

Promoting Decent Rural Employment through FAO's Integrated Country Approach in Malawi and Tanzania

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 (FAO) of the United Nations has committed, through its Strategic Framework, to ensure that the enabling environment in support of decent rural employment is improved.

The promotion of decent rural employment is part of FAO's mandate and contributes to reaching its three global goals: reducing hunger, eliminating poverty and managing natural resources in a sustainable manner. FAO's Decent Rural Employment Team (DRET) coordinates and implements FAO's efforts in supporting member countries to effectively promote decent rural employment at country level through an Integrated Country Approach (ICA).

In January 2011, FAO launched a three-year programme in Malawi and Tanzania entitled: “Policy support on rural employment and decent work for the promotion of equitable and sustainable livelihoods under conditions of climate change” that is funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).



The main purpose of this programme is to provide policy and institutional support to key national stakeholders (in particular national ministries of agriculture, as well as farmers' unions and federations) with the aim of generating a greater enabling environment for DRE at the national level. This is

based on an understanding that decent employment is crucial for inclusive economic growth, poverty reduction and food security in rural areas. Consequently, the programme focuses on promoting productive employment opportunities in agriculture and related occupations such as agro-processing and retailing.

The rural unemployed and underemployed, particularly women and youth, are the primary beneficiaries of this programme. They include subsistence farmers, own-account workers in the informal economy, unpaid family labourers or workers under vulnerable employment arrangements (e.g. casual and migrant workers).

The programme also directly contributes to national

growth and poverty reduction strategies (including the MGDS II in Malawi, as well as MKUKUTA II and MKUZA II in Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar); the United Nation's development assistance frameworks and plans (UNDAFs/UNDAPs) that are in place at country level; the ILO-led decent work country programmes (DWCPs) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), specifically MDG 1 and its target 1B.

The programme is implemented in collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO). By fostering country-level cooperation with the ILO and its partners, the programme encourages policy dialogue between agriculture and labour stakeholders in Malawi and Tanzania. It also fosters cross-sectoral policy coherence and coordinates its activities within other national and regional programmes (e.g. AU/NEPAD and CAADP), as well as with other UN agencies in both countries.

Integrated Country Approach

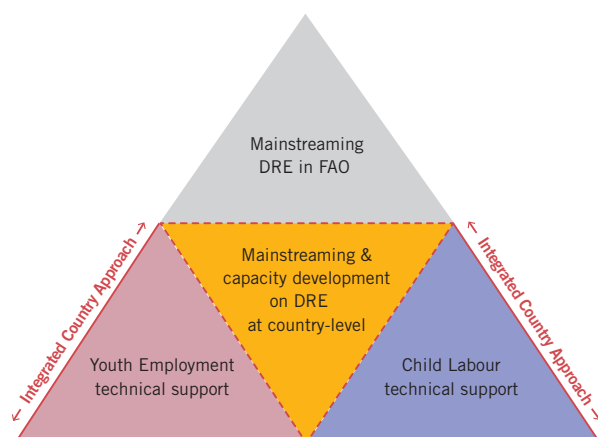
Creating more and better rural jobs depends on the effective implementation of rural development policies and strategies, supported by efficient rural institutions. It requires strengthening inter-ministerial and multi-stakeholder mechanisms, further empowering civil society organisations and engaging with the private sector. To support these national processes, FAO's DRET has developed an [Integrated Country Approach \(ICA\)](#) for the promotion of decent rural employment, which is currently being implemented in Malawi and Tanzania.



The country interventions have several components, namely: awareness raising and mainstreaming; capacity development; youth employment promotion and child labour prevention. The ICA aims to combine the technical support provided by FAO on specific areas of work, such as youth employment promotion or child labour prevention in agriculture, with assistance to strategic planning, policy formulation and national capacity development processes. The approach is aligned with the four pillars of the Decent Work Agenda: employment creation, rights and standards at work, social protection and social dialogue. Gender equality, rural institutions and rural-urban linkages are the main crosscutting issues.

The work carried out under the ICA is part of FAO's overall efforts to promote and mainstream DRE issues both in-house and at the global level. It goes hand in hand with FAO's normative work on DRE, including the production of knowledge documents and guidance materials that are subsequently applied to various national contexts (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: The Integrated Country Approach as part of FAO's interventional logic for the promotion of DRE



Programme Structure

Component 1: Awareness raising and mainstreaming

There is significant awareness in Malawi and Tanzania on the centrality of employment for rural growth and especially on the need to render the agricultural sector more attractive for young people in order to generate more and better jobs. However, this awareness has not yet translated into national integrated approaches that would successfully help tackle the complex issue of decent rural employment.

Within major Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD) policies and strategies, employment continues to be viewed as an indirect effect of agricultural transformation, growth and value addition instead of an immediate driver of these processes. Hence, there is a need for employment to be considered explicitly in strategic planning and policy processes.

Moreover, there are some dimensions of the employment challenge that fail to be taken into consideration adequately. In particular, the quality of rural jobs tends to remain overlooked. This is mostly due to a lack of information regarding the severity of decent work deficits in rural areas (e.g. rates of child labour; occupational health and safety risks in subsistence agriculture; women's work burden and lower access to inputs and training), as well as on how this phenomenon has a negative impact on agricultural productivity and the growth of the rural economy.

In addition to raising awareness, the programme supports the mainstreaming of decent rural employment concerns into ARD policies and related implementation strategies. Providing information is often not enough to promote changes in action. For this reason, FAO's role also includes providing guidance to national stakeholders on how to develop concrete programmes and strategic interventions.

Activities include:

- Mapping of national policy and institutional frameworks, as well as identifying knowledge gaps related to DRE;
- In collaboration with UNRISD, developing an analytical framework for employment-centred policy analysis and support;
- Producing thematic studies and policy briefs, as well as identifying and sharing good practices;
- Providing technical inputs to reflect DRE in ARD-related policies, strategies and programmes;
- Providing technical support to existing multi-stakeholder mechanisms for policy and social dialogue on DRE, as well as fostering their inclusiveness.

Component 2: Capacity development

Strengthening the capacities of national stakeholders to promote DRE is a key aspect of the programme, and also underpins the Integrated Country Approach. Strong emphasis is placed on national ownership and on nationally-driven change processes.

For this reason, the first step is to identify and prioritize capacity needs in collaboration with national stakeholders. In line with FAO's corporate strategy on capacity development, both technical and functional employment-related capacities are addressed, including policy, knowledge, partnering and implementation.

Transfer of knowledge and training of individuals is often used to provide immediate capacity support. But capacity development can be complex and often requires lengthy change processes, where technical assistance and policy advice are also instrumental. Therefore, a strong focus is placed on forming partnerships with other capacity development actors, such as the ILO and national training centres.



© FAO 2012. Capacity development workshop, Morogoro, Tanzania.

Activities include:

- Carrying out comprehensive Capacity Needs Assessments (CNAs) on DRE with key national stakeholders;
- In collaboration with ILO, developing and implementing technical workshops and trainings;
- Developing guidance materials for policy-makers and technical staff on specific DRE aspects;
- Supporting the integration of DRE modules in ongoing trainings and other nationally owned capacity development processes;
- Providing institutional support to national stakeholders and inter-institutional mechanisms to better reflect DRE for ARD and food security in their organizational structures, strategies, budgets and work plans.

Capacity Development Workshops

Capacity development workshops were organized as a follow-up activity to the CNAs, undertaken in 2011. The workshops focused on the integration of DRE aspects into strategic planning of national agriculture and rural development policies, strategies and programmes – with a special emphasis on monitoring and evaluation. They were carried out during the second year of the programme and were attended by a wide range of decision and policy makers, as well as senior technical staff from key national institutions in Malawi and Tanzania.

Component 3: Youth employment promotion

Young women and men are generally more educated than their parents and hold an enormous potential for innovation, bringing energy and dynamism to rural economies. Yet, they face several challenges when seeking decent job opportunities, as one of the main factors shaping labour markets are inequalities between youth and adults.

In Malawi and Tanzania, FAO strengthens institutions' capacities in the context of the [Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools \(JFFLS\)](#) to stimulate decent employment opportunities in the agro-sector for rural youth as a means to increasing food security and youth access in specific value chains.

Activities include:

- Assessing the specific needs of youth in targeted districts and adapting the JFFLS methodology to the national context;
- Carrying out training of trainers (ToT) on youth employment for cooperative members, jointly with farmers' federations and unions, ministries of agriculture and labour, as well as local government authorities;
- Conducting market analysis of specific products and youth friendly agro-value chains;
- Identifying mechanisms to increase the uptake of rural youth employment activities into national policies, programmes and strategies.

Trainings on Youth Employment Promotion

The approach used by the JFFLS offers vocational education and training opportunities combined with support to business development, group cooperation and access to markets. A total of 71 (in Tanzania) and 82 (in Malawi) cooperative members, as well as federation and union executives were trained under the programme in 2011 and 2012. In both countries, the main partner institutions include the Farmers Union of Malawi (FUM), the National Smallholder Association of Malawi (NASFAM), the Tanzania Federation of Cooperatives (TFC) and the Cooperative Union of Zanzibar (CUZA).

Component 4: Child labour prevention and reduction

Children are the future of a nation's economy. When they engage in child labour they are denied their basic rights to health and education and the future of their community and country is compromised. Sixty percent of all child labour is in agriculture. Decreasing child labour in agriculture and improving rural education are key for reducing poverty and increasing food and nutrition security. This is why FAO, in collaboration with the ILO and other members of the [International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture](#), are supporting governments, producers' organizations and other key stakeholders in order to join forces and tackle this complex issue.

The FAO country-level intervention in Malawi and Tanzania aims to contribute to a sustainable reduction of child labour in agriculture by promoting a holistic approach, in which institutional capacity and policies are strengthened, awareness is raised within communities, access for children to relevant education is facilitated, decent youth employment is promoted and families are supported to increase their incomes and food security without the use of child labour.

Also in light of rural youth employment promotion, child labour prevention and reduction are of crucial importance.

Activities include:

- Mainstreaming child labour concerns into ARD policies and programmes and providing technical support to develop and implement strategic action plans on child labour reduction in rural areas;
- Carrying out joint FAO-ILO capacity development workshops on child labour prevention in agriculture for key national and district stakeholders;
- Promoting joint targeting at the household level to ensure an integrated approach between child labour and food security programmes;
- Supporting institutional mechanisms and capacities for child labour prevention in agriculture;
- Technical support to the [Malawi National Conference on Child Labour in Agriculture](#), including the presentation of a paper on [good agricultural practices](#) to prevent and reduce child labour and a contribution to the final [Framework for Action](#).



©FAO 2011. Child labour prevention training in Salima, Malawi.

The way forward

FAO will continue to support the enabling environment for decent rural employment in Malawi and Tanzania at least until 2013. The strategic partnership with ILO and the guidance of the Decent Work Agenda will continue to represent a core dimension of FAO's Integrated Country Approach. Additional partnerships will be fostered with other UN agencies, development partners and national capacity development actors.

In the future, the FAO DRET intends to further replicate the Integrated Country Approach in other countries and regions, as financial resources become available. The adaptation of the approach to different country and regional contexts will allow further application and generalization of the institutional mechanisms, methodologies and tools developed in Malawi and Tanzania (e.g. analytical framework for policy analysis and advice; methodologies for mapping and capacity assessment; training tools for DRE strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation; institutional mechanisms for youth employment promotion). This will contribute to a systematized but flexible approach, which will guide FAO's corporate policy and institutional work towards employment-centred rural transitions.

Child Labour Prevention Trainings

In 2011, FAO and ILO supported a series of pilot capacity development workshops in Malawi to raise awareness on child labour in agriculture and strengthen stakeholder coordination. The national workshops targeted directors, managers and senior technical staff, primarily from the ministries of agriculture and labour. They resulted in national and district-level activity plans and a district training package to support the implementation of the National Plan of Action on Child Labour. In Tanzania, FAO has supported the integration of child labour concerns into national and district-level trainings of the Southern Highlands Food Systems project, including on the topic of *Farming as a business*.

Key Resources on the topics below can be found at www.fao-ilo.org

- [Decent Rural Employment](#)
- [Gender-Equitable Rural Employment](#)
- [Rural Youth Employment Promotion](#)
- [Child Labour Prevention in Agriculture](#)
- [Integrated Country Approach](#)

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Visit the [Integrated Country Approach in Malawi and Tanzania webpage](#)

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Visit the joint [FAO/ILO website on Food, Agriculture and Decent Work](#)

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