Decent rural employment for food security and poverty reduction

Paola Termine, IPEC of ILO
Peter Wobst, ES Department of FAO
I. Addressing decent work deficits

II. Decent rural employment in development policies & programmes: examples of policies and approaches
Reducing decent work deficits – Pillar 1

Employment & enterprise development

- **Addressing constraints**
  - Access to productive resources (land, credit, agricultural inputs, etc.)
  - Promote adequate technologies that enhance labour productivity

- **Transforming the structure of employment**
  - Invest in the skill base for productive employment (i.e. vocational training & education)
  - Support youth employment
  - Support productive mobility for all workers (e.g. women)

- **Entrepreneurship promotion** in rural areas
  - Supporting micro, small and medium enterprises and rural services including in agriculture

- Livelihoods diversification for decreasing risks and vulnerability

- Enhanced employability through **knowledge and skills interventions**
Reducing decent work deficits – Pillar 2

Social protection

- **Public employment programmes** (e.g. India)
  - Provided income opportunities & reduced vulnerability
  - Built or repaired community assets & infrastructure
- Universal pension schemes (e.g. South Africa)
  - Reduced poverty and inequality
  - Increased investment in education and health of children
- Conditional cash transfer programmes (e.g. Mexico)
  - Reduced number of work days lost to illness thanks to better health clinic attendance
- Promotion of safer technology
  - Reduced use of pesticides through Integrated Production and Pest Management
Reducing decent work deficits – Pillar 3

Standards & rights at work

- Extend labour laws to all forms of employment and agric sub-sectors
- Advocate & inform rural workers of their labour rights
- Reduce entry barriers for disadvantaged groups in labour markets & employment opportunities (i.e. access to land, mobility)
- Promote gender-sensitive working environment through normative actions, policies, strategies
- Promote gender equality in rural employment
- **Prevent and reduce child labour in agriculture**
Reducing decent work deficits – Pillar 4

Social dialogue

- Strengthen small producers’ organizations and cooperatives
- Encourage participation of women and youth in member-based organizations
- Encourage association of women, youth, migrants to complement formal unions to give voice to specific categories of workforce
- Support formal unions in opening up to self-employed farmers and agricultural workers (e.g. General Agricultural Workers Union of Ghana)
Examples of programmes & approaches

- **Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS)**
- **Integrated approach on child labour in agriculture (MALI)**
- **Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA)**
- **General Agricultural Workers' Union (GAWU)**

- **Additional Examples**
  - ....
The JFFLS is an adaptation of the Farmer Field Schools (FFS)

Since 2004, the approach has been expanded to 16 countries in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East

Some 20,000 youths (50:50) have graduated from the schools

The JFFLS is an integrated approach, which combines in a youth friendly way agricultural & entrepreneurial skills with life skills

The methodology is contextualized and adapted to different country needs
The JFFLS approach

- Developing life skills (self esteem, decision-making skills, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, health & hygiene)
- Promoting Youth Farmers' Associations
- Rights awareness: child labour prevention; gender equality; land & property rights
- Developing an integrated learning methodology (agr. & life skills)
- Collaborating with central & local authorities
- Adapting curricula to local needs & contexts
- Strengthening involved institutions’ capacities
- Aligning to national priorities & promoting national ownership
- Entrenching JFFLS into national employment programmes
- Enhancing agro-skills: field preparation., seeding, planting, IPM, harvesting, irrigation
- Understanding ecosystems, Agro-Eco System Analysis (AESA)
- Promoting G.A.P. & environmental awareness
- Developing life skills (self esteem, decision-making skills, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, health & hygiene)
- Promoting entrepreneurship, business & marketing skills
- Facilitating access to credit
Institutionalization of JFFLS

Ministry of Youth
Ministry of Education

Institutional Support

Youth Clubs - Schools

Vocational Training Centers

FAO

Capacity Building

Norms and Standards

Innovation Programmes

Inclusion of agric. skills in MoYDS - MoE curriculum

Creation of Youth Farmers’ Associations

National ownership - Up-scaling to all MoYDS clubs and MoE schools & farmers’ cooperatives

Rural Finance Institutions

Farmers’ Organizations & Cooperatives
Addressing DRE through the JFFLS approach

- **Employment & enterprise development**
  - Stimulating youth employment & entrepreneurship
  - Providing job-relevant vocational training in rural areas
  - Facilitating access to credit & markets through Youth Farmers Associations (YFAs)
  - Reducing distress rural out-migration of youth

- **Social protection**
  - Introducing safer technologies
  - Improving knowledge on nutrition, health & hygiene

- **Standards & rights at work**
  - Introducing child labour prevention modules
  - Improving gender equality

- **Social dialogue**
  - Empowering youth & raising self-esteem
  - Promoting youth participation in producers’ organizations
  - Enhancing youth voice & social dialogue
NREGA is a right-based public employment programme, in which a level of entitlement to work is provided. The objective is to enhance livelihood security, providing basic employment guarantee in rural areas.

**Results:** 2008-2009, 45 M households, 2163 M people days of work

**Innovations:**
- Demand-driven
- Statutory guarantee (100 days/max 15 days of delay)
- Minimum wage, equal remuneration and quotas (1/3 female)
- Web site in place [http://www.nrega.nic.in](http://www.nrega.nic.in) to assure transparency and accountability

**Limitations:**
- Limited work typologies
- Uneven results/administrative problems (on average 42 working days per year out of 100)
- Need for greater integration of gender concerns
Addressing DRE through NREGA

- **Employment & enterprise development**
  - Creating employment (e.g. lean season)
  - Building or rehabilitating vital community-based assets
  - Reducing distress rural out-migration
  - Creating new employment opportunities through improved infrastructure & market linkages

- **Social protection**
  - Employment guarantee scheme for rural households

- **Standards & rights at work**
  - Paying a minimum wages & equal remuneration for women & men
  - Empowering workers (employment dependent upon the worker exercising the choice to apply for jobs)
  - Introducing time-bound actions to fulfil the guarantee
  - Providing work site facilities such as crèche
  - Influencing working conditions and employability of beneficiaries

- **Social dialogue**
  - Increasing transparency & accountability, notion of right to work
Integrated approaches for child labour elimination - Mali

**Goal**: addressing the root causes of child labour in agriculture integrating CL prevention, education, livelihoods support and adapted technology

**Context:**
- More than 80% of CL is in agriculture
- Existing national policies and structures to address CL (PANETEM, CNLTE) but not effective on agriculture. Agricultural stakeholders rarely participate in community, district and national child labour action and coordination
- Missing common national understanding of child labour in agriculture
Integrated approaches for child labour elimination Mali (cont.)

Results:

- Enhanced dialogue, coordination & engagement of agricultural and labour stakeholders (MoA, MoL, agric trade unions, producers orgs)
- Integration of CL issues in agricultural & RD policies
- Improved focus on agriculture in CL policies (National Action Plan)
- Awareness and knowledge, shared understanding on labour and agriculture sides
- Decreasing dependency on CL through:
  - Livelihoods support at producers / family / community level
  - Piloting and promotion of labour saving technologies and safer agricultural practices
Lessons learned:

- Agricultural stakeholders are interested in being more actively involved in child labour work, if they perceive:
  - Food production, income generation and poverty reduction as means of reducing child labour
  - Child labour as a threat to future decent employment in youth and adulthood (life-cycle)
  - Child labour as a long-term threat to agricultural and rural development

- Clarifying child labour laws is important, but not the best entry point for discussion. It is important to find a common language

- Agricultural stakeholders can bring innovative solutions to causes of CL based on technical knowledge and production processes
Addressing DRE through integrated approach for CL elimination

- **Employment & enterprise development**
  - Creating alternative livelihoods opportunities
  - Addressing constraints in labour supply
  - Promoting return to school and vocational training

- **Social protection**
  - Promoting occupational safety and health to reduce hazardous work
  - Increasing access to health services for children

- **Standards & rights at work**
  - Eliminating child labour in all agricultural sub-sectors
  - Contributing to improve adult workers’ rights

- **Social dialogue**
  - Enhancing engagement of sectoral trade unions and producers’ organization
  - Including child labour clauses in collective bargaining agreements
The General Agricultural Workers Union (GAWU), established in 1959, is a large trade union for agricultural standards with 47,000 members (25,000 small-scale farmers and 22,000 formal sector employees).

In Ghana 8 million are small independent farmers. GAWU has understood that to maintain membership and achieve results it is important to mobilize them and become a reference institution at community level.

GAWU promotes integrated programmes to address the daily needs of their members and the community (employment and livelihoods, credit, training) as a means to campaign and build a strong base to promote labour rights.
Addressing DRE through GAWU’s approach

- **Employment & enterprise development**
  - Creating alternative livelihoods opportunities during lean season
- **Social protection**
  - Providing safety nets at community level (including microfinance) to build a strong supporters’ base
  - Promote OSH training and reduced use of pesticides
- **Standards & rights at work**
  - Eliminating child labour through community engagement
  - Promoting gender equality
- **Social dialogue**
  - Opening up membership to self-employed farmers
  - Organising the informal sector
  - Mobilising community around social development issues
Discussion questions

- What strategies can be used to promote employment and sustainable economic growth (both farm and non-farm), and to reduce poverty in rural areas?

- How can rights at work be extended, implemented and enforced in rural areas?

- How can social protection and social inclusion be extended and improved in rural areas?

- How can better governance and social dialogue be promoted in rural areas?

- How can national and local governments, and employers’ and workers’ organizations best contribute to decent rural employment and poverty reduction?
Publications for additional reading

- **Combating poverty and inequality: Structural Change, Social Policy and Politics**, UNRISD, 2010

- **Gender dimensions of agricultural and rural employment: Differentiated pathways out of poverty**, FAO, IFAD, ILO, 2010

- **International migration, remittances and rural development**, FAO, IFAD, ILO, 2008

- **Promotion of rural employment for poverty reduction**, ILO, 2008

- **Rural Youth Employment in Developing Countries: A Global View**, FAO, March 2010

Q & A

...