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# Green Jobs for Rural Youth



Green jobs are decent jobs that contribute to preserve or restore the environment. By definition, green jobs meet all criteria of the social, economic, and environmental sustainability. Promoting green jobs can be a powerful tool to address many global issues such as rural poverty, unemployment, climate change, and food insecurity.

## Context

While **agriculture** remains the **largest employer in the world**, it is a sector that is highly hazardous and often associated with working poverty and vulnerable employment. At a global scale, agriculture is a major source of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, the largest user and a significant polluter of water, and can cause both land degradation and loss of biodiversity. However, there is enormous potential to turn this situation around and adopt agricultural practices that contribute to **sustainability** and **improved livelihoods**.

**Green jobs** can support this shift and provide **innovative solutions** to climate change and environmental degradation, while supporting decent work for vulnerable and marginalized population in rural areas. Revitalising rural economies and promoting green jobs for rural youth is also essential to address the unemployment crisis, and consequently to mitigate some of the adverse drivers of migration, and to reduce poverty and inequality.

Green jobs can help lift millions of workers **out of poverty** and promote **social inclusion**. The transition towards the Green Economy is projected to generate over 24 million full-time jobs by 2050. In this scenario, youth can become catalysts of the needed transformations to make agriculture sustainable and improve rural livelihoods.

To meet the demand for youth employment in the Green Economy, what is required is a **package** of (i) education, skills development and training; (ii) innovative sustainable technologies; and (iii) policy support.

## Key facts



**30%**

of the anthropogenic GHG stem from the food sector



**70%**

of freshwater is used in agriculture, which is also a major driver of biodiversity loss, deforestation, soil degradation and climate change



**Over 3/4**

of the world's poor live in rural areas and many of them depend on agriculture



**42 million**

new entrants to the labour market every year while 126 million are working but living in poverty



**88%**

of the world's 1.2 billion youth (15-24 age cohort) live in developing countries and count for 24 percent of the working poor

## FAO's role

FAO has a **longstanding experience** working with governments and agriculture stakeholders to effectively promote youth-inclusive policies, laws, strategies and programmes aimed at creating **green, decent employment** and youth engagement in agri-food systems.

Through the Green Jobs for Youth work area, FAO strives to identify the **most promising value chains** for green development in agri-food systems, energy, waste management, and other rural industries. Solutions include agroforestry, agroecology, climate smart-agriculture, and bioenergy, among others sustainable innovations.

Partnerships with **public and private actors** as well as local communities and farmers are an integral feature of the FAO approach to green jobs, ensuring that the initiatives are **sustainable** and owned by local actors. Involving green business partners also allows the private sector to play a critical role in scaling up green job opportunities in rural areas.

FAO is working to **strengthen the capacity** of public and private actors in order to guide youth employment and entrepreneurship schemes conducive to the green economy. Interventions will support youth in the provision of technical and transferable skills.



## Boosting green jobs for rural youth in agri-food systems

In **Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe and Timor-Leste**, FAO is training 600 rural and urban young men and women in green agriculture, green energy, and waste management. At the end of the training, the authors of the most promising plans will be employed in the public and private sector. The emerging challenges and best practices will be used to inform the development of national strategies for rural youth employment and transition to the Green Economy.

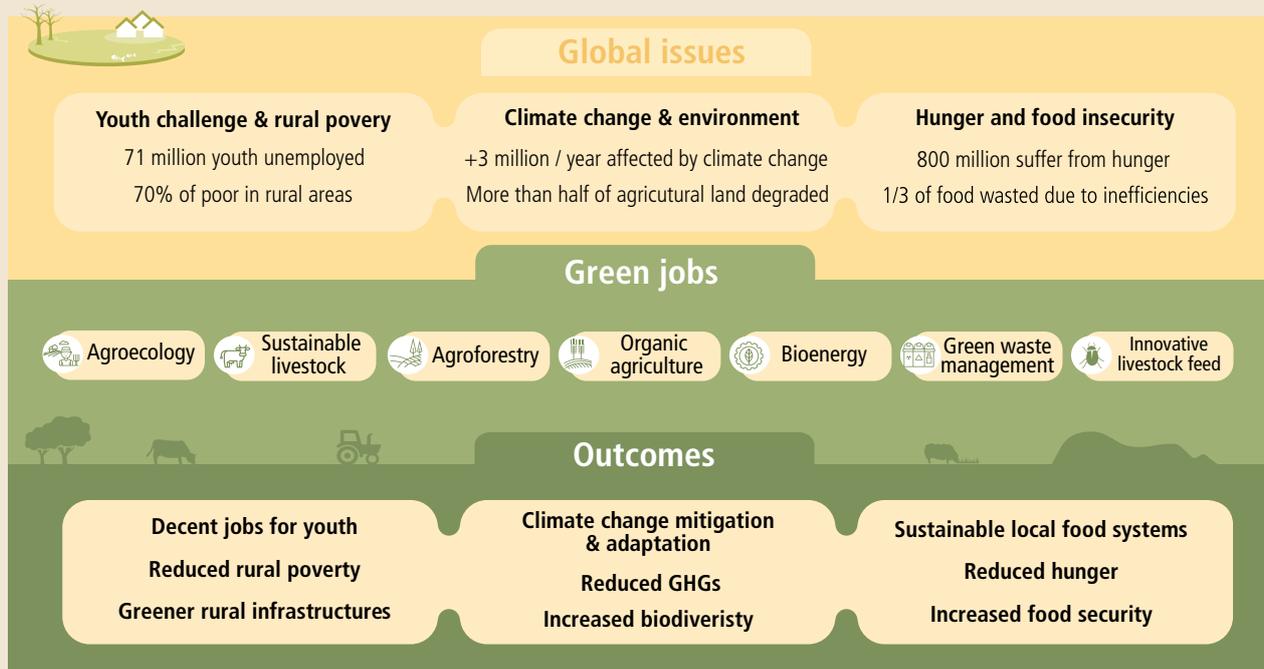
**Project duration:** December 2019 - June 2024

**Budget:** 6 million USD

**Resource partner:** Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA)

**Beneficiaries:** 600 youth trained on green jobs across rural economic sectors. 300 youth supported in implementing green businesses, also through public green employment schemes. 9,000 youth trained by partners. 100 government officials received policy support.

## Expected results



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