these activities, it will also work to improve gender- and age-differentiated statistics and analysis of rural labour markets.

Second Edition: Guidance on how to address decent rural employment in FAO country activities

FAO has recently published the Second Edition of the *Guidance on how to address decent rural employment in FAO country activities* and the related *Quick reference for addressing decent rural employment*. This guidance document provides resources and tools that can assist FAO Representatives, staff and consultants to better reflect DRE



concerns in country-level programmes, policies and activities. This second edition also integrates feedback from the original, which was field tested in 31 FAO Decentralized Offices. It offers substantial improvements, including more up-to-date information and resources on DRE issues.

For more information: www.fao-ilo.org



Sida-supported intervention in Malawi and Tanzania (2011-2013)

FAO continues to implement the three-year country-level intervention in Malawi and Tanzania - “*Policy support on rural employment and decent work towards equitable and sustainable livelihoods*” - supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

Capacity development workshop in Malawi for strategic policy planning for employment-centred agriculture and rural development

The workshop (27-29 November 2012, Salima, Malawi) was carried out as a follow-up activity to the Capacity Needs Assessment undertaken in Malawi in December 2011. It was attended by 18 participants (senior technical staff and director-level) from government institutions, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), the donor community and UN agencies.

Overall, the workshop focused on the integration of DRE aspects (including youth employment, child labour



prevention and gender equality) into strategic planning of national agriculture and rural development

strategies, policies and programmes, with particular emphasis on monitoring and evaluation.

The objective of the workshop was to strengthen the capacities of national policy makers, senior technical officers and programme managers, as well as provide knowledge and materials for the integration of DRE aspects into national policy processes. Participants provided a positive response to the workshop and welcomed future activities of this kind.

More and better jobs for rural youth

Creating decent employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for young rural women and men is a key aspect of FAO’s operational activities.

Youth in agriculture: African Green Revolution Forum

The [African Green Revolution Forum 2012](#) was held from 26-28 September in Arusha, Tanzania. During the Forum, FAO’s Regional Office for Africa (FAO RAF) organized a side event on *Youth in Agriculture* as a follow-up to recommendations provided by Member States at the Twenty-seventh Session of the Regional Conference for Africa in Brazzaville (Congo).

The event was attended by over 75 participants including senior government officials, parliamentarians,

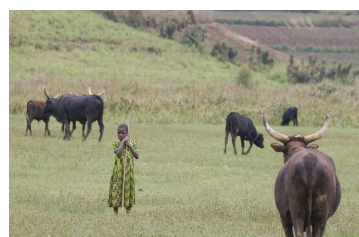
private sector organizations and representatives from universities, NGO’s and civil society. The main objective of the event was to share and discuss youth engagement in Africa’s agri-food systems by showcasing some examples of successful initiatives in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and Tanzania.

The event also provided recommendations on how FAO RAF can strengthen its work to facilitate young people’s access to economic opportunities in Africa’s agri-food sector.

Preventing and reducing child labour

Children’s work in the Livestock sector: Herding and beyond

FAO has recently released this explorative study, which strengthens the knowledge on children’s work in the livestock sector and identifies avenues for further research and action.



Children engage in a variety of activities in the livestock sector, from herding cattle to watering camels, to caring for pigs. They not only take part in the production of livestock, but also in other activities, such as: collecting feed, building poultry sheds, collecting and selling milk or working in slaughterhouses. Some children working in the livestock sector are trapped in bonded labour or have been trafficked into situations of exploitation.

For more information: www.fao-ilo.org/fao-ilo-child/en/

Global Framework of Action to address child labour in agriculture

Some 160 participants representing governments, inter-governmental organizations, trade unions, farmers’ organizations, cooperatives, NGOs and corporations from more than 50 countries took part in the [International Conference on Child Labour in Agriculture](#) (July 2012, Washington, D.C.). FAO chaired a workshop on addressing [child labour in neglected agricultural sub-sectors](#), such as fishing, forestry and livestock. The conference gave forth a [Framework of Action](#), which recognizes that child labour is often related to rural poverty and the precarious situation of families living in rural communities, where significant decent work deficits in agriculture persist. Among other actions, it also highlights the need to harness the untapped potential of producers’ organizations and cooperatives.

Malawi National Conference on Child Labour in Agriculture

At the [Conference](#), research presented by FAO and Malawi’s Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security

shed light on the occurrence of child labour in Malawi's crop, livestock and fisheries sectors; as well as highlighted potential solutions offered by labour and energy-saving technologies and [good agricultural practices](#). Recognizing that the majority of child labour in the country can be found in agriculture, participating stakeholders agreed on a [Framework for Action](#). Recommendations emanating from this Framework include: developing a policy on fair agricultural investments (including a regulatory framework to implement fair contract farming); improving the targeting of the Agriculture Input Subsidy Programme; and promoting good agricultural practices among smallholder farmers (e.g. conservation agriculture, crop diversification, occupational safety and health).

Other news...

ILO-FAO collaboration on Decent Work for Food Security programme in Malawi

The ILO and FAO jointly carried out a scoping mission to Malawi (3 -10 December 2012) following a request from the national Government to include Malawi as a pilot country in the implementation of the



ILO's Decent Work for Food Security (DWFS) programme. The overall objective of the DWFS is to address the

root causes of food insecurity and build livelihood resilience by tackling decent work challenges in selected agri-food value chains with employment, income generation and productivity potential.

Consultation meetings were held with more than 20 key national stakeholders, concluding with a one-day workshop that served as a discussion forum for over 30 decision-makers and senior technical staff.

The consultation meetings and workshop with national partners resulted in the selection of relevant agricultural value chains, which were assessed against their decent work deficits, as well as their relevance to national food security and potential for creating new and decent jobs. The objective and outcomes of the programme were also discussed, while rural women and youth were identified as target groups.

This first joint ILO-FAO mission in Malawi is the beginning of a promising collaboration, together with national stakeholders, which is aimed at enhancing decent work and food security in the country.

Corporate Social Responsibility consultation in Tanzania

In collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders, FAO is facilitating the development of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) guidelines for Responsible Agro Investments (RAI) in Tanzania, as part of the United Nations Development Assistance Plan (UNDAP). The guidelines will be



based on the [proposed principles for RAI developed by FAO, UNCTAD, IFAD and the World Bank](#). These comprise: transparency, good governance and accountability; socially, environmentally and economically sustainable stakeholder involvement; and a recognition of domestic food security and rural development concerns.

A first consultative meeting, attended by various Government representatives and private sector institutions, was organized by FAO from 9-10 October 2012 in Dar es Salaam, to build consensus on the global principles for RAI as they are adapted to the national Tanzanian context. The consultations resulted in draft principles adapted to the national context, as well as a proposed institutional set-up, outlining which institution(s) will play the coordinating role to guide, oversee and report on the implementation of the guidelines. The guidelines are expected to provide specific and hands-on CSR actions that can be taken on by investors.

Expert consultation: Policy responses to high and volatile food prices

In 2011, FAO organized a series of regional and subregional policy consultations on high and volatile food prices to help countries draw on lessons learned from the 2007-08 crisis.

As a next step, FAO's inter-departmental working group on food price volatility prepared a series of papers on key policy topics that were discussed at the "Expert consultation on policy responses to high and volatile food prices" (Rome, November 2012). The consultation provided a unique opportunity to discuss the papers from different technical perspectives with key staff from FAO, IFAD and WFP, as well as external experts.



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Specific to employment, a paper on "Promoting economic diversification and decent rural employment

towards greater resilience to food price volatility” was presented. It argued that economic diversification and decent rural employment, complemented with social protection, are crucial to improving and stabilizing real incomes. Policy responses should therefore aim to reduce income uncertainty among the most vulnerable and strengthen their resilience through more sustainable agriculture systems and decent employment opportunities in farm and non-farm activities.

During the consultation, lessons learned and key messages were identified, which will ultimately feed into an FAO publication designed to become a reference document for capacity development and policy guidance at regional, subregional and country level.

World Food Day meeting in Paris explores impact of labour market trends on small-scale farmers

On World Food Day 2012 (October 16th), FAO was represented at a meeting in Paris entitled: “*Evolution du marché international du travail, l’impact des exclusions paysannes*” - organised by Gret, the *Centre international de recherche agronomique pour le développement* (Cirad) and the *Agence française de*

développement (AFD), in collaboration with the *Conseil économique, social et environnemental* (CESE). The meeting aimed to raise awareness among policy makers and the French research community on the implications of major trends on rural labour markets in developing countries, as they undergo a process of demographic transition and structural transformation. Particular attention was paid to how this process will affect small-scale producers, family farms and rural workers.

In sub-Saharan African countries, for instance, there will be a strong need for job creation from now to 2050 due to large inflows of young labour market entrants (around 330 million by 2025 according to [RuralStruc.WB, 2012](#)).

The challenges are multiple, including the prevalence of working poverty, persisting gender inequalities and growing concerns over climate change. Participants discussed potential policy solutions too, including the need for responsible agricultural investments in support of family farms and job creation in rural towns that favour access to markets and services.

Recent publications:

Decent Rural Employment for Food Security: A Case for Action



This case for action identifies the links between decent employment and food security. It argues that improving policy coherence between employment and agricultural initiatives, as well as investing more in the promotion of decent rural employment, are key to fighting rural poverty and feeding our growing world population in a sustainable way.

www.fao.org/docrep/015/i2750e/i2750e00.pdf

Second Edition: Guidance on how to address rural employment and decent work concerns in FAO country activities



This document is designed to provide key conceptual information, important tools and examples of concrete actions to enable FAO country staff to address rural employment and decent work within their programmes, projects and activities. This second edition has benefited from field testing in 31 FAO Decentralized Offices.

www.fao.org/docrep/013/i1937e/i1937e.pdf

Children's work in the livestock sector: Herding and beyond



This explorative study aims to give an overview of available data on child labour in the livestock sector and indicate potential avenues for action. It provides a basis for further research and discussion on this topic, in order to reach a common understanding of what efforts need to be prioritized and to encourage governments and other stakeholders to address this issue.

www.fao.org/docrep/017/i3098e/i3098e.pdf

Promoting employment and entrepreneurship for vulnerable youths in West Bank and Gaza Strip



This case study describes FAO activities to improve youth skills and abilities to generate income in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It also emphasizes the role of women's associations and the creation of youth farmers' clubs grouping Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS) graduates in the rural areas, which can help to establish a stable basis for rural people to gain voice and representation.

www.fao.org/docrep/012/i1450e/i1450e00.pdf

Information materials on decent rural employment



This series of newsletters and information materials has been developed in order to share regular updates on some of the work carried out by FAO to support the integration of decent rural employment concerns within FAO and in the policies and programmes of Member Countries. They include useful reference materials concerning decent rural employment, including youth employment and child labour prevention and reduction in agriculture.

<http://www.fao-ilo.org>