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INFORMATION MATERIAL

FAO's Integrated Country Approach (ICA) for promoting decent rural employment in Uganda



Sustainable Development Goal 8

The Integrated Country Approach (ICA) programme contributes to Goal 8 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which is dedicated to decent work: "Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all."

Decent rural employment is key to achieving food security and alleviating poverty. FAO has committed, through its Strategic Framework, to foster the enabling environment in support of decent rural employment (DRE), with special focus on rural youth and women's economic and social empowerment. One of the FAO's flagship programmes in this area is the **Integrated Country Approach (ICA) for promoting decent rural employment**. So far, the ICA programme has been implemented in five countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America, mainly funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, under the FAO Multi-Partner Support Mechanism. In Uganda, the programme implementation started in 2015.

- The **DRE Toolbox**, a repository of practical tools including case studies, guidance materials and other useful resources, organized in different modules that cover the main components of FAO's approach to mainstreaming decent rural employment.
- The **e-Learning Courses** on *End Child Labour in Agriculture* and *Promoting productive employment and decent work in rural areas* (forthcoming in 2017), which provides knowledge and guidance on how to promote DRE to FAO's staff as well as policy-makers and technical staff in developing countries.

At country level, ICA focuses on enhancing the **employment content** of national strategies, policies and programmes for agricultural and rural development. Addressing the employment challenge requires increased capacities across several institutions responsible for both employment promotion and agricultural development. For this reason, ICA advocates for the need to support capacity development of core rural institutions, produces knowledge documents and guidance materials, and facilitates the establishment of **private-public partnerships**.

ICA actively promotes multi-stakeholder mechanisms for dialogue between agriculture and employment stakeholders and fosters coherence among policies in different sectors, including those related to agriculture, employment, migration, social protection, youth and women. Gender equality and environmental sustainability are mainstreamed as cross-cutting issues.

An integrated approach



The ICA approach mobilizes several **core functions** of FAO, with the aim to induce sustainable policy change. The integrated nature of ICA also refers to its **multilevel scope**.

At global and regional level, ICA contributes to FAO's overall efforts to promote DRE issues in the agricultural and rural development discourse. Such active mainstreaming goes hand in hand with FAO's normative work on DRE, setting international standards connected with food and agriculture. Also, ICA contributes to knowledge generation through the following instruments:

- The **Policy database on employment and decent work in rural areas**, an online inventory of national, regional and global policies, programmes and studies that are relevant to the promotion of decent jobs in rural areas;

An inclusive approach

The ICA programme has been implemented in two phases. The **first phase** was implemented in Malawi and Tanzania (2011-2014), while the **second phase** in Guatemala, Senegal, and Uganda (2015-2017).

This second phase focuses on the **rural youth** and in particular on the provision of strategic support to enhance the enabling environment for their engagement in agriculture.

High unemployment and underemployment are big challenges among youth in Uganda, especially considering that **78 percent** of the population is **below 30 years of age** (Uganda Population Census Results, 2015). This youthful population offers a demographic dividend that can be of great benefit if the country invests in improving the quality of the human resource. Yet, the participation of youth in the different sectors of the economy remains limited and **below its potential**. This is particularly true for agriculture and rural areas, which are increasingly losing their capacity to attract the younger generations due to underdevelopment, poor economic diversification and private sector development, as well as the low productivity and returns in subsistence farming. Increasingly youth are **migrating** from rural to urban areas to engage in small urban based income generating activities that are perceived as offering quick and regular income with less risk, such as riding *bodaboda* (motorcycles for hire) or conducting petty trade and service sector work such as in hotels and restaurants.

The implementation of the ICA in Uganda started in 2015 with a **mapping exercise** to adapt the intervention to the demands of the country and determine specific entry points. An assessment of labor standards and related practices in the agricultural sector has also been conducted.

The main partners identified are the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) and the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD). In addition, research institutions such as the Economic Policy Research Center (EPRC) support the research component of the ICA Project.

In terms of **priorities** agreed with partners, the ICA programme in Uganda will support:

- An **inclusive process of policy dialogue** on the best strategies to promote decent employment opportunities for the rural youth, starting from an assessment of the current approaches adopted by national programmes;
- The **generation of knowledge** on the existing national regulatory frameworks and legal barriers for rural youth employment in the agricultural sector, as well as on the situation of school drop-outs and in particular younger youth in the age bracket 15-17, who are often left outside most youth employment interventions;

- The **integration of youth and employment considerations** in other policy areas and tools, such as the national extension policy and the MAAIF and UBOS statistical tools.



Support for the development of the Strategy for Youth in Agriculture in Uganda

Within the framework of the ICA programme, the MAAIF requested FAO support for the development of a Strategy for Youth in Agriculture. The objective of the Strategy would be to enhance the enabling environment for youth engagement in the sector, while contributing to towards changing the attitudes among rural youth and communities so that they perceive agriculture as a business and adopt practices that will make selected enterprises commercially viable. Specific activities under this strategy will include:

- 1) **Training** youth in agro-enterprise development;
- 2) Identifying **youth champions** and targeting them to serve as role models;
- 3) Training youth in **farming as a business** and identifying linkages to agribusiness incubators and financing;
- 4) Promoting youth **participation** in small-scale value addition processing;
- 5) Promoting **occupational safety and health** and other decent work standards in the sector, and
- 6) Promoting the utilization of the **youth livelihood fund** and other funds targeting youth by profiling and supporting the youth to develop agricultural enterprises.

A Technical Working Group (TWG) has been established to provide leadership to the process of developing the strategy and to oversee the coordinated efforts of the ICA programme. These include among others, the National Planning Authority (NPA), MAAIF and MGLSD, and youth and farmer organizations such as the Young Farmer Champion Network and Uganda Farmers Federation. Also, several regional consultations have been held in 2016 with representatives from the Northern, Eastern Western and Central regions.

The strategy will guide MAAIF in addressing youth issues to the **Agriculture Sector Strategic Plan (ASSP) 2015/16-2019/20**, and directly contribute to the recently approved National Action Plan on Youth Employment (NAPYE).

