

# 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 first half of 2012 on gender-equitable decent rural employment 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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## New FAO publication

### Decent rural employment for food security: A case for action

FAO has recently released *Decent rural employment for food security: A case for action*. This publication argues that investing more in the promotion of decent rural employment (DRE) will contribute highly to the interlinked challenges



of fighting rural poverty and feeding a growing world population in a sustainable way. In order to substantiate that, the document presents arguments along the four dimensions of food security.

In particular, more productive and decent employment in agriculture and agri-business will: (I) Increase food availability by contributing to a sustainable increase in domestic production; (II) Boost people’s access to food through increased incomes, while reducing inequalities and fostering inclusiveness; (III) Improve food utilization, through improved diets due to more stable incomes and better work life balance; (IV) Improve the stability of food security over time by fostering more sustainable food systems and investing in the human and social capital of rural populations.

Building on these, the document identifies four priority themes for action: (1) Promotion of employment-centred responsible agro-investments towards sustainable rural development and food security for all; (2) Support to gender and age-disaggregated analysis of rural labour markets and conditions of employment in the informal rural economy; (3) Promotion of decent work conditions in agriculture by pooling and increasing current efforts of the organization towards more socially sustainable agricultural production; (4) Advocacy for the centrality of DRE promotion for adapting and coping with disasters, economic crises and other emergencies. The document is expected to have important implications for the way FAO approaches agriculture and rural development.

For more information: [www.fao-ilo.org/ilo-dec-employ](http://www.fao-ilo.org/ilo-dec-employ)

### 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 Tanzania on strategic policy planning for employment-centred agriculture and rural development

The workshop (7-10 May 2012, Morogoro, Tanzania) was carried out as a follow-up activity of a Capacity Needs Assessment, which was undertaken in Tanzania in September 2011. It was attended by 33 participants (senior technical staff and director-level) from government institutions, CSOs, and UN agencies from both Mainland and Zanzibar.

The overall theme of the workshop was the integration of DRE aspects (including youth employment, child labour prevention, and gender equality) into strategic planning of national agriculture and rural development policies, strategies 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 on this topic as well as to provide knowledge, references and materials for the integration of DRE aspects into national policy processes. The workshop was favourably received and evaluated by the participants.

### 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.

#### Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools in Egypt

The Egyptian Ministry of Agriculture and FAO have signed an agreement for a project aiming at improving household food security by targeting women and youth. The project will be implemented in five governorates in Upper Egypt and will address the economic, socio-cultural, and behavioral causes of household food insecurity through the creation of an integrated pilot model. Youth will be trained using the Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS) methodology in environmentally friendly and bio-secure ways of producing food and rearing animals, as well as in an array of skills to prepare them to run small enterprises. The program is part of FAO's commitment in the region to combat the effects of the financial and political shocks.

For more information: [neareast.fao.org](http://neareast.fao.org)

### Young People, Farming and Food International Conference, 19-21 March 2012

FAO participated in the Young People, Farming and Food International Conference, organized in partnership with the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), in conjunction with the CAADP process. The conference was held in Accra, Ghana.

The overarching theme was making agriculture viable and attractive for young people.

In the entrepreneurship and employment session, FAO presented a paper entitled "Exploring opportunities and constraints for young agro-entrepreneurs in Africa". The presentation provided some examples of how governments and national stakeholders may approach the planning and implementation of youth employment strategies and programmes in Africa, with particular attention to the agriculture sector.

Discussions at the conference were focused on creating incentives for young people to engage in agriculture, particularly through the modernization of the sector. Good practices such as providing affordable credit for young farmers, investing in all levels of education, supporting and investing in agricultural innovation, building market infrastructure and improving the business environment were outlined and practical examples shared from throughout the African continent.

For more information: [www.fao-ilo.org](http://www.fao-ilo.org)

### Preventing and reducing child labour

#### Reducing hazardous child labour in agriculture: Working with farmers in Mali

F30 Farmer Field School facilitators and extension agents in the Sikasso and Niono regions of Mali were trained in June on reducing hazardous child labour in cotton and rice production.

The workshops were organized by the Ministry of Agriculture, with the support of FAO, the ILO and the National Committee Against Child Labour.



The training piloted capacity development modules on child labour in agriculture, particularly on occupational health and safety, children's exposure to pesticides and risks related to children's involvement in ox ploughing.

Participants identified entry points to systematically include the topic of child labour reduction and prevention in Farmer Field School curricula throughout crop cycles with a focus on assessing risks and building alternatives.

FAO also partnered with the producers' organization OREMAP to produce a radio programme to raise awareness in the two regions.

#### Addressing labour conditions in fisheries and aquaculture: COFI side-event on how to tackle child labour and improve working conditions?

FAO and ILO have long cooperated on labour-related issues in fisheries and aquaculture. A growing area of collaboration is child labour. The FAO-ILO side-event to



FAO's Committee on Fisheries (COFI) on 12 July 2012 provided the opportunity to present the FAO-ILO guidance

document on addressing child labour in fisheries and aquaculture, share national experiences from Thailand, Cambodia and Malawi, and discuss how the implementation of international labour standards (particularly ILO Convention No. 188 on work in fishing) could help improving working conditions in the fisheries sector.

### Targeting child labour in Cambodian fisheries

The Cambodian Fisheries Administration has integrated child labour targets into its 10-year strategic planning framework and the Cambodian Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. In this context, a "National Plan of Action on Eliminating Child Labour in Fisheries & Aquaculture Sector of Cambodia" was developed at an FAO-ILO supported workshop and adopted by the participants of the National Workshop on small-scale fisheries consultative process (February 2012).

### World Day Against Child Labour 2012

On the occasion of the World Day Against Child Labour 2012, FAO organized a series of activities both at FAO



headquarters and at country level.

A joint FAO-ILO event in Rome featured a new documentary

"[Reducing child labour through partnership](#)", which warns that the goal of eliminating the worst forms of child labour by 2016 will not be met without an increased commitment at global level. A panel of FAO managers discussed the work undertaken by their departments on child labour and what more needs to be done to achieve the goal of eliminating the worst forms of child labour in agriculture. Labour and agriculture stakeholders also came together in Tanzania and Mali to commemorate the day and discuss the way forward.

For more information: [www.fao-ilo.org/fao-ilo-child](http://www.fao-ilo.org/fao-ilo-child)

### Other news...

#### FAO's contribution to the 2012 UN ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) on decent work and promoting productive capacity, 2-27 July 2012

The 2012 ECOSOC AMR on the theme of "Promoting productive capacity, employment and decent work to eradicate poverty in the context of inclusive, sustainable and equitable economic growth at all

levels for achieving the MDGs" was held in New York. FAO contributed throughout the preparatory process, including participating in the [Global Preparatory Meeting](#), and providing technical inputs to the [Secretary – General's Report on the AMR's](#) theme. FAO's involvement ensured that issues of food security, agriculture and rural development were adequately reflected.

Furthermore, together with ILO, WFP, IFAD, and UNDESA, FAO organized a side-event on "Promoting Decent Work in Rural Areas for Achieving Food Security". The aim was to draw attention to the linkages between rural employment, poverty reduction and food security.

Through a moderated discussion, panelists shared their insights and experiences on the topic. Participants expressed general agreement on the holistic nature of decent work and food security issues and on the importance of working together and delivering as one.

Decent jobs, a social protection floor and safety nets were all acknowledged as necessary for rural people to have sustainable livelihoods. The



necessity of creating public private partnerships and to increase investment in rural areas was also emphasized.

### ILO 12<sup>th</sup> African Regional Meeting

In October 2011, FAO participated in the ILO 12<sup>th</sup> African Regional Meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa, serving on the panel for the thematic discussion on "Rural employment, industrial development and structural transformation as a path of decent work". FAO highlighted the fact that two thirds of the sub-Saharan African workforce is concentrated in rural areas and that decent work is the most sustainable and dignified means of food procurement, social inclusion and long-term food security. FAO's contribution to the conference focused on the need to create decent work for rural youth and to prevent and reduce child labour, over 60% of which is in agricultural. With respect to the FAO-ILO partnership, there was recognition that the CAADP process and the renewed global interest in the agriculture sector present rich opportunities for future collaboration between the two agencies, particularly given their commonality and complementarities in vision.

For more information: [www.un.org/en/ecosoc](http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc)

### Master on Applied Labour Economics for Development

Jointly with ILO, FAO held on 3 May 2012 a "Rural Employment" seminar in the Master on Applied

Labour Economics for Development (MALED) at the Turin School of Development (ITC-ILO), Italy. The course highlighted contemporary global labour market challenges. Decent rural employment promotion as a means for food security and poverty reduction was discussed as a necessary condition for economic growth, rural development and social transformation. The concepts of decent work, the relevance of decent rural employment and the challenges of addressing decent work in rural areas were presented along with concrete examples of policies and good practices.

## Stories from the field

### Adam Athumani, 19 year old agro-entrepreneur from Mamfando village, Tanzania

Adam comes from a family of agro producers and had long held ambitions of having his own agro business and providing for his young family.

After he attended a two-week training course organized by FAO in June 2011 on agricultural skills, production, agribusiness using the JFFLS methodology, Adam,

went back to his village and debriefed the leaders of the local cooperative on the outcomes of the training and his wish to pursue a career in agriculture. The cooperative leaders promised to cooperate with him in mobilizing more young people in the area to work with Adam in the agriculture sector.

Jointly with the cooperative and village leaders, Adam, managed to mobilize 120 young men and women. After organizing the group, Adam and his peers managed to secure 300 acres of land from the regional commissioner to start up their commercial agro activities.

As Adam explains: “Agro business needs patience and good planning. Youth can benefit a lot from it, if they work as a group. This can be easily done if there is a cooperative assisting rural youth in their access to land and markets and [it] would be very simple to attract young people in[to] the agriculture sector if the government recognizes youth efforts and wishes to be part of commercial agriculture”.

For more info on youth employment activities in Tanzania: [www.fao-ilo.org/news-ilo/detail/en/news/148816](http://www.fao-ilo.org/news-ilo/detail/en/news/148816)

## 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 and argues that improving policy coherence between employment and agricultural initiatives and investing more in the promotion of decent rural employment will contribute highly to the interlinked challenges of fighting rural poverty and feeding a growing world population in a sustainable way.

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

### *Gender and rural employment: Differentiated pathways out of poverty and seven related policy briefs*



These publications represent a first step in providing policy makers, development practitioners, civil society and private sector organizations, workers' and employers' organizations, the UN, donors and researchers, with an up-to-date analyses of the issue, examples of innovative success stories and a menu of policy options.

[www.fao-ilo.org/publications3/workshop/en/](http://www.fao-ilo.org/publications3/workshop/en/)

### *Guidance on how to address rural employment and decent work concerns in FAO country activities and Quick Reference*



These documents are 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 work programmes, projects and activities.

[www.fao-ilo.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/fao\\_ilo/pdf/DecentWorkGuidance\\_impagWEB\\_DEF.pdf](http://www.fao-ilo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/fao_ilo/pdf/DecentWorkGuidance_impagWEB_DEF.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](http://www.fao.org/docrep/012/i1450e/i1450e00.pdf)

### *FAO-ILO Good practice guide for addressing child labour in fisheries and aquaculture: policy and practice. Preliminary version*



This guidance document presents the situation of child labour in fisheries and aquaculture and underlines the need for action, aiming to help policymakers and government authorities tackle the issue of child labour in the sector.

[www.fao-ilo.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/fao\\_ilo/pdf/FAO-ILOGuidelines\\_child\\_labour\\_in\\_fisheries\\_and\\_aquaculture\\_Policy\\_practice\\_Preliminary\\_version.pdf](http://www.fao-ilo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/fao_ilo/pdf/FAO-ILOGuidelines_child_labour_in_fisheries_and_aquaculture_Policy_practice_Preliminary_version.pdf)