



International  
Labour  
Office

A photograph of a young boy with dark skin and curly hair, wearing a dark polo shirt. He is focused on his work, using a hand planer to smooth a piece of light-colored wood. The wood is part of a larger structure, possibly a fence or railing, made of rough-hewn logs. In the background, there's a brick wall and some trees under a clear sky.

# Decent Work for Rural Youth

**DECENT WORK IN THE RURAL ECONOMY  
POLICY GUIDANCE NOTES**



# 1. Rationale and justification

Nearly 18 per cent of the global population, or 1.2 billion people, are between the ages of 15 and 24. Almost 85 per cent of them live in developing regions of Asia, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, many of them in rural areas. This global youth population is expected to increase to 1.3 billion by 2030. Young women and men in rural economies are powerful agents for change and are key actors for the successful implementation and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Such a demographic dividend offers a unique opportunity to advance rural economies and shape the process of rural transformation.<sup>1</sup>

However, the potential of decent jobs for youth has not been unleashed, and unemployment and working poverty among young women and men remain a global challenge. The ILO estimates the global youth unemployment rate (15-24 years) at 11.8 per cent, meaning that around 59.3 million young people are unemployed. Among those who are employed, nearly 156 million live in extreme or moderate poverty in emerging and developing countries. In sub-Saharan Africa alone, 58 million working young people – nearly 67 per cent of the employed youth population – live in conditions of poverty. An estimated 21.8 per cent of youth globally are not in employment, education or training (NEET), most of them young women.<sup>2</sup>

Decent work challenges in rural areas are particularly daunting, and persistent unemployment and working poverty among youth remain a challenge. The lack of viable employment opportunities remains a key obstacle to their participation in rural labour markets. Those who are employed are often engaged in unsustainable forms of employment, and typically remain in the informal economy where they work as own-account workers and casual wage labourers, especially in the agricultural sector. Rural youth are 40 per cent more likely to engage in casual wage work without a contract and four times more likely to work as unpaid family workers as compared to young people in urban areas.<sup>3</sup>

Despite their important contribution to rural economies, young women find themselves in even more disadvantaged positions compared to their male counterparts. Often, their participation in rural labour markets is prevented by structural, social, cultural, and economic barriers. These include historical power imbalances between women and men, patterns in the ownership of land and means of production and control of resources, gaps in opportunities for education and healthcare, discriminatory laws and social norms, and gender stereotypes and the unequal sharing of unpaid domestic work. Young women in rural areas are disproportionately represented in the informal economy. Unpaid care work is distributed unevenly, with young women bearing the higher burden. In some parts of sub-Saharan Africa, for example, the gender gap in informal employment is more than 20 percentage points, and even wider among youth. Young women lack access to financial services, agricultural supplies, time and labour-efficient technologies, and basic services such as sanitation and water. In some Arab and Northern African states women in rural areas face unemployment rates twice as high as men, despite their relatively high levels of education.<sup>4</sup>

The ILO's school-to-work survey shows that youth in rural areas are more likely to engage in economic activities at early ages than their urban counterparts. Limited opportunities for quality education and training hamper the transition of rural young people to decent work. The geographic remoteness and the frequent absence of employment relationships in rural areas also have an impact on their rights at work, limiting their engagement with workers' and employers' organizations and weakening their position in social dialogue processes.<sup>5</sup> Working poverty influences young workers' decisions to migrate to urban areas, especially among men, which in turn contributes to the feminization of agriculture.

Young people in rural areas are generally better educated than their parents and more open to adapt to new technologies and processes, including those that increase agricultural

<sup>1</sup> UNDESA: *Population Facts: Youth population trends and sustainable development*, 2015, [https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/popfacts/PopFacts\\_2015-1.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/popfacts/PopFacts_2015-1.pdf); UNDESA: *Population 2030: Demographic challenges and opportunities for sustainable development planning*, New York, 2015; OECD: *The future of rural youth in developing countries: Tapping the potential of local value chains*, Paris, 2018.

<sup>2</sup> ILO: *World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2019*, Geneva, 2019; ILO: *World Employment and Social Outlook 2016: Trends for youth*, Geneva, 2016; ILO: *World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2018*, Geneva, 2018; ILO: *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2017: Paths to a better working future*, Geneva, 2017.

<sup>3</sup> ILO: *GET for Youth*, 2017 op. cit.; ILO: *Empowering women in the rural economy*, Portfolio of Policy Guidance Notes on the Promotion of Decent Work in the Rural Economy, Geneva, 2015; S. Elder, H. de Haas, M. Principi, and K. Schewel: *Youth and rural development: evidence from 25 school-to-work transition surveys*, ILO, Geneva, 2015; ILO: *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015*, Geneva, 2015; ILO: *WESO 2016* op. cit.

<sup>4</sup> FAO, IFAD and ILO: *Gender dimensions of agricultural and rural employment: Differentiated pathways out of poverty*, Rome, 2010; Commission on the Status of Women, E/CN.6/2018/L.8, 26 March 2018; ILO: *WESO Trends 2018*, op. cit. Commission on the Status of Women, E/CN.6/2018/L.8, 26 March 2018; ILO: *World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends for women 2017*, Geneva, 2017; ILO: *World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends for Women 2018 – Global snapshot*, Geneva, 2018.

<sup>5</sup> ILO: *Rights at Work in the Rural Economy*, Portfolio of Policy Guidance Notes on the Promotion of Decent Work in the Rural Economy, Geneva, 2015.

productivity and sustainability. The development of and access to these technologies should be encouraged, especially when they enhance decent employment opportunities for young people in rural areas, and a just transition to environmentally and socially sustainable economies can facilitate this. The greening of enterprises and jobs through energy- and resource-efficient clean practices, together with

the sustainable management of resources can be a driver for innovation, investment and rural jobs.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> K. van der Geest: *Rural youth employment in developing countries: A global view*, FAO, Rome, 2010;  
ILO: *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all*, Geneva, 2015 [https://www.ilo.org/wcms5/groups/public/-/ed\\_emp/-/emp\\_ent/documents/publication/wcms\\_432859.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcms5/groups/public/-/ed_emp/-/emp_ent/documents/publication/wcms_432859.pdf);  
Declaration of the G20 Meeting of Agriculture Ministers, 27-28 July 2018, Buenos Aires, Argentina, [http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2018/2018-07-28-g20\\_agriculture\\_declaration\\_final.pdf](http://www.g20.utoronto.ca/2018/2018-07-28-g20_agriculture_declaration_final.pdf)

## 2. Scope and definitions

### Key definitions

The United Nations defines youth as persons between the ages of 15 and 24, without prejudice to other definitions by Member States. This definition is intended to capture the typical age of entry to the labour market after leaving school.<sup>7</sup> Different countries define young people in various ways, but the ages generally range from 12 to 35 years. There is no agreed definition of what qualifies as "rural". Countries use different criteria to define "urban areas", often leaving "rural" as the de facto remaining area in the national territory. This combination of different definitions makes it challenging to draw cross-country comparisons of labour statistics on the employment of young people in rural areas.<sup>8</sup>

### Target groups

Programmes and policies aimed at creating decent work opportunities for youth in rural areas should give special attention to young women and indigenous youth, who face additional socio-economic barriers to participation in the rural economy and often suffer discrimination.

*Young women:* Promoting the economic empowerment of young women in rural areas can create income-generating opportunities for young women and their communities through, for example, targeted entrepreneurship opportunities, support for transition from the informal to the formal economy, improved access to productive resources and technical, agricultural and vocational training, including financial and digital literacy.<sup>9</sup>

*Young indigenous women and men:* Many traditional economic activities do not meet the needs of indigenous peoples on account of their low income-generating capacity, weak market linkages, and lower levels of productivity. These have also prevented particularly the younger generations of indigenous peoples from adequately benefiting from emerging opportunities. The life expectancy of indigenous peoples is 20 years lower than that of their non-indigenous counterparts, and suicide rates among young people are high. Young indigenous and tribal women can face discrimination from both within and outside their communities, increasing their vulnerability, marginalization, exploitation, and gender-based violence. Policies targeting youth in rural areas, therefore, should adequately address the structural socio-economic barriers to decent work opportunities faced by indigenous youth.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> UN: *Secretary-General's Report to the General Assembly*, A/36/215, 1981;  
ILO: *GET for Youth* 2017, op. cit.

<sup>8</sup> ICLS/2018/Room document 3/Rev.3, ILO Room document 3 on Rural-urban labour statistics [https://www.ilo.org/wcms5/groups/public/-/dgreports/-/stat/documents/meetingdocument/wcms\\_636038.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcms5/groups/public/-/dgreports/-/stat/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_636038.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Commission on the Status of Women, 2018 op. cit.

<sup>10</sup> ILO: *Sustainable Development Goals: Indigenous peoples in focus*. Geneva, 2017, [https://www.ilo.org/wcms5/groups/public/-/ed\\_emp/-/ifp\\_skills/documents/publication/wcms\\_503715.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcms5/groups/public/-/ed_emp/-/ifp_skills/documents/publication/wcms_503715.pdf);  
ILO, UNWOMEN, UNFPA and UNICEF: *Breaking the silence on violence against indigenous girls, adolescents and young women: A call to action based on an overview of existing evidence from Africa, Asia Pacific and Latin America*, New York, 2013.

### 3. Critical areas of focus for policy guidance

The following are some of the priorities that should inform policies promoting decent work opportunities for youth in rural areas.

#### (a) Stimulating rural jobs for youth through macroeconomic and sectoral policies

Rural development and job creation can be promoted through sound fiscal, monetary and other economic policies. While the sectors of growth in the rural economy are evolving quickly, major emphasis should be placed on the promotion of those that create quality and productive jobs for youth and women, such as agribusiness and rural tourism. Employment impact assessments are a useful tool in identifying such sectors.

#### (b) Skills, education, training and apprenticeships

In rural areas there are significant deficits in access for youth, particularly women, to quality education, training and skills that match the labour market demand. In addition to widespread illiteracy, the fact that many leave education early to enter the labour market with low skills remains a challenge. Demand driven skills training that provides young people with both technical skills – including entrepreneurial and digital skills – and non-technical soft skills and on-the-job learning can lead to better labour outcomes.<sup>11</sup> Investment in good quality education and vocational training at different levels can both increase their capacities and make rural areas more attractive for youth to live and work. Social protection measures that help poor households manage their risks may enable young people remain in education. Young people who left school early or did not go to school at all may also benefit from alternative and non-traditional forms of training for basic knowledge and competencies to upgrade their skillsets. Informal apprenticeships can promote access to skills training for poor youth in the rural and informal economy. In this respect, effective policies and institutions are needed to upgrade informal apprenticeship so as to set standards and rules for ensuring the quality of training in enterprises and to ensure decent work for young apprentices.<sup>12</sup>

#### (c) A youth-friendly environment for business and entrepreneurship and access to productive resources

An enabling environment for sustainable enterprises is a precondition for supporting entrepreneurship and job

opportunities for youth. This can both provide decent work by stimulating investment in value chains, and support the establishment of sustainable rural enterprises by young people. Efforts to promote financial inclusion, for example by providing access to financial services such as credit and banking and financial education, are key to improving opportunities for youth. Support for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as other business models such as cooperatives and other social and solidarity economy enterprises, can facilitate young people's access to entrepreneurship.

In addition to conducive legislative and regulatory frameworks, a supporting environment should also encompass political stability, good governance and respect for human rights and the environment, along with adequate social protection and inclusion.<sup>13</sup> Infrastructure development, connectivity and accessibility also play a significant role in enabling sustainable enterprises in rural areas by reducing the distance between young farmers and entrepreneurs and markets, thereby shortening the supply chain. Such investments also enhance productivity and competitiveness and bring down production costs to ultimately strengthen rural-urban linkages and attract further investment.<sup>14</sup>

Young people in rural areas, especially women, can benefit from policy interventions that ensure access to productive resources, in particular those related to the ownership and management of assets such as land, financial capital, information, and technology. A survey of young people in Africa found that nine in ten believed their prospects would improve if general conditions in rural areas improved.<sup>15</sup> This includes investments in mechanized agriculture, agribusiness and agro-tourism, or by applying value chain approaches to rural development, for example through forest-based value chains.

#### (d) Economic diversification for rural youth

Economic diversification, through a shift of focus to non-farm activities in rural areas, together with the diversification of economic inputs in both farm and non-farm sectors and investment in agriculture, has the potential to generate more and better jobs for youth. Given that agriculture remains the key sector for rural employment and livelihoods, investments in agricultural development contribute to the overall process of structural transformation. Higher incomes from agriculture boost local demand, which prompts new activities, consolidates

<sup>11</sup> ILO: *Youth in the rural economy: Unleashing the potential of rural economies through investment in young people*. Decent Jobs for Youth, Thematic priority of the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth, Geneva, 2017.

<sup>12</sup> I. Nübler, C. Hofmann, and C. Greiner. *Understanding informal apprenticeship – Findings from empirical research in Tanzania*. ILO, Employment Working Paper No. 32, Geneva, 2009.

<sup>13</sup> ILO: *The promotion of sustainable enterprises*, Report VI, International Labour Conference, 2007, Geneva.

<sup>14</sup> ILO: *Youth in the rural economy* 2017 op. cit.

<sup>15</sup> Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ): *Creating opportunities with the young generation in the rural world – Joint call for action by science, the private sector and civil society*, Berlin Charter, Bonn, 2017.

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value chains, and promotes the expansion of agriculture.<sup>16</sup> Enhancing skills in farm management and new technologies, and facilitating the sharing of best practices can also improve linkages with input suppliers, transporters and retailers, as well as improve the quality of products and capacity to meet market demands.<sup>17</sup>

Investing in non-farm sectors allows for income diversification for households dependent on seasonal agriculture and landless, poor and subsistence farmers. It also generates cash for investment in productivity enhancing inputs and practices. This can be an opportunity for youth to be involved in both upstream enterprises – providing inputs – and in downstream services to farmers, including marketing and work in agro-processing.

## (e) Expanding young people's access to employment services and active labour market programmes in rural settings

Employment services help to link jobseekers to available jobs, and can be delivered by public, private, and non-governmental providers to all unemployed and active jobseekers. Assisting young people in rural settings, however, often requires a combination of mainstream services and targeted approaches to ensure a successful transition into employment and productive livelihoods. Expanding access to employment services and active labour market programmes in rural areas increases the chances available to young people to develop job-relevant skills for both farm and non-farm activities.

Making employment services effective for rural settings involves tailoring job-search and counselling services to young jobseekers' readiness for work and their personal aspirations. Another important element is to link the provision of core employment services to other labour market interventions and programmes (e.g. training and poverty reduction strategies) so as to improve income opportunities for young people. The challenge of reaching out to them cannot be addressed by public employment services alone. Multi-channelled approaches with the involvement of various partners operating in rural areas and the young people themselves have shown positive results.

## (f) Giving rural youth a voice and a larger role in their communities

Young people, including indigenous youth, should have access to opportunities for more meaningful participation

in decision making and policy formulation at different levels. Their participation in and leadership of rural organizations should be promoted, including through support for the establishment of youth associations; and through their integration in producer organizations and cooperatives. They should also be encouraged to participate in employers' and workers' organizations in order to enhance their involvement in social dialogue processes. Special attention must be given to gender imbalances and young women's empowerment.

## (g) Technological advances for better livelihoods and increased aspiration to work in rural areas

Young people are in a good position to be in the vanguard of technological advances, which are having a transformative impact on the rural economy and agriculture, as already observed in both farm and off-farm activities.<sup>18</sup> Advances in information and communication technologies (ICTs) can improve agricultural productivity and output growth, which increase the demand for non-farm goods and services. Digital and financial tools can also provide and improve vertical integration in agriculture and access to regional and global value chains.

A "human-in-command" approach to technology can help generate new employment opportunities, improved livelihoods, and increased incomes.<sup>19</sup> It can also help advance green jobs to build a greener economy that is more geared to climate change mitigation and adaptation. Transitioning into an environmentally and socially sustainable economy involves investment in the environmentally sustainable production, consumption and management of resources, in addition to more efficient processes and greener products and services in agriculture, construction, recycling, and tourism. It involves adopting clean and environmentally sustainable energy.<sup>20</sup> Such innovations are especially relevant from the standpoint of young people, who are more open to learning advanced skills and adapting to new technologies. Integrating technology into the rural economy may open avenues for youth participation and make working in rural areas more attractive by offering comparable opportunities and quality of work.

It is also important to ensure that these opportunities are inclusive of both young men and women, as women in rural areas have less access to technology than men given the financial and digital literacy barriers.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>16</sup> WEF: *The future of jobs: Employment, skills and workforce strategy for the fourth industrial revolution, Global challenge insight report*, Geneva, 2016.

<sup>17</sup> ILO: *Work for a brighter future – Global Commission on the Future of Work*. Geneva, 2019.

<sup>20</sup> ILO: *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all*, 2015 op. cit.

<sup>21</sup> World Bank: *ICT in agriculture, connecting smallholders to knowledge, network and institutions. E-sourcebook on ICT in agriculture*. Washington, DC, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/World Bank, 2011.

## 4. The ILO's approach

Making rural areas more attractive to young people and ensuring that decent rural employment opportunities are a reality will be essential to eradicate poverty, improve food security and guarantee social justice. It is a key contribution to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the future of work that we want.

The ILO has a long-standing commitment to promote decent work for youth. Its activities on youth employment include advocacy, knowledge generation and dissemination, policy and technical advice, and capacity building. The ILO's approach to addressing youth employment challenges has evolved over the years from the protection of young workers through normative efforts to multi-pronged interventions targeting sustainable and decent livelihoods in the rural economy.

The 2012 ILC resolution on “The youth employment crisis: A call for action” recommends a well-balanced policy mix to encourage investment and job creation, while ensuring young workers’ rights at work.<sup>22</sup>

The comparative advantage of ILO’s work on youth employment lies in its proven ability to influence policy change by involving employers’ and workers’ organizations and their youth representatives, as well as other stakeholders through extended social dialogue and participatory practices.

The ILO plays a key role in larger multi-stakeholder efforts such as the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth (Box 1) and the UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD) (Box 2).

### **Box 1: Rural Youth Employment Initiatives to leave no-one behind: The ILO-led Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth and G20 Initiative for Rural Youth Employment**

The ILO Director-General launched the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth in 2016 with the endorsement of the executive heads of the United Nations system. It brings together the vast resources and in-depth expertise of multiple partners to create linkages and synergies that maximize the effectiveness of youth employment investments. One of its key thematic priorities is rural youth employment, with global action being pursued in areas of evidence-based and innovative policy and programmes. These include the development of efficient training approaches, promoting efficient agribusiness and value chain models, facilitating access to productive resources, and job creation for young people through green practices and green jobs.

In 2017 the G20 leaders established the Initiative for Rural Youth Employment to intensify their efforts in this regard, building on the G20 Food Security and Nutrition Framework of 2014 and the G20 Action Plan on Food Security and Sustainable Food Systems of 2015. While this initiative focuses on challenges and opportunities in developing countries in Africa as a key element of the G20 Africa Partnership, it recognizes the importance of the issue in developing countries in other regions and the relevance of promoting exchanges of experience and learning. It seeks collaboration and synergies with the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth. The G20 Initiative acknowledges the Berlin Charter, a call for action developed by participants in the G20 conference aimed at all national governments, the G20, and the United Nations system to address rural challenges and shape the rural world positively for the young generations, with a special focus on decent work opportunities.

<https://www.decentjobsforyouth.org>

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/23551/2017-g20-rural-youth-employment-en.pdf>

[http://ruralfuture.mediacompany.de-web.biz/assets/pdf/Berlin\\_Charter.pdf?1704202](http://ruralfuture.mediacompany.de-web.biz/assets/pdf/Berlin_Charter.pdf?1704202)

### **Box 2: UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD)**

The United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD) comprises UN entities, represented at headquarters level, whose work is relevant to youth. The aim of the Network is to increase the effectiveness of UN work on youth development by strengthening collaboration and exchanges among all relevant UN entities, while respecting and harnessing the benefits of their individual strengths and unique approaches and mandates.

<https://social.un.org/youthyear/unianyd.html>

<sup>22</sup> ILC. 2012. *The youth employment crisis: A call for action*. Resolution and conclusions of the 101st Session of the International Labour Conference, Geneva, 2012. [https://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/101stSession/texts-adopted/WCMS\\_185950/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/101stSession/texts-adopted/WCMS_185950/lang--en/index.htm)

## 5. The ILO's experience to date

### (a) ILO-IFAD Taqeeem Initiative: Evidence to improve youth and women's rural employment in the Middle East and North Africa

Taqeeem (meaning “evaluation” in Arabic), a unique partnership between the ILO and the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD), is a capacity development and learning project that aims to build evidence for the promotion of youth and gender mainstreaming, with the ultimate goal of reaching gender equality in rural employment outcomes across the MENA region.<sup>23</sup> The key outcome of the project includes the building of a multi-stakeholder “Taqeeem Community of Practice” (CoP), made up of 17 organizations. Together, the CoP members reach over 40,000 women and young people across the region. The project was also instrumental in reducing evidence gaps in the region through the production of eleven impact studies that used rigorous evaluation techniques, including randomized control trials.

Taqeeem’s impact evaluation in rural Egypt shows a positive correlation between business and vocational training programmes and the economic empowerment of young women. It also indicates that involving local communities in training programmes has supported the creation of an enabling environment for empowering women. Evidence from Egypt and Morocco also reveals the positive impact of microfinance programmes on women and their families.<sup>24</sup> The experience has been showcased in the Academy on Rural Development targeting youth in rural Egypt (see Box 3).

### (b) School-to-Work Transition Surveys (SWTS)

ILO’s SWTS is a unique tool for capturing information on the transition of young people aged from 15 to 29 between school and the labour market. It helps to identify the gaps between young people and labour demand and to inform adequate policy responses to facilitate a smoother transition from school to work. It also generates reliable data for policy making and monitoring, especially in countries that do not have a well developed labour market information system.

### Box 3: Academy on Rural Development: Making rural areas more attractive to youth

The Rural Development Academy on “Making rural areas more attractive to youth” was hosted in Cairo in March 2019 as a joint initiative by the ILO, the ILO International Training Centre, FAO and UNIDO to promote decent work for Egypt’s rural youth. With over 135 national and international participants, the Academy provided a platform to gain expert knowledge and exchange ideas on integrated approaches, making use of interactive learning methodologies, tools, and training packages on factors that promote a sustainable, inclusive and prosperous rural economy. The programme covered a combination of cutting-edge topics presented and discussed in a series of classes facilitated by the ILO, other UN agencies, and leading international and national experts; study visits to innovative rural initiatives; and a range of elective workshops offering additional insight into subjects related to economic diversification, value chain development, women’s empowerment, green jobs, increasing access to finance, skills development, and technology diffusion.

<https://www.itcilo.org/en/areas-of-expertise/enterprise-development/rural-development-academy>

With findings from 34 countries surveyed between 2012 and 2016, SWTS reveals that young people living in rural areas experienced a longer transition (15.4 months) compared to their urban counterparts (13.3 months).<sup>25</sup> In sub-Saharan Africa, less than 50 per cent of young people complete lower secondary education, and less than 10 per cent go on to higher education in half of the countries surveyed. The SWTS data also demonstrates the significantly higher numbers of adolescents in rural areas who were out of school and working, or neither in employment nor in education or training (NEET).<sup>26</sup>

### (c) Regional workshops on quality apprenticeships and work experience measures for school-to-work transition

Bridging the gap in skills and experience faced by young people transitioning from school to work and the demands of the labour market, the ILO supports its constituents in formulating

<sup>23</sup> ILO & IFAD: *Evidence to improve youth and women's rural employment in the Middle East and North Africa*, Geneva, 2018 [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/documents/publication/wcms\\_667599.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_667599.pdf)

<sup>24</sup> ILO: *GET for Youth 2017* op. cit.;  
IFAD & ILO: *Empowering young women through business and vocational training: Evidence from a field intervention in rural Egypt*. ILO Impact Brief Series, Issue 8, Geneva, 2017, [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_emp/documents/publication/wcms\\_575930.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_575930.pdf);  
IFAD & ILO: *Promoting women's empowerment in the Middle East and North Africa: A rapid evidence assessment of labour market interventions*, Impact Brief Series, Issue 9, Geneva, 2017, [http://www.ilo.org/employment/areas/youth-employment/WCMS\\_563865/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/employment/areas/youth-employment/WCMS_563865/lang--en/index.htm)

<sup>25</sup> ILO: *GET for Youth 2017* op. cit.

<sup>26</sup> Elder, de Haas et al., 2015 op. cit.

policy responses to enhance the skills and employability of youth through quality apprenticeships. Emphasis is placed on work-based learning systems that prepare young people for gainful employment and clear guidelines on the quality and purpose of such apprenticeships so that they do not become a tool for the exploitation of young people.

The workshop held in Cambodia in October 2015 drew participants from Cambodia, China, Fiji, Indonesia, and Pakistan. It has served as a platform to enhance understanding of quality apprenticeships and work experience measures to help young people undergoing the transition from school to work, and to share country, regional and inter-regional experience so as to identify the elements of good practice in developing apprenticeship and work experience opportunities.<sup>27</sup>

#### (d) Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (TREE)

The ILO implements the Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (TREE) programme in several countries. The programme is based on the systematic identification of employment and income-generating opportunities at the community level and supporting these opportunities through appropriate training programmes with local public and private training providers and post-training support on access to markets. Implemented through technical cooperation projects with identified countries, TREE builds on existing job-creation programmes by strengthening their content and delivery.<sup>28</sup>

#### (e) Public private partnerships for youth employment in the Commonwealth of Independent States

With rural youth as one of the main target groups, the objective of Partnerships for Youth Employment in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) (2018-2022) is to improve the effectiveness of policies and programmes promoting decent jobs for youth in those countries. This includes developing joint approaches to address youth employment issues common to the CIS countries and enhancing existing mechanisms for regional cooperation on youth employment. The project is implemented by the ILO with financial support from the Russian company LUKOIL.<sup>29</sup>

#### Box 4: Country examples on ILO support to expanding access of youth to employment services

In Paraguay the ILO assisted the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security with the design of a public employment office for rural areas to help a predominantly young population access information on job offers and counselling services to connect with training programmes, entrepreneurship support, and community works. The first office was implemented in the Municipality of Choré with a financial contribution from the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID). Expanding employment services to rural areas was part of a national strategy to implement the Youth Employment Act in order to improve labour market transition for young people through job matching and skills development.

In Ethiopia, in an effort to address the root causes of migration, the ILO has supported the establishment of a Youth Employability Services (YES) Centre in a local municipality in the Amhara Region to prepare and accompany young people during their entry into the labour market. The Centre provides a range of services matching people to jobs and improving their employability, and aims to coordinate existing services. Being the first of its kind in the area and the region, it has had tremendous success in influencing the mindset of stakeholders and increasing their understanding and appreciation of meritorious and skills-based matching and recruitment among local employers. Given the low labour demand in the formal sector, the regional government promotes the development of self-employment microenterprises. The Centre provides an opportunity to link and deliver them as a package. The city and regional governments have been motivated to establish other centres at the city and regional level.

<sup>27</sup> For more information, see [https://www.ilo.org/islamabad/whatwedo/eventsandmeetings/WCMS\\_409963/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/islamabad/whatwedo/eventsandmeetings/WCMS_409963/lang--en/index.htm)

<sup>28</sup> [https://www.ilo.org/skills/projects/WCMS\\_103528/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/skills/projects/WCMS_103528/lang--en/index.htm)

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/youth-employment/projects/cis-partnership/lang--en/index.htm>

## 6. Practical guidance and resources

### ILO instruments

*Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87)*

*Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)*

*Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)*

*Minimum Age Convention (No. 138) and Recommendation (No. 146), 1973*

*Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No. 182) and Recommendation (No. 190), 1999*

*Equal Remuneration Convention (No. 100) and Recommendation (No. 90), 1951*

*Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No. 111) and Recommendation (No. 111), 1958*

*Employment Policy Convention (No. 122) and Recommendation (No. 122), 1964*

*Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142)*

*Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195)*

*Medical Examination of Young Persons (Industry) Convention, 1946 (No. 77)*

*Medical Examination of Young Persons (Non-Industrial Occupations) Convention, 1946 (No. 78)*

*Medical Examination of Young Persons Recommendation, 1946 (No. 79)*

### Tools

*Guide on Measuring Decent Jobs for Youth: Monitoring, evaluation and learning in labour market programmes (2018)*

Guide to international labour standards and rights at work concerning young people (2017)

*Rising to the youth employment challenge: New evidence on key policy issues (2017)*

*ILO Toolkit for Quality Apprenticeships – Vol. 1: Guide for Policy Makers (2017)*

*Infographic - A generation at risk: Global employment trends for youth (2013)*

*Know About Business (KAB)*

*Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB)*

*Upgrading informal apprenticeship - A resource guide for Africa (2012)*

*Guide for the formulation of national employment policies (2012)*

*Disability inclusion toolkit and resource manual (2011)*

*Decent work: a common goal of youth and trade unions (2011)*

*Tackling youth employment challenges: an overview of possible actions and policy considerations: an introductory guide for employers' organizations (2011)*

*Project Design Manual, A Step-by-Step Tool to Support the Development of Cooperatives and Other Forms of Self-Help Organization (2010)*

*Rural Skills Training: A generic manual on Training for Rural Economic Empowerment (TREE) (2009)*

*School-to-work transition survey: A methodological guide (2009)*

*Youth right @ work: a facilitator's guide and toolkit, (2009)*

*Joining Forces for Young People: A Practical Guide to Collaboration with Youth People (2009)*

*User's guide : how to prepare the "Safe work for youth" materials for local use (2009)*

*Guide for the preparation of National Action Plans on Youth Employment (2008)*

*Youth Employment: Making it happen, an electronic resource tool for employers (2008)*

*Working with youth : tips for small business owners (2008)*

*Guiding youth careers: a handbook for those who help young jobseekers (2007)*

*Guide to private employment agencies: Regulation, monitoring and enforcement (2007)*

*Biz'up: Self-employment skills for young people – Facilitator's Guide, Toolkit & User's guide (2007)*

*Career Guidance: A Resource Handbook for Low and Middle-Income Countries (2006)*

## **Reports and publications**

Youth in the rural economy: Unleashing the potential of rural economies through investment in young people. Decent Jobs for Youth, *Thematic Priority of the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth (2017)*

*Global Employment Trends for Youth (2017 and several others)*

*Boosting youth employment through public works (2016)*

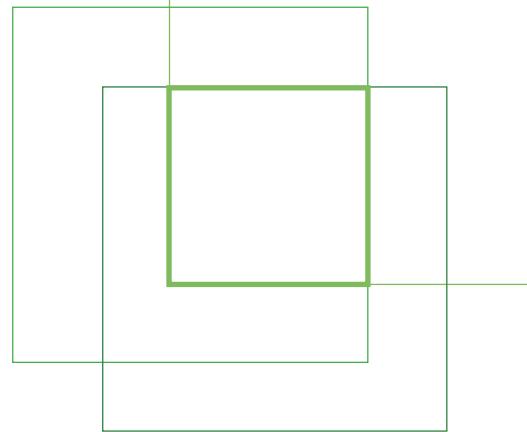
*Resolution concerning the youth employment crisis: A call for action (International Labour Conference, 101<sup>st</sup> Session, 2012)*

*The youth employment crisis: Time for action: Report V, International Labour Conference, 101<sup>st</sup> Session (2012)*

*Mobilizing support for the call for action on the youth employment crisis (2013)*

*Resolution concerning youth employment: Resolutions adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 93<sup>rd</sup> Session (Geneva, June 2005)*

# Overview of Policy Guidance Notes on the Promotion of Decent Work in the Rural Economy



## Supporting inclusive agricultural growth for improved livelihoods and food security

- Decent Work for Food Security and Resilient Rural Livelihoods
- Decent and Productive Work in Agriculture

## Promoting economic diversification and triggering productive transformation for rural employment

- Economic Diversification of the Rural Economy
- Promoting Decent Work for Rural Workers at the Base of the Supply Chain
- The Role of Multinational Enterprises in the Promotion of Decent Work in Rural Areas
- Transitioning to Formality in the Rural Informal Economy
- Sustainable Tourism – A Catalyst for Inclusive Socio-economic Development and Poverty Reduction in Rural Areas

## Promoting access to services, protection and employment-intensive investment

- Providing Access to Quality Services in the Rural Economy to Promote Growth and Social Development
- Extending Social Protection to the Rural Economy
- Developing the Rural Economy through Financial Inclusion: The Role of Access to Finance
- Employment-Intensive Investment in Rural Infrastructure for Economic Development, Social and Environmental Protection and Inclusive Growth

## Ensuring sustainability and harnessing the benefits of natural resources

- A Just Transition towards a Resilient and Sustainable Rural Economy
- Decent Work in Forestry
- Harnessing the Potential of Extractive Industries
- Water for Improved Rural Livelihoods

## Increasing the voice of rural people through organization and the promotion of rights, standards and social dialogue

- Rights at Work in the Rural Economy
- Promoting Social Dialogue in the Rural Economy
- Building Local Development in Rural Areas through Cooperatives and other Social and Solidarity Economy Enterprises and Organizations
- Decent Work for Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in the Rural Economy
- Empowering Women in the Rural Economy
- Decent Work for Rural Youth
- Promoting Fair and Effective Labour Migration Policies in Agriculture and Rural Areas

## Improving the knowledge base on decent work in the rural economy

- Enhancing the Knowledge Base to Support the Promotion of Decent Work in Rural Areas

For more information please visit [www.ilo.org/rural](http://www.ilo.org/rural) or contact [rural@ilo.org](mailto:rural@ilo.org)