



Table 1 | Challenges and opportunities

Issues	Challenges	Opportunities
<b>Value chains</b>	Poorly integrated rural-urban value chains are missed opportunities for market integration of rural young producers and entrepreneurs.	Strong rural-urban connectivity allows young people to diversify their activities and develop businesses along agri-food value chains.
<b>Infrastructures / Services</b>	Rural youth often lack access to land and finance. Inadequate infrastructure and services connecting rural to urban areas also limit access to markets.	Better access to land, services and urban markets increases the profitability and sustainability of rural youth's farms and enterprises.
<b>Education</b>	Rural youth have less access than urban youth to quality education and training relevant to the labour market	Increased access to good quality and relevant education and training enables rural youth to find better jobs along agri-food value chains.
<b>Migration</b>	Many rural youth migrate to cities due to lack of productive and decent work opportunities in rural areas.	Strong rural-urban linkages create employment opportunities for rural youth preventing distress migration.
<b>Domestic remittances</b>	Young migrants and their rural families often rely on informal, costly and insecure channels to transfer remittances from urban areas.	Domestic remittances sent through formal channels by young migrants can lead to productive investments in rural areas.
<b>Socio-cultural</b>	Local traditions and social norms often prevent rural youth, especially young women, to access productive resources and integrate into value chains.	Limiting social exclusion against vulnerable youth can facilitate their access to productive resources and integration into inclusive value chains.

## Way forward: Integrated approaches

An integrated approach should be promoted that builds on **partnerships** among relevant stakeholders in rural and urban areas. Governments and stakeholders should aim at policies, programmes and investments that:

- **Promote agribusiness for youth.** Rural youth can become “agripreneurs” along agri-food value chains, from production and aggregation to processing and marketing. Supporting their access to productive resources can help them invest in profitable smallholder agricultural activities.
- **Invest in hard and soft infrastructure.** Access to energy, roads, communications and water infrastructure is essential, as well as facilitating the flow of goods, labour, money and information.
- **Operate both on labour supply and demand.** Rural youth need access to quality training in order to develop relevant skills for the labour market (supply), and decent farm and non-farm employment opportunities within agri-food value chains (demand).
- **Integrate decent work aspects.** Policies should improve working conditions of young rural women and men employed in agri-food value chains by extending social protection, workers’ rights, occupational safety and health, and rural workers’ groups.
- **Adopt context-specific and territorial approaches.** National and sectoral policies should be coordinated with local development strategies taking into account particular local youth employment challenges. Small and medium-sized towns can also provide a meeting point between urban and rural businesses turning into hubs for employment, entrepreneurship and training for rural youth.
- **Improve linkages between urban centres and smallholder farmers and their organizations.** Enhancing linkages between smallholders and market opportunities across agri-food value chains, creating decent employment in them, and fostering shared sustainable arrangements between urban and rural groups are necessary preconditions to create inclusive and sustainable rural-urban linkages.

*This brief was prepared by Elisenda Estruch and David Schwebel (FAO), and David Suttie and Karim Hussein (IFAD)*