



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations



PROMOTING PRODUCTIVE
EMPLOYMENT
AND DECENT WORK IN
RURAL AREAS

Lesson 3

Youth employment in agriculture

Text-only version

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Learning Objectives

At the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- define who is a youth;
- describe the main issues related to work and young people;
- explain the main factors that negatively affect youth employment in the agricultural sector;
- explain the importance of engaging youth in the agricultural sector and food systems;
- Illustrate the main opportunities that agriculture offers to youth employment;
- list existing networks and platforms relevant for youth employment promotion in agriculture.

Introduction

Never before there have been so many young people in the world (the 20% of global population is youth, 90% of which live in developing countries).

Each year, some 120 million **youth** reach the working age. The global economy will need to **create 600 million jobs in developing countries** over the next decade in order to absorb current unemployment levels.

Far from being a problem, the increased number of youth is one of the greatest assets that any nation can have. Countries should invest in young people and their development of knowledge and skills, offering more and better opportunities in the world of work. In this way, youth will be well placed to offer a crucial contribution to the resolution of many long-standing problems, such as food insecurity, poverty and climate change.

The **agricultural sector** has huge **potential to create jobs for young people**, but needs to polish and transform its image in order to attract them. While there is a growing trend in industrialized economies towards offering agriculturally focused education and incentives for young people to invest in rural areas, in many developing economies this sector remains associated with poverty, informality and archaism.

Attracting youth to agriculture can bring new energy to this sector. Indeed, a profound change in the global food and agriculture system is needed if we are to feed today's 925 million people and the additional 2 billion expected by 2050.

This lesson will cover the working conditions of youth in rural areas and explain why they can be a valuable resource for solving many complex problems.

Who is a youth?

Several UN entities, instruments and regional organizations have different definitions of youth, and the UN Secretariat recognizes this.



The United Nations (UN) generally defines youth as persons between the ages of 15 and 24.



Child and youth definitions

There is a voluntary overlap of years in the child and youth definitions (from 15 to 17). As per the Geneva Convention on the Rights of the Child, anyone below the age of 18 is also considered a child and therefore has legal framework protection in the signatory countries, under the terms described by the convention itself. At the same time, the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) says that 15 is the minimum age to enter full time employment. Therefore, those aged from 15 to 17 are considered both children and youth.

FAO acknowledges the UN definition and mostly follows the general youth age frame of 15-24. For activities at regional or national level, where youth may be identified in a more flexible manner, FAO adopts the definition as used by a particular Member State, while also recognizing that within the various youth age-frame definitions, different approaches should be adopted. This is particularly true in specific contexts, such as crises and post-conflict, when years of "childhood" and "youth" are frequently lost.

Youth and work

Youth are the main asset on which societies should focus in order to make economic and social progress. Yet **young people** around the world encounter **many problems** when they try to **enter the world of work**. Let's analyse the main issues.

Globally, **73.4 million youth** between the ages of 15 and 24 were **unemployed** in 2015 (about 37 percent of the world's 202 million unemployed) with youth unemployment rates 2.5 higher than those of adults (*Source: ILO Global Employment Trends for Youth*).

Up to 60 percent of young people in developing regions are not working or in school, or have only irregular employment.

Working youth make up **24 percent of the world's working poor** population (earning and living on less than US\$1.25 a day). Crucially, the majority of young poor working people are employed in rural agricultural sectors.

Migration is very common among youth, motivated by the wish for a better life and the hope of **finding a better job and escaping poverty**. Young people move within their home countries as internal migrants, or beyond these borders as international migrants.

Youth and agriculture

There is compelling evidence of an ageing farming population in various regions of the world. This issue must be addressed to facilitate sustainability in agricultural production, and by extension food and nutrition security.



Food and nutrition security

About **805 million people** worldwide are estimated to be **suffering from chronic hunger**. Approximately **200 million are youth**.

Beyond its ethical dimension, hunger and food insecurity take an enormous toll on economies and have adverse consequences for the livelihoods and economic capabilities of vulnerable populations.

Good nutrition is a **precondition for** a healthy and **productive life**; malnutrition in all of its forms imposes high economic, social and human development costs on individuals, households, communities and countries.

The costs to society are enormous in terms of lost productivity, health, well-being, decreased learning ability and reduced fulfillment of human potential.

Similar to extreme poverty, **food insecurity** continues to be predominantly **concentrated in rural areas** and disproportionately affects rural communities.

UN World Conference on Youth 2014 - Poverty eradication and food security brief.

For many reasons, **youth are not incentivized or facilitated to be part of the sector**. Yet fostering young people's involvement in agriculture could potentially address the serious issue of who will produce food in the coming years for a growing population, while contributing to job creation and reducing youth unemployment and working poverty.

Let's look at the main factors that have a negative influence on youth engagement in the agricultural sector:

➤ **Negative mindset about agriculture**

In many developing countries, **agriculture** is mainly conducted at subsistence level, with little surplus for sale and very low value addition. So farming is **burdened with negative perceptions**, linked in particular to its association with hard physical work, low wages and uncertainty.

As a result, young people rarely choose it as a career.

Rebranding agriculture is key to success in reaching young people. Motivating youth to view agriculture as a career opportunity will require multi-level intervention.

Rebranding should start with children in schools, through innovative and creative approaches to make agriculture a fun and an attractive subject.



Teaching agriculture to children at school

Healthy relationships with agriculture should begin with learning about where and how food grows on farms.

One **educational strategy** used to **teach agriculture** to children in schools is **Garden Based Learning (GBL)**. This uses a garden as a teaching tool and is based on experiential education.

In a fun way, schoolchildren learn basic skills for agriculture, as well as the importance of a good diet, so as to develop and grow properly, be protected from disease and have the energy to study, learn and be physically active.

Media campaigns through social media, rural radio and local papers should be explored and launched to feature young sector champions and young agro-entrepreneurs.

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➤ **Limited access to vocational education**

The availability of an adequately educated workforce for the agricultural sector is still strongly limited by **low school enrolment** in various countries and by few young people being motivated to pursue **agricultural studies** at university level. There are few opportunities for young producers, rural youth and other young professionals to improve their skills in agribusiness¹.

Investing in the education and training of young rural people is becoming increasingly **important** to address the challenges associated with adopting sustainable, climate smart production methods and linking to marketing opportunities in modern value chains. Training and mentoring should be developed **in partnership with the private sector**, to help young people develop the skills they need to succeed in agriculture and agribusiness.

The story of Elias

Elias Alberto Manuel comes from the Sofala province of Mozambique. When he was 12 and still going to school he was chosen to **attend the Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS)** on two afternoons a week throughout the school year.

Until then, he knew agriculture was his destiny, but he was unenthusiastic and knew little about it. During the school year, together with his peers, he **learned** through experience **how to grow crops in a fun way** and what was needed to lead a healthy life. The way that he learned about

¹ Agribusiness denotes the collective farm-to-table business activities that are performed by agricultural input suppliers, producers, agroprocessors, distributors, traders, exporters, retailers and consumers.

Source: FAO (2013). *Enabling environments for agribusiness and agro-industries development. Regional and country perspectives. Agribusiness and Food Industries Series 1.*

agriculture as a child, and about food systems and healthy diets, made him more **interested in continuing his studies in agriculture related skills**. So from being reluctant to enter the sector, he was now keen to follow a career in agriculture. Elias is now a young man of 23, and recently graduated from a well known agricultural college in Manica province.

➤ **Limited access to assets**

Young people **face several challenges** related to their **access to assets**, such as land, water, credit, equipment and services. Due to their age, young people seldom have access to collateral in order to apply for loans. Creating conditions to give young people easier access to assets is crucial.

Producers' organizations (PO) are often an effective means of **enabling young people to access** various important **assets**. By forming their own cooperatives or taking part in mixed-age ones, young producers can gain access to a wide array of services, ranging from natural resources to information and technologies.

The story of Adam

Adam is a young **small-scale agro-producer** from the Singida region of Tanzania. He comes from a family of smallholders.

As a newlywed, he wanted to have his own agribusiness and provide for his young family.

Adam **attended a training initiative on agricultural skills and agribusiness**, using the Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS) methodology. The experience really inspired him! He went back to his village and told **local cooperative union leaders** about the outcomes of the training sessions and his wish to pursue a career in agriculture, together with other young people like himself.

The cooperative union leaders promised to **support him** in mobilizing more young people in the area, and in attracting them to the agricultural sector. More than 200 local young men and women were reached and signed up to a future in farming. After **organizing** the group and naming it **Singida's Young Producers' Union**, the young people managed to secure more than 300 acres of land from the regional commissioner.

The Singida's Young Producers' Union also **applied for credit from the government** and received about US\$4,500, which helped them **to buy their first set of inputs**. They are now officially recognized as a youth union and affiliated with the Tanzania Federation of Cooperatives (TFC).

The union produces sunflower, which is a commercial crop with significant returns in the area, and plans to integrate other crops and buy a tractor. Adam and his **union** colleagues are **making rapid progress** and have managed to access national markets through the affiliation with TFC. They also hire temporary workers during peak agricultural seasons, creating temporary jobs for other young people. This brief example demonstrates that, **with the right support**, motivation, facilitation among various partners and incentives, **youth can create their own enterprises** and generate further jobs for their communities, while revitalizing the sector.

➤ **Limited access to markets**

Access to markets for youth is becoming even more **difficult** due to the growing **influence of supermarkets** globally, and the rigorous standards of their supply chains.

Young rural women in developing countries face additional constraints in accessing markets, partly due to the fact that their freedom of movement is sometimes limited by cultural norms.

Improving access to education, training and market information can all facilitate youth's access to markets, with niche markets offering particularly significant opportunities for young farmers.

Facilitating their involvement in (youth) producers' groups can be similarly beneficial in this respect.

Through an integrated set of measures, young people can be provided with better information, technology and links to upstreaming and downstreaming their activities along value chains, and helping to advertise their businesses and products.

➤ **Limited participation in policy-making**

The **participation of young people in formal, institutional and political processes is relatively low** compared with that of older citizens across the globe. This is particularly true of the agricultural sector. There is a **lack of an enabling environment**, in terms of appropriate policies, laws and regulations, to facilitate the engagement of youth in agriculture related debates. There are also few policy instruments to ensure that youth have a voice. Young women may be particularly disadvantaged by cultural norms.

Young people have a **critical role to play in promoting social change**, not just in the future as adults, but more immediately, as active citizens today, by designing, undertaking or contributing to individual or collective actions. **Youth participation** in regional, national or community decision-making **should always be facilitated and encouraged**.

The story of Mosunmola

Mosunmola, is a young woman from Lagos State in Nigeria. She started her entrepreneurial career within agriculture straight after college and she is one of the **young agripreneurs supported by the Youth in Agriculture Programme (YEAP)** in Nigeria.

Today, her business venture is engaged in farming, food processing and distribution.

The company also has a flagship retail outlet in Ikeja, Lagos, offering a wide range of farm produce, including poultry products, eggs, snails, catfish and vegetables and provides a door-to-door service.

Mosunmola has always been a strong advocate of youth in agriculture. Thanks to her determination and **advocacy of rural youth inclusion**, Mosunmola has recently been appointed Special Advisor on youth in agriculture issues to the (Nigerian) Federal Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. Her presence will ensure that rural youth have a strong voice in all the Ministry's related activities, including policies, strategies and programmes.

Making a commitment to solve all the challenges mentioned, and to foster the involvement of youth in agriculture, is crucial, especially for developing countries.

Youth can be a source of labour, energy, dynamism and innovation, all of which are urgently needed by the agricultural sector. Only with **young people's involvement will it be possible to achieve the sustainable agricultural development and transformation of food systems** needed to meet the challenge of increasing agricultural production by 60 percent by 2050.

The potential returns are huge: increased food and nutrition security, poverty reduction and employment generation, as well as economic growth, peace and political stability.

Example: A good practice - Nigeria's commitment to youth employment in agriculture

Nigeria is making efforts to diversify its economy, which has depended massively on revenues generated from sales of crude oil. The **diversification of the economy** has become a government priority at a time that the price of crude oil has continued to fall.

In addition, **youth unemployment** has been identified as one of the biggest challenges facing the country.

As part of its commitment to the promotion of decent jobs for youth while trying to diversify its economy, the Federal Government of Nigeria has developed its [National] **Youth Employment in Agriculture Programme (YEAP), together with FAO.**

During the design of YEAP, a **youth stakeholders'** workshop was organized to collect **recommendations** from young people to be **included**. As a **result**, the programme has been designed for and by young people.

Main opportunities for youth employment in agriculture

Let's look in greater detail at why agriculture could offer huge opportunities for youth employment.

The main factors to consider are:

➤ **Renewed interest in agriculture and in fostering youth engagement in the sector**

In recent years, UN Member States, UN agencies, including FAO, related sector stakeholders and the private sector, have increasingly recognized the importance of investing in youth. Clearly, opportunities exist for facilitating the engagement of African youth in agriculture and agribusiness. If done in an inclusive manner, this could bring profound societal and economic benefits and transform the agrifood and rural sectors through young people's fresh ideas and perspectives.

For more information see: [World Bank, Growing Africa: Unlocking the potential of agribusiness](#).

➤ **High demand for increased productivity in the agricultural sector**

Increased productivity in the sector also depends on the availability and skills of the workforce (as well as other factors).

There is compelling evidence of an ageing farming population in various regions of the world. This issue must be addressed by engaging young people in agriculture. Doing so will help to promote sustainability in agricultural production, and by extension regional food availability, as a result of increased domestic production.

➤ **Young people's willingness to engage in agriculture**

Contrary to widespread perceptions, many young people would be willing to enter the agricultural sector, and modernize it through technical innovation, if adequately supported and facilitated.

➤ **Expanding markets and green jobs**

Vibrant and expanding markets for primary and secondary agricultural commodities² offer tremendous opportunities for young people to earn good income from agricultural activities.

² Primary agricultural commodities are raw/unprocessed products. Secondary agricultural commodities are products with some level of value addition or processing.

Green jobs³ are also part of such expanding markets. Globally there is stronger demand to transform agriculture into a green economy sector, in order to promote environmental sustainability.

➤ **Agribusiness**

Boosting agricultural transformation and rural development is critical in order to provide employment to the millions of youth joining the labour market each year.

Agribusiness can play a critical role in jump-starting economic transformation through the development of agro-based industries that generate much needed jobs and incomes. Successful agribusiness investments in turn stimulate agricultural growth through the provision of new markets and the development of a vibrant input supply sector.

For example, agriculture and agribusiness together are projected to be a US\$1 trillion industry in sub-Saharan Africa by 2030 (compared with \$313 billion in 2010).

➤ **Agro-services**

As agricultural goods progress from "field to fork" they require attention, tracking and integrity and related services connected to that. Different agricultural jobs are and will be available along the value chains.

Agro-chemicals experts, seed quality controllers, biofuel specialists, farm machinery and supplies distributors and mechanics, agro-financial and insurance experts, storage and processing facilities specialists - these are some of the jobs already available in the sector that may be of interest to youth, while offering an opportunity to rejuvenate the sector.

Main disadvantaged youth groups

When designing specific youth employment policies, strategies and programmes in agriculture, it is important to consider that youth is a vastly heterogeneous group with very different needs. Let's look at some of the **specific disadvantaged youth** groups, who require **particular attention**.

³ Green jobs are jobs that contribute to preserving or restoring the environment, be they in traditional sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing and construction, or in new, emerging green sectors, such as renewable energy and energy efficiency. Green jobs help to:

- improve energy and raw materials efficiency;
- limit greenhouse gas emissions;
- minimize waste and pollution;
- protect and restore ecosystems;
- support adaptation to the effects of climate change. Examples are organic agriculture, biofuel production, agro-ecotourism etc.

Source: Definition from ILO.

➤ **Young women**

Young women face multiple and interlocking **forms of discrimination**, often leaving them among the most marginalized, vulnerable and hard-to-reach young people, particularly in rural settings. The situation of young women in the family, educational and occupational spheres varies from one country to another, with the greatest differences seen between developed and developing countries.

➤ **Indigenous youth**

The world's indigenous youth comprise many different multidimensional identities and nationalities. There are approximately **67 million indigenous youth worldwide** who are reportedly facing higher levels of illiteracy and school dropout rates.

Indigenous youth tend to experience lower enrolment and higher unemployment rates, as well as lower incomes compared with their peers.

➤ **Youth in protracted crisis and conflict areas**

More than **600 million youth worldwide live in fragile and conflict affected countries** and territories and are at severe risk of violence, abuse and injury.

The majority of conflicts take place in developing countries, particularly Africa.

Example: Promoting employment and entrepreneurship for vulnerable youth in West Bank and Gaza Strip

Youth in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (WBGs) face enormous challenges related to occupation, conflict, deep rural poverty, food insecurity and lack of extracurricular activities.

To combat challenges facing youth (both from refugee camps and non), **FAO** launched a **Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS)** programme in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (WBGs) in 2008.

Using the agricultural growing calendar as a model for life, young people learned agricultural skills while developing corresponding life lessons, such as setting goals, the importance of personal space for growth, and teamwork.

According to the evaluation undertaken by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE), JFFLS **participants** stated that they **developed new skills**, expressed **interest in** continuing the programme and/or **pursuing agricultural education**, while performing well in their end-of-year exams. Participants also showed a general improvement, with a positive change in their attitudes, including more confidence and hope for the future.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East's (UNRWA) partnership in the Gaza Strip has allowed FAO to widen the selection of beneficiaries to particularly vulnerable youth living in the refugee camps.

➤ **Distressed young migrants**

Some young people become migrants due to economic related reasons. An estimated **75 million** of the world's 232 million **international migrants** are **under the age of 30**, while about half the population of young international migrants are women and young women. Some **60 percent of young international migrants** live in **developing countries**.

Involuntary and unregulated migration may have some benefits, including skill acquisition, remittances, professional opportunities and higher wages. But job migration among young people also brings specific development challenges that need to be addressed.

Example: Creating decent jobs to reduce distress out-migration

To **reduce distress out-migration**, FAO proposes an integrated approach by **promoting the creation of more and better jobs for youth in rural areas**.

In particular, FAO works to generate evidence and increase awareness of the causes and consequences of rural youth migration for the areas of origin. It also strengthens national capacities to account for migration and labour mobility in agriculture and rural development planning.

FAO actively promotes the adoption of innovative solutions for employment creation for youth in rural areas, including through public-private partnerships and remittance investments.

In its project *Fostering rural diversification through enhanced youth employment and better labour mobility in Ethiopia and Tunisia*, FAO is particularly implementing activities in the field in the two countries **to address root causes of distress economic migration** among rural youth.

In both Ethiopia and Tunisia, agricultural and rural development is linked to migration flows and the lack of gainful and productive employment opportunities. The two countries also share youthful demographic profiles and similar challenges in ensuring employment and entrepreneurship development opportunities for rural youth, seeking to address these through specific youth employment creation solutions and mechanisms.

➤ **Forced young migrants**

They are refugees, Internally Displaced People (IDPs) etc. Internal and international displacement may be a consequence of armed conflict, widespread violations of human rights and man-made and natural disasters.

The legal **status of displaced young people** and whether or not they have the right to access national education systems and health services or the right to work, **affects their social and livelihood opportunities.**

Example: Restoring livelihoods and economic opportunities for youth in Dadaab refugee camp

Dadaab refugee camp, in the Garissa District of Eastern Kenya hosts a population of about 330,000 people (estimates as of 2015), mainly of Somali origin. It is the world's largest refugee camp.

Within Dadaab, refugees' economic opportunities and mobility are limited, and occasional attacks by armed militia threaten security.

Providing education and vocational education is a pressing challenge in Dadaab, where approximately **37 percent of the camp's population is of school age.**

Lack of basic livelihoods and agricultural and life skills trap **youth in a vicious cycle of food insecurity, malnutrition, violence and disease, which threatens their livelihoods.**

FAO, in collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), promotes the **Junior Farmers and Field and Life Schools (JFFLS)** to improve the livelihoods and economic opportunities of youth, as well as those of their parents and guardians, within communities in Dadaab refugee camp and its environs.

➤ **Young people living with HIV and AIDS**

Between 2005 and 2012, AIDS related deaths among youth rose by 50 percent, in stark comparison with overall declining rates of AIDS related mortality. Although significant progress has been made during the past 30 years, there were still an estimated 2.3 million **new HIV infections** in 2013 and about **39 percent** were **among young people**. Moreover, in HIV endemic regions such as Africa - where almost three-quarters of all people living with HIV reside - female youth have higher rates of HIV than male youth.

Example: Helping young people with HIV and AIDS

The agricultural and natural resource sectors present a unique opportunity to combat the HIV and AIDS epidemic in predominantly rural economies. **FAO** was the first UN agency to initiate detailed sectoral **analysis of the socio-economic impact of HIV and AIDS on rural economies**.

HIV and AIDS erode the asset base of rural households, deplete their labour force, reduce their range of knowledge and skills, restrict their ability to earn cash from farming and non-farm activities, and undermine their ability to feed themselves.

Youth are also susceptible to infection, either through sexual contact or harmful traditional practices, such as circumcision, using unsterilized infected implements.

Addressing HIV and AIDS among young people, and combating their discrimination and stigmatization, is therefore essential. Young people living with HIV may face multiple labour market disadvantages and discrimination in employment and occupation.

Employment programmes for young people should provide information on equal treatment and rights at work, as well as on how to prevent HIV infection.

FAO, within **training methodologies such as Farmer Field Schools or Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools**, provides major entry points for addressing topics beyond agriculture and business, such as raising awareness about HIV and AIDS.

➤ **Young people with disabilities**

Estimates suggest that there are **between 180 and 220 million youth with disabilities worldwide** and nearly **80 percent** of them live **in developing countries**. Youth with disabilities often face marginalization and severe social, economic and civic disparities, compared with those without disabilities. This is due to a range of factors, ranging from stigma to inaccessible environments.

➤ **Children/youth from 15 to 17**

The legal minimum age for work varies in countries, though generally it is fixed at 15, with some exceptions for developing economies, who have set it at 14 (under restrictions and with parental permission). Light work, which helps to support the family (as long as it does not threaten health and safety, or hinder education or vocational orientation and training), is possible from the age of 12 to 13. **Activities** for youth employment, which also includes young people from the age of 15 to 17 (hence minors, but who are legally entitled to work), **must include appropriate skills training in the health and safety** of (minor) **young workers**. Therefore hazards should be removed (as mentioned by conventions 182 and 184).



Conventions 182 and 184

Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182). *For more information:*

www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C182

Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184). *For more information:*

www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C184

The United Nations' commitment to youth employment

In recent years, UN Member States have increasingly asked the UN system to intensify **collaboration among the different UN entities** and to develop a **shared strategy** to address the challenges of **creating more and better employment opportunities for youth**, especially in rural areas and the agricultural sector. Various networks, platforms and initiatives have been created to enhance synergies among governments, UN agencies and target beneficiaries involved in youth employment.

	<p>The United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD)</p> <p>The United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development, formally created in 2010, works jointly towards an enabling and inclusive environment that gives every youth the opportunity to participate actively in the political, social and economic life of his or her society.</p> <p>Youth employment and entrepreneurship is one of the IANYD working groups and comprises different organizations working on youth related activities.</p> <p>FAO is one of the founding members of IANYD, along with other UN entities.</p> <p><i>For more information: http://unyouthswap.org/bla/network-members</i></p>
 <p>Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth</p>	<p>The Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth</p> <p>Strongly connected to IANYD, and in particular to the specific working group on employment and entrepreneurship, the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth, led by the International Labour Organization (ILO), is the first ever UN system-wide effort to scale up action in support of youth employment. It involves 19 UN entities, including FAO, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDESA and the World Bank, as well as the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth.</p> <p><i>For more information: Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth.</i></p>

	<p>The World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY)</p> <p>In 1995, on the tenth anniversary of the International Youth Year, the UN strengthened its commitment to young people by directing the international community’s response to challenges experienced by youth. It did this by adopting an international strategy, the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond. FAO is actively involved in the implementation of selected priority areas and actions of the programme, in particular those on youth employment and related education and vocational education. WPAY provides a policy framework and practical guidelines for national action and international support to improve the situation of young people. It is regularly updated and has 15 priority areas identified by the international community.</p> <p><i>For more information: World Programme of Action for Youth</i></p>
	<p>The Global Migration Group (GMG) is an inter-agency body that promotes dialogue on migration issues at international level. FAO joined the GMG in 2014 and membership offers it an opportunity to ensure that international dialogue is well informed regarding the root causes of migration from rural areas and the implications for rural poverty, food security and natural resource management. Among activities it undertakes within the GMG, FAO makes a strong contribution to reducing distress out-migration. Specifically, it adopts an integrated approach by creating promoting productive employment and decent work in rural areas, especially for rural youth, in countries with high levels of migration due to economic reasons.</p> <p><i>For more information: www.globalmigrationgroup.org/</i></p>
	<p>The Youth and United Nations Global Alliance (YUNGA)</p> <p>The Youth and United Nations Global Alliance (YUNGA) is an alliance between UN agencies (including FAO), civil society organizations, government institutions (including schools) and youth groups. It is a gateway to promoting youth engagement in activities of key environmental and social concern at national and international level. YUNGA and its numerous partners work on a number of thematic areas, including agriculture, biodiversity, climate change, energy, forests, food security, hunger, nutrition, oceans and water. It therefore has linkages to the creation of decent jobs for youth in the agricultural sector.</p> <p><i>For more information: www.fao.org/yunga/home/en/</i></p>

United Nations' major milestones on youth related issues

1965 - The Member States of the United Nations endorsed the **Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples** and officially acknowledged that the imagination, ideals and energies of young women and men are vital for the continuing development of the societies in which they live.

1985 - The UN General Assembly declared 1985 as **International Youth Year (IYY)**, with the theme Participation, Development and Peace. The Year drew international attention to the important **role that young people play** in the world, and in particular to their potential **contribution to development and to the goals of the United Nations Charter**. The 1985 General Assembly also defined youth as those persons between 15 and 24 years of age, without prejudice to other definitions of Member States.

1995 - The UN General Assembly adopted the **World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY)** to guide national and international action to create an environment in which young people can flourish and develop their potential to the fullest. To this day, WPAY remains the **basis for UN policies in the field of youth development**.

2010 - Increased interest in youth at all levels led to the expansion of youth related activities across the UN system and made it more and more important for UN entities to work together, leading to regular meetings of UN entities involved in youth development topics. As the benefits of **sharing experience** and closer collaboration started to show, the entities comprising the initial group decided to move to a more structured form of cooperation, and in 2010 formally created the **United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development (IANYD)**.

2013 - In the UN Secretary-General Five-Year Action Agenda, "working with and for [women] and young people" has been identified as a top priority. It is within that context that the UN Secretary-General announced the appointment of a specific **Envoy on Youth** in order to advocate for and address the needs of the largest generation of youth the world has ever known. In the same year, the **UN System-wide Action Plan (SWAP) on Youth** was endorsed.

2016 - The **Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth and its Strategy** was launched in February 2016 under the auspices of the ECOSOC Youth Forum. The Initiative aims to scale up action in support of youth employment, involving in its development 19 entities of the United Nations, among which are FAO, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), UNICEF, UNESCO,

the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the World Bank, as well as the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth.

Summary

Youth face many challenges when they try to enter the world of work. In most countries, levels of youth unemployment and underemployment are double those of adults. Agriculture has huge potential to create jobs for young people, but there are many factors that negatively influence youth engagement in this sector.

Committing to fostering youth involvement in agriculture is crucial, especially for developing countries. Only with the involvement of young people will it be possible to achieve sustainable agricultural development and the food systems/rural transformation needed to address the challenge of increasing agricultural production by 60 percent by 2050, as well as transforming rural sectors and reducing unemployment.

When designing specific youth employment policies, strategies and programmes for agriculture, it is important to bear in mind that youth is a vastly heterogeneous group with very different needs to be taken into account.

The UN system has created various networks, platforms and initiatives to enhance synergies among governments, UN agencies and target beneficiaries, so as to create more and better employment opportunities for youth, including in rural areas and the agricultural sector.