

# Rural employment and decent work at FAO

## News from the web



“Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger” is the first Millennium Development Goal (MDG), and includes the target 1B: “Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people”. Through its new Strategic Framework, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is committed to ensuring that decent rural employment creation is integrated into agricultural and rural development policies, strategies, programmes and partnerships.

This issue shares some of the work that FAO carried out in the second half of 2013 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

#### FAO's work on decent rural employment in 2014-15

In the course of the current biennium (2014-15), FAO will implement its new Strategic Framework. This opens an exciting chapter for the work on decent rural employment, which is featured prominently as an Organizational Outcome under Strategic Objective 3 “Reduce Rural Poverty”. With almost 400 million workers living in extreme poverty, most of them in rural areas, FAO plans to address prevailing employment challenges thanks to three interrelated Organizational Outputs.

FAO's work will focus on supporting countries to formulate and implement policies, strategies and programmes that generate greater opportunities for the rural poor to access decent farm and non-farm employment. It will also strive to further extend the application of International Labour Standards to rural areas. This includes eliminating discrimination, strengthening the employability of the rural workforce, preventing child labour in agriculture, promoting social protection as well as occupational safety and health, and guaranteeing freedom of association. Finally, FAO will work towards generating better information and knowledge on the employment dimensions of agriculture and rural development.

Overall, the Organization's work on decent employment will be guided by the diverse priorities and challenges existing across world regions, FAO's comparative advantage and existing work, as well as the recognition that an integrated approach is needed to boost the creation of decent jobs in rural areas.

#### New – FAO promoting decent employment opportunities for rural youth



Published in October 2013, this briefing paper makes a case for engaging the world's poor and underemployed youth in agricultural and rural development as a means to reduce poverty and food insecurity.

It also stresses the importance of promoting decent on- and off-farm employment in order to seize the untapped economic potential of the youth cohort, and details the complementary set of activities carried out by FAO to support the creation of an environment where rural youth can thrive.

Download the leaflet: [www.fao.org/docrep/018/i2976e/i2976e.pdf](http://www.fao.org/docrep/018/i2976e/i2976e.pdf)



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

FAO implemented a series of activities in 2013 as part of its three-year country level intervention in Malawi and Tanzania entitled: “Policy support on rural employment and decent work towards equitable and sustainable livelihoods”. This programme has been supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

### Capacity development workshops and Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools trainings in Malawi and Tanzania



Building on ongoing government efforts to promote decent rural employment, FAO organized a series of workshops in Malawi and Tanzania on “How to integrate employment indicators in agricultural and rural development monitoring and evaluation systems” in September and October 2013.

Participants included members of agriculture line ministries, labour ministries, national statistics offices and producers’ organizations. In particular, the workshops aimed to achieve a wider inclusion of labour market indicators in the monitoring and evaluation frameworks of Malawi’s Agriculture Sector Wide Approach (ASWAp) and Tanzania’s Agriculture Sector Development Programme II (ASDP II).

Technical notes on monitoring and evaluation in both countries can be accessed here: [www.fao-ilo.org/ilo-dec-employ/ica/malawi-and-tanzania/cd](http://www.fao-ilo.org/ilo-dec-employ/ica/malawi-and-tanzania/cd)

Additionally, in the fall of 2013, Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS) training sessions took place under the Sida programme in Malawi and Tanzania, as well as Zanzibar. Sixty young farmers attended, including a number of trainers from national partner organizations (the *National Smallholder Farmers’ Association of Malawi*, the *Farmer’s Union of Malawi*, the *Tanzania Federation of Cooperatives* and the *Cooperative Union of Zanzibar*). FAO discussed with relevant government partners the possibility of establishing nationwide JFFLS programmes based on training of trainers sessions and training materials developed over the past three years.

The training materials are now available in English, and for Tanzania translated into Kiswahili. They can be downloaded from here:

[www.fao-ilo.org/ilo-dec-employ/ica/malawi-and-tanzania/yep/](http://www.fao-ilo.org/ilo-dec-employ/ica/malawi-and-tanzania/yep/)

## More and better jobs for rural youth

### Investing in rural youth employment

Young people in rural areas are the future of agriculture and other rural sectors, and addressing their needs is vital for sustained local and national growth. For greater impact, youth employment should be promoted through wider economic policies, dedicated agro investments, more dynamic agricultural and service sectors, and a faster productive transformation process.



To this end, FAO has been working with various governments to develop large-scale investment plans focused on creating decent rural work opportunities for young women and men. In Nigeria, FAO provided technical support to develop an investment plan for the *National Youth Employment in Agriculture Programme (YEAP)*, which has since been allocated approximately US\$ 235 million by the government and will be implemented in parallel with Nigeria’s ongoing Agricultural Transformation Agenda. In Benin, FAO also offered technical support for the formulation of the Benin national youth employment programme investment plan amounting to a total of US\$ 200 million (*Promotion de l’emploi des jeunes dans le secteur agricole*). Moreover, FAO has provided technical support to IFAD in Mali for the development of a grant of approximately US\$ 35 million in support of rural youth entrepreneurship (*Formation professionnelle, insertion et appui à l’entrepreneuriat des jeunes ruraux – Projet FIER*).

Finally, in response to increasing demand from Caribbean governments, an investment plan has recently been proposed for the Caribbean sub-region as well. It aims to promote the development of sustainable and environmentally friendly youth employment opportunities within the agricultural sector as a means to reduce rural poverty, increase food and nutrition security as well as raise young people’s awareness of the potential employment opportunities deriving from the agro sector.

### Towards a ten year strategy for rural youth employment in Antigua and Barbuda

In the last decade, the economy of Antigua and Barbuda has been negatively impacted by the global economic crisis. Food prices have increased, remittances decreased and a decline in tourism has had severe consequences on people’s incomes and government revenues. Unemployment in the twin-island state currently stands at approximately 11 percent, of which around 20 percent are young people between the ages of 15 and 24.



The spike in food prices has served to draw greater attention to agriculture, as well as food and nutrition security in the country – and youth employment is considered a priority for the Government of Antigua and Barbuda.

In response to a request from the islands' Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Housing and the Environment, FAO has supported the government in drafting a ten year *Strategic plan for the involvement and development of youth in the agricultural and rural sectors*. Given the limited employment options and high unemployment rates, encouraging young people to explore opportunities in the agriculture sector is perceived as an effective way to tackle current social and economic problems afflicting the country. Moreover, an effort to support young people to develop agricultural enterprises and to view agriculture as a viable career option, is likely to help address other important issues, including: youth unemployment, food and nutrition security, as well as the rural-urban drift.

### **FAO launches new projects in Africa focused on rural youth employment**

FAO has recently embarked on two new projects designed to stimulate decent rural employment creation in sub-Saharan Africa. The first, a UN Joint Programme led by the ILO with funding from Sida, will support the Government of Zambia to create decent jobs for young rural entrepreneurs, especially out-of-school youth, along the soybeans value chain. Participants will receive guidance on the development of their enterprise ideas, while being aware of the environmental and social concerns that may hinder business sustainability. The initiative, which will run over a period of four years, is expected to generate at least 2,000 new jobs.



In Ethiopia, FAO with support from the Netherlands, has begun to implement a project that will foster job creation along the value chains of small ruminant livestock, namely sheep and goats. Livestock production is a major provider of income to farmers, and small ruminant production provides an enormous opportunity to generate gainful employment opportunities, especially for women and youth. The project design acknowledges that there is a need to enhance not only productivity but also access to value addition and other employment options along the value chain. Furthermore, the increasing demand for small ruminant meat constitutes a significant opportunity for youth to become key drivers for the future of this sector. The project will work in two regions of the Ethiopian highlands and will be linked with the Ethiopian Agriculture Growth programme (AGP) and the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP), in which FAO's Ethiopia office is already active.

## **Preventing and reducing child labour**

### **3rd Global Conference on Child Labour**



FAO participated in the [3rd Global Conference on Child Labour](#) – hosted by the Brazilian Government from 8-10 October 2013. The Conference was attended by delegates from 152 countries who gathered to identify successful ways to eradicate child labour globally.

Addressing child labour in the agriculture sector remains a chief priority, as a newly released ILO report confirms that it accounts for 59 percent of all those in child labour and over 98 million children in absolute terms. Beyond the core child labour convention, the final [Brasilia Declaration](#) adopted at the Conference promotes the ratification of other relevant instruments, such as Convention No. 129, on Labour Inspection in Agriculture, and Convention No. 184, on Safety and Health in Agriculture, and acknowledges the importance of policy coherence for the reduction of child labour, including in agricultural policy. The [International Partnership for Cooperation against Child Labour in Agriculture](#) actively participated in the online dialogues leading up to the Conference; ILO moderated a semi plenary session on supply chains, and IUF and FAO presented as panelists in a semi-plenary session dedicated to child labour in agriculture.

### **ASEAN countries team up to accelerate action against child labour**

FAO participated in a workshop on *Accelerating Action towards the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour* organized by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretariat in cooperation with the ILO. The workshop, held in December 2013 in Jakarta (Indonesia), aimed to follow-up on the ASEAN Roadmap for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour by 2016. It provided an opportunity to share and reflect on country-level initiatives, progress and challenges in combating the worst forms of child labour, as well as to discuss strategies, actions and priorities for accelerating efforts.

The workshop was attended by some 80 delegates representing governments, employers, workers, civil society and international organizations. FAO gave a presentation on the challenges and opportunities to eliminate child labour in agriculture in ASEAN member countries.



## Other news...

### Programmatic Regional Initiative in Ghana: Achieving impact on the ground

In 2013, FAO made substantial progress in implementing its Programmatic Regional Initiative (SO3-PRI) in Northern Ghana's West Gonja District – a pilot initiative through which the Organization seeks to put into practice a new integrated approach to rural poverty reduction under Strategic Objective 3.

As part of the activities, FAO carried out a study on the working conditions and opportunities for decent employment creation along the cassava value chain in the West Gonja District. This study was used as the basis for a sensitization workshop held in Tamale in November 2013 for public and private sector stakeholders operating along this value chain. The workshop sought to raise awareness on decent rural employment issues and to build consensus among participants on the constraints, opportunities and priority actions needed to generate decent employment opportunities. In December, two trainings on business and entrepreneurial skills were also held for two groups of unemployed and underemployed youths in the District. The trainings were instrumental in identifying promising business

ideas and in strengthening young people's entrepreneurial and marketing skills. The collective insights gained from these activities will help guide additional SO3-PRI activities in 2014.

### Decent rural employment at CFS 40

On 9 October 2013, FAO, ILO and Sida co-hosted a side event on decent rural employment for poverty reduction and food security during the 40th session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS).

The purpose of the event was to highlight the centrality of decent rural employment in reducing rural poverty and enhancing food security. The panelists – including representatives from FAO, ILO, Sida and the Zambian delegation to FAO – stressed the need to build and maintain strong partnerships to effectively promote decent work in the agricultural sector and rural areas. Several examples of ongoing successful collaborations were discussed, including the joint ILO-FAO Decent Work for Food Security (DW4FS) programme, as well as the United Nations Joint Programme on promoting youth employment in Zambia. Panelists and participants also agreed on the need to discuss decent rural employment issues within the context of the formal CFS debate in the coming years.

## Recent publications:

### *Decent rural employment for food security: A case for action (and related leaflet)*



This case for action argues that creating more and better jobs in rural areas is essential to achieving food security and reducing poverty. Decent jobs will enable households to maintain a stable level and quality of food consumption and contribute to the overall social sustainability of agri-food systems.

Full publication: [www.fao.org/docrep/015/i2750e/i2750e00.pdf](http://www.fao.org/docrep/015/i2750e/i2750e00.pdf)

Leaflet: [www.fao.org/docrep/018/i2933e/i2933e.pdf](http://www.fao.org/docrep/018/i2933e/i2933e.pdf)

### *Guidance on addressing child labour in fisheries and aquaculture*



This document aims to provide guidance to governments and development partners on how to find practical pathways to address child labour and provide support to fishers, fish farmers and fish workers, particularly in the small-scale sector. It also offers for the first time a global overview of child labour in the different fisheries and aquaculture subsectors.

[www.fao.org/docrep/018/i3318e/i3318e.pdf](http://www.fao.org/docrep/018/i3318e/i3318e.pdf)

### *FAO promoting decent employment opportunities for rural youth*



This briefing paper details the complementary set of awareness-raising, policy assistance, capacity development and technical support activities through which FAO seeks to promote decent on- and off-farm employment opportunities for youths in rural areas.

[www.fao.org/docrep/018/i2976e/i2976e.pdf](http://www.fao.org/docrep/018/i2976e/i2976e.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 decent rural employment 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](http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i1937e/i1937e.pdf)

### *Children's work in the livestock sector: Herding and beyond (and related leaflet available in English, French and Spanish)*



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.

Full publication (available only in English): [www.fao.org/docrep/017/i3098e/i3098e.pdf](http://www.fao.org/docrep/017/i3098e/i3098e.pdf)

Leaflet: [www.fao.org/docrep/018/i2971e/i2971e.pdf](http://www.fao.org/docrep/018/i2971e/i2971e.pdf)

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