



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations



PROMOTING PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK IN RURAL AREAS

Lesson 1

Understanding employment and decent work in rural areas: concepts and definitions

Text-only version

The interactive version of this lesson is available free of charge at <https://elearning.fao.org/>



Some rights reserved. This work is available under a CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO license
(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/igo/>)

© FAO, 2017

In this lesson

Learning Objectives.....	3
Introduction	3
The concept of decent work and the decent work agenda	4
The concept of decent work	5
Endorsement of the decent work goal	6
The decent work agenda.....	7
Decent work deficits in rural areas	10
Main decent work deficits in rural areas	11
The most disadvantaged or vulnerable groups of workers in rural areas	13
The employment priority	14
Summary	16
Annex 1 - Sustainable Development Goals.....	17
Annex 2: Most disadvantaged or vulnerable groups of workers in rural areas and common challenges faced.....	19

Learning Objectives

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

- define the concepts of decent work and the decent work agenda;
- identify the main decent work deficits in rural areas;
- explain the difference between work and employment.

Introduction

The working conditions of rural workers are different depending from the *regions of the world* they live in. Below you may find some examples:

Example

<u>Central America</u>	<i>Luisa works as a seasonal agricultural worker in the coffee sector. She does not have a labour contract and she is paid on the basis of the harvest. She works up to ten hours or more a day, especially during the coffee picking season.</i>
<u>South America</u>	<i>Pedro works on a sugar plantation, but he is not really paid the minimum wage. He does not know who to complain to. If he joins a trade union, he risks losing his job.</i>
<u>Near East</u>	<i>Jamila is a beach clam fisher. Every day, she walks long distances at low tide, bent over in a very uncomfortable position under a blazing sun, standing in mud or up to her knees in icy sea water. She then sells the clams to middlemen who show little respect for her efforts. The price she gets is very low.</i>
<u>South Africa</u>	<i>Oumar is 12 years old. He left his family and home village to go with a family friend and work in the fishing industry. He works long hours every day, releasing the fish from the smaller nets and diving to disentangle the fish nets from the tree stumps.</i>
<u>South Asia</u>	<i>Sashi is a small-scale rice farmer. He has less than 1 hectare of land. He never had any agricultural training in his life and the agricultural extension services rarely come to the remote rural area where he lives.</i>
<u>East Asia</u>	<i>Min is discriminated in her job because she is a woman. She earns less than her male colleagues, who do the same tasks.</i>

The world is facing a **major unemployment crisis**, and creating more and better employment opportunities for all is an acknowledged priority.

Lesson 1 - Understanding employment and decent work in rural areas: concepts and definitions

Those work opportunities that are available often do not ensure decent levels of income and sustainable livelihoods, **especially in rural areas**. This is due to low labour productivity, underemployment, or other forms of exploitation, such as forced or child labour.

To remedy this, FAO, in the framework of the decent work agenda led by the International Labour Organization (ILO), supports countries in:

1. creating more jobs in rural areas and / or for rural people;
2. improving the quality of existing and future jobs in rural areas.

These two priorities are interlinked and the agriculture sector can contribute to - and benefit from - both of them.

This lesson will describe the concepts of employment and decent work in the context of rural areas.

The concept of decent work and the decent work agenda

In **1999**, in response to a global employment challenge, the constituents of the **International Labour Organization (ILO)** - governments, employers and workers - launched the concept of decent work and the decent work agenda, which have been fully endorsed by the international community.

DECENT WORK	DECENT WORK AGENDA
Productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity	A programmatic approach to pursuing the objectives of full and productive employment and decent work for all at global, regional, national, sectoral and local levels

For more information on decent work, visit the www.ilo.org/global/topics/decent-work/lang-en/index.htm



What does work mean?

Work comprises any activity performed by persons of any sex and age to produce goods or to provide services for use by others or for own use.

We can identify 5 different forms of work:

1. **Own-use production work** production of goods and services for own final use;
2. **Employment work** performed for others, **for pay or profit**;
3. **Unpaid trainee work** performed for others without pay to acquire workplace experience or skills;
4. **Volunteer work** non-compulsory work performed for others without pay;
5. **Other work activities**, such as unpaid community service and unpaid work by prisoners etc.

In defining the concept of work we refer to the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) [Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization](#), adopted in October 2013.

The concept of decent work

Decent work is productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity that means:

- a fair income;
- freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives;
- equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men;
- security in the workplace and social protection¹ for families;
- better prospects for personal development and social integration.



Decent work is enshrined in international law as a human right to which every person is entitled as a means of personal development and socio-economic inclusion.

¹ Social protection encompasses initiatives that provide cash or in-kind transfers to the poor, protect the vulnerable against risks and enhance the social status and rights of the marginalized - all with the overall goal of reducing poverty and economic and social vulnerability. Social protection includes three broad components: social assistance, social insurance and labour market protection. Source: FAO (2015). *The State of Food and Agriculture (p.XII)*. <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4910e.pdf>



The right to decent work in international law

The **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** guarantees everyone "the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work, to protection against unemployment, to equal pay for equal work, to just and favourable remuneration and to form and to join trade unions" (Article 23).

The **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)** also recognizes the right to work and connected rights at work, such as the right to the enjoyment of just and favourable conditions of work and the right to form and join trade unions, through its articles 6 to 8.

More information on Art. 6-8 of International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CESCR.aspx

Endorsement of the decent work goal

Following its formulation by the ILO's constituents, the decent work agenda rapidly forged an international consensus and was soon endorsed by the United Nation system as a whole.

1999	International Labour Organization (ILO) launches the concept of decent work and develops the decent work agenda.
2005	During the World Summit of the United Nations General Assembly , the heads of State and Government commit to take further action to promote full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people.
2012	The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) strongly reaffirm these objectives through a Ministerial Declaration, expressing deep concern at the ongoing adverse impacts of the world financial and economic crisis.
2015	The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) , which shape the 2030 development agenda, dedicate Goal 8 to "Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all" (<i>see Annex 1 at the end of this document</i>).



See Annex 1 - "Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all"



After more than 15 years, the need to achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all is a recognized global priority.

The decent work agenda

The decent work agenda has **four pillars**:

1. Employment creation and enterprise development

It is mainly about promoting:

- employment-rich and pro-poor economic growth;
- productivity;
- an enabling macroeconomic environment for jobs;
- investments;
- entrepreneurship and an enabling environment for enterprises;
- human resource development;
- youth employment;
- migrants' livelihoods through employment.

2. Social protection

It deals mainly with:

- policies for social protection, both in the formal and informal economy;
- protection from risks;
- safety in the workplace;
- health and work;
- fair conditions at work;
- pension systems.

3. Standards and right at work

The ILO's fundamental principles and rights at work: freedom of association and collective bargaining, equality and non-discrimination, and the abolition of child labour and forced labour are the foundations for decent work and define a universal social basis of minimum standards in the world of work. Other ILO instruments set out internationally agreed standards and serve as guidance for national law, policies and practice at the national, local and enterprise levels.

4. Governance and social dialogue

It is about labour law and institutions, strengthening and involving social partners and promoting social dialogue.

Lesson 1 - Understanding employment and decent work in rural areas: concepts and definitions

By integrating a dedicated organizational outcome on decent work in its Strategic Framework, FAO endorses and contributes to the decent work agenda with a focus on rural areas, and the agriculture sector in particular. For more details on the 4 pillars of the decent work agenda, see the ILO Toolkit for Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work/United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination.

For more details on the 4 pillars of the decent work agenda, see the [ILO Toolkit for Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work/United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination](#).

Below you will find four stories connected to the four pillars of how objectives pursued by the decent work agenda have been achieved.

1. The story of Sovath - Employment creation and enterprise development



My name is Sovath and I am 33. I have been running a small-scale home-based poultry business for 3 years, which has been just enough to earn money to sustain my livelihood and meet the operational costs of the business. I discovered that government officials in my district were providing advice on business and technical aspects, such as veterinary services and animal nutrition. I went to the local office and they told me where to buy other affordable chickens. They also recommended the best feeds and approaches to bolster growth. I made my investment, but soon afterwards a disease broke out and my chickens started to die, one by one. Luckily, my advisors from the local office helped me to save the rest of the chickens and advised how to avoid the disease breakouts in future. After two months, I had 30 chickens once more. The local office has also helped me to reach out to restaurants in the city, where I have sold 27 chickens. I hope to have 60 chickens in the coming months!

Adapted from the IFAD Social Reporting Blog: <http://ifad-un.blogspot.it/2012/11/increasing-farmers-access-to-markets.html>

2. The story of Sophia – Social protection



My name is Sophia and I am 75 years-old. My husband and two adult children have passed away and I am caring for three orphans. Some time ago, people came to my house from the district capital to ask many questions about my living situation, and visited my compound. After this visit, I was told by one of the village leaders that I had been selected for a social protection

programme and will receive money regularly. From time to time, a village leader visits my house and gives me advice on how to use this cash, e.g. for house improvements, for the well-being of family members and also for farming. My investments in farming are mostly paying hired piece-workers to cultivate my fields (e.g. maize, groundnuts, cassava, sweet potato). I save most of the harvest for household consumption, but for cassava, I keep some aside for processing mealie meal, most of which I sell. I know for sure that my family is doing better: eating and sleeping better, and there are better clothes for my grandchildren.

Adapted from: an individual interview as part of a qualitative study on decent rural employment and social protection in Zambia. Roopnaraine, T., Pozarny, P. and Estruch E. (2016): Qualitative Study on Decent Rural Employment and Social Protection: Zambia Case Study (From Protection to Production, FAO, forthcoming).

3. The story of Kao – Standards and right at work



My name is Kao. I live in a small village. After my husband died I had to withdraw my oldest child, 9 year-old Ny, from school. The income I earned from collecting crabs and selling them was not enough to feed my children and pay the tuition fees and the uniform. Ny started working many hours on a fishing boat, helping the boat owner with loading and unloading. I was worried because I had heard of some other children dying because they fell into the water, while sleeping, or because the floor of the boat was slippery. Sometimes, other boats would attack them to get the catch from the day. But things changed when I joined my village fisheries' community and I became a member of the savings group. I took out a small loan so I could afford to buy some small livestock to supplement the income from selling crabs. As part of the programme, I learned how to keep and raise piglets properly and also about the risks of child labour on the boats. After some months, I was able to pay back the loan and I had collected enough money to send Ny back to school.

Adapted from the FAO Regional Fisheries Livelihoods Programme for South and Southeast Asia:

www.fao.org/fishery/rflp/en

4. The story of Belen – Governance and social dialogue



My name is Belen. I am 27 years old, and I work in a quinoa processing factory, which mainly employs women from the neighbouring villages. At the beginning I was very happy that I got this job, since I have three small children and before, I could hardly make ends meet.

Unfortunately, very soon I realized that the money was very little for long hours of hard work and I still needed to hire someone to look for my children during my absence at work. I was exhausted. Several women in my factory were fired because they got pregnant and some fell sick because of the bad air in the factory. That's when I started to talk to other women, to convince them to talk together to our employer and ask him to work less and to improve the air ventilation. At the beginning, they were reluctant but after another accident, we went together to talk to the management. It wasn't easy. They threatened to fire all of us and some women wanted to give up because they feared losing their only source of income, but we managed to convince them to carry on. After several months of negotiations, we got a good compromise to our demands: maternity leave of two months, new ventilation and a small facility with two carers where we could leave the youngest children. After that we realized that we can achieve much more if we join forces. We continued to meet among ourselves to discuss other burning issues.

Adapted from: UN Women, Rural Peruvian women spur local dairy industry:

www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2015/10/rural-peruvian-women-spur-local-dairy-industry

Decent work deficits in rural areas

The goal of decent work is particularly relevant for rural areas, where 80 percent of the world's extreme poor live. Decent work deficits, such as poor employment status, low productivity and precarious working conditions are particularly severe in rural areas, and in the agriculture sector in particular. They are among the causes of the high poverty and food insecurity rates.



Decent work deficits

The only way to measure and monitor decent work deficits is to produce statistical and legal framework decent work indicators (DWI) and track them over time. The Decent Work Measurement Framework containing the set of DWIs was presented to the ICLS and ILO Governing Body in 2008. For the references to various International Labour Standards documents on monitoring the progress towards decent work, please see: Measuring decent work www.ilo.org/integration/themes/mdw/lang--en/index.htm. Also, the ILO Department of Statistics has produced a manual for users and producers: International Labour Organization, 2013, Decent Work Indicators - Guidelines for producers and users of statistical and legal framework indicators, Geneva. (www.ilo.org/stat/Publications/WCMS_223121/lang--en/index.htm)



See **lesson 2** “The centrality of employment and decent work for agricultural development, poverty reduction and food and nutrition security” for more information on the links between poverty and lack of decent jobs in rural areas.

Main decent work deficits in rural areas

Let’s take a look at the main work related gaps and exclusions in rural areas:

➤ Working poverty

The working poor are those individuals who are (i) employed and (ii) living in households whose income or consumption levels fall below a poverty threshold.

In 2012, 88 per cent of the extreme working poor in emerging and developing countries were in rural areas. Extreme poverty rates were four times higher in rural areas than in urban areas (see [ILO World and Employment Social Outlook](#), 2016). The highest risk of extreme working poverty (those workers who live on less than US\$1.25 per day) is associated with employment in agriculture.



ILO’s classification of working poor

ILO distinguishes between:

- the extreme working poor (less than US\$1.25 per day);
- the moderate working poor (between \$1.25 and \$2 per day);
- the near poor (between \$2 and \$4 per day);
- developing middle-class workers, who are those workers living in households with per capita consumption between \$4 and \$13 per day); and
- developed world middle-class and above, who are those workers living in households with per capita consumption greater than \$13 per person per day.

➤ Hazards and workplace accidents

Many producers and workers are employed in poor health and safety conditions.

Agriculture, which employs about 60% of workers in less developed countries, **is one of the most hazardous sectors**. Of the 321 000 fatal workplace accidents documented worldwide each year, about half occur in agriculture. Between one and three percent of agricultural workers worldwide suffer from acute pesticide poisoning, with adolescents disproportionately affected.

➤ Youth unemployment and underemployment

Young rural women and men, who have weaker links to the world of work than the general population, are particularly vulnerable to unemployment, underemployment and poor working conditions.

They account for a disproportionately large share (23.5%) of the world's working poor. Most of them work in the agriculture sector, often as contributing family workers in subsistence agriculture. Otherwise, they tend to engage in vulnerable own-account, casual or seasonal wage work in the informal economy, with low pay, low job security and no social protection. Many young people see rural out-migration as their only way to escape poverty.



See **lesson 3** “Youth employment in agriculture” for more information on young rural workers.

➤ **Limited access to social protection**

The lack of access to social protection is a major obstacle to economic and social development. Inadequate or absent social protection coverage is associated with high and persistent levels of poverty and economic insecurity, growing levels of inequality, insufficient investments in human capital and human capabilities, and weak aggregate demand in a time of recession and slow growth. About 73 percent of the world population have no access to adequate social protection. A majority of people without social protection live in the rural areas of developing countries, and many of them depend on agriculture to make a living. *Source ILO, 2014.*

See official FAO Social Protection website www.fao.org/social-protection/en/ for more information on social protection in rural areas.

➤ **Child labour**

Child labour is defined as work that is **inappropriate for a child's age**, affects children's education, or is likely to harm their health, safety or morals. Worldwide, child labour remains predominantly a rural issue. The **agriculture sector** alone accounts for nearly 60% of the world's child labourers, or **98 million boys and girls** in absolute terms.



See **lesson 5** “Preventing and reducing child labour in agriculture” for more information on child labour in rural areas.

➤ **Gender related discrimination**

Women suffer serious discrimination in terms of the jobs available to them, their remuneration, benefits, working conditions and access to decision-making positions, such as in rural producers' organizations. They constitute a significant proportion of contributing family workers and are less likely to engage in wage employment than men. When they do, they are more likely to hold part-time, seasonal and/or low-paid jobs in the informal economy.



See **lesson 4** “Rural women's empowerment in the context of the decent work agenda” for more information on rural women and the world of work.

➤ **Weak institutionalization of rural labour markets**

Rural work tends to be informal, precarious, casual and/or seasonal, with high rates of self-employment. Workers are poorly organized and labour market governance and institutions are usually weak. Also, producers' organizations often lack capacities and voice, or have issues of poor governance or representation.

Only 10 percent of rural workers are unionized, and agricultural and rural workers are often excluded from the implementation of national labour laws, including from legislation which guarantees the right to establish and join organizations that represent their interests. Where rural workers are included in the scope of protective regulation, the law is often not applied in practice, either due to the precarious nature of the employment relationship or to a labour inspectorate ill-equipped to ensure application of the laws in the rural economy.

The most disadvantaged or vulnerable groups of workers in rural areas

It is important to consider that **different groups of rural workers face different gaps and exclusions** and that separate solutions are needed in each case. Among the most vulnerable and/or disadvantaged categories of workers in rural areas are:

- small-scale agricultural producers, including peasants, herders, fishers, aquaculture farmers and pastoralists;
- wage agricultural workers, especially informal, seasonal and casual workers;
- micro and small-scale entrepreneurs;
- rural migrant workers;
- rural women, youth and children in the previous categories.



Wage agricultural workers

"Wage agricultural workers do not own or rent either the land on which they work, or the tools and equipment that they use. In these respects, they are a group distinct from farmers. Yet these workers remain invisible in terms of the goals, policies, programmes and activities to eliminate poverty and to strengthen the role of major civil society groups in promoting sustainable agriculture and rural development [...] Successful sustainable development requires that both small farmers and waged workers are given considerably more attention as distinct groups, each with its own political, economic and social needs

and contributions; that both groups figure in sustainable rural development strategies and programmes; and that more support is given to building and strengthening links between these groups in the interests of sustainable development and poverty eradication."

Source: [*Agricultural Workers and their Contribution to Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development*](#)/FAO-ILO-IUF. - Geneva: ILO, 2007, (Preface and p.90).



See Annex 2 - "Most disadvantaged or vulnerable groups of workers in rural areas and common challenges faced"

The employment priority

Within the broader decent work agenda for rural areas, the promotion of **more and better employment opportunities** is a widely acknowledged and urgent requirement.

To be good for development, jobs in rural areas need to **guarantee adequate pay or profit**, as well as the respect of people's rights at work.



A decent job enables people to use their work to lift them out of poverty in dignity.

What is the distinction between employment and work?

WORK comprises any activity performed by persons of any sex and age to produce goods or to provide services for use by others or for own use (**own-use production work**, production of goods and services for own final use, **employment work** performed for others, **for pay or profit**, **unpaid trainee work** performed for others without pay to acquire workplace experience or skills, **volunteer work** non-compulsory work performed for others without pay, **other work activities**, such as unpaid community service and unpaid work by prisoners etc.)

Employment is a subset of the broader concept of work. Employment work is performed for others, **for pay or profit**.

What is employment work?

People in employment also include persons:

- working in their own economic units to produce goods intended mainly for sale or barter, even if part of the output is consumed by the household or family;
- working for pay or profit payable to the household or family;
- working in market units operated by family member living in the same or in another household; or
- performing tasks or duties of an employee job held by a family member living in the same or in another household.



The pay or profit specification, which includes remuneration in cash or in kind, is what really characterizes employment work.

This definition of employment therefore only includes **small-scale agricultural producers** if a substantial part of their production is sold or bartered, even if some is intended for own consumption. However, the majority of subsistence foodstuff producers are in own-use production work, and not in employment.

Example

In employment

- *Felipe is running a small-scale recycling enterprise, which turns waste plastic into poles and fence posts as an alternative to timber. He employs more than 50 people (he works for a profit);*
- *Amina is a micro entrepreneur running a small unregistered shop without employees (she works for a profit);*
- *Joshua is an artisanal fisherman selling his catch on the local market (he works mainly to sell its output on the local market and therefore for a profit);*
- *Alala is a young woman working for a wage during the agricultural season (she works for a pay).*

Not in employment

- *Adham is a young contributing family member in a household that mainly produces for its own final use, and only rarely sells a small part of its production to the local market (the household produces mainly for own final use).*

Why is "employment work" so important for rural people?

The need to create **more and better employment opportunities for rural people** is a core dimension of promoting decent work in rural areas.

Many people in rural areas work as subsistence producers, therefore they are **not considered in employment** since they mostly **produce for own use**. As the alarming rates of rural poverty demonstrates, for many rural people working is not enough to move out of poverty.

Moving subsistence producers into an employment status would be beneficial for their livelihoods.

This could follow two different pathways, depending on local conditions and opportunities, by helping households:

1. to increase productivity on-farm, commercialize their produce and participate in value chains;
2. to diversify their income, by accessing more rewarding self-employment and regular wage work (farm or off-farm) in the local economy and/or in urban areas.

Summary

Promoting employment and decent work is a crucial priority in rural areas. This lesson has clarified the definitions of:

- employment and work;
- decent work;
- the decent work agenda;
- decent work deficits.

Annex 1 - Sustainable Development Goals

Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

- 8.1
Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7 per cent gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries
- 8.2
Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labour-intensive sectors
- 8.3
Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services
- 8.4
Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production, with developed countries taking the lead
- 8.5
By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value
- 8.6
By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training
- 8.7
Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms
- 8.8
Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment

Lesson 1 - Understanding employment and decent work in rural areas: concepts and definitions

- 8.9
By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products
- 8.10
Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all
- 8.a
Increase Aid for Trade support for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, including through the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries
- 8.b
By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization

Annex 2: Most disadvantaged or vulnerable groups of workers in rural areas and common challenges faced

Groups of rural workers	Common challenges
Small-scale producers (including peasants, herders, fishers, aquaculture farmers, pastoralists)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low productivity and poor working conditions ▪ Physically demanding and strenuous work ▪ Exposure to health and safety risks often without awareness or preventive measures ▪ Incomes below the poverty line ▪ Multiple job-holding to make a living ▪ Lack of technical and entrepreneurial skills ▪ Limited access to adapted credit and other financial services ▪ Informality, excluding workers from social security schemes or maternity benefits and other labour protection legislation ▪ Lack of insurance against income shocks ▪ Lack of organization and of collective bargaining and representation rights
Micro and small entrepreneur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poor access to financial services and land as collateral ▪ Overregulation and bureaucracy, discouraging enterprise formalization ▪ Inadequacy, unreliability and high cost of utilities and infrastructure (power and water) ▪ Difficulty diversifying markets and sourcing from smallholders (e.g. because of inconsistent quality, volume or non-timely delivery) ▪ Lack of competitiveness ▪ High cost of certification fees
Wage agricultural workers (especially informal, seasonal and casual workers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employment under low paid seasonal or casual arrangements, necessity of multiple job-holding to earn a living ▪ Little or no access to social protection and trade unions ▪ Lack of attention from policy-makers and employment statistics ▪ High degree of income insecurity due to lack of economic opportunities
Rural migrant workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High levels of abuse and exploitation ▪ Employment under low paid seasonal or casual arrangements ▪ Poor access to social protection
Rural women in above categories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As producers and more often contributing family workers, productivity constrained by various forms of discrimination (e.g. reduced access to land, inputs and other productive resources, markets, extension services) ▪ Limited freedom, inability to participate in associations and poor voice in cooperatives and POs (e.g. often no female representation in POs governance and management functions) ▪ As wage workers, pay inferior to that of men for equivalent jobs and comparable levels of education and experience, and part-time, seasonal and/or low-paying jobs more frequent ▪ Lack of job security and social protection (e.g. maternity leave), additional gender-based discrimination when pregnant or as mothers ▪ Additional risks and hazards in the workplace (e.g. exposure to sexual harassment), especially when working during pregnancy or maternity

Lesson 1 - Understanding employment and decent work in rural areas: concepts and definitions

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Heavy work and time burdens due to competing demands of productive and reproductive responsibilities.
Youth in above categories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of technical and entrepreneurial skills ▪ Difficult access to land and other productive resources, finance, adapted training etc. ▪ Lack of job prospects in rural areas, resulting in migration to urban centres ▪ Low visibility, given their frequent role as contributing family workers in subsistence agriculture ▪ Engagement in vulnerable own-account, casual or seasonal wage work in the informal economy with low pay, low job security and no social protection ▪ Labour force participation rates for young women lower than for young men in many regions, often reflecting cultural traditions and social norms ▪ Lack of voice, poor organization ▪ Poor targeting by development initiatives
Children in above categories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High risk of involvement in child labour, including the worst forms of child labour (e.g. hazardous work in the agricultural sector) ▪ Lack of voice

Source: [*FAO, 2016. Incorporating decent rural employment in the strategic planning for agricultural development. Pilot version for field-testing*](#)