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Migration and youth in rural areas

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## Migration and youth in rural areas

29 September 2021

### Questions and Answers

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### 1) How can be done to prevent the migration of people from working abroad?

It must be first noted that FAO does not aim to prevent migration. Migration can also bring positive benefits for origin and host communities. We do want migration to be a real choice though and not a necessity or act of desperation. Therefore, we want to create alternatives and options for decent livelihoods in rural areas.

Migration can be prevented by creating additional and improved employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in agri-business. Agriculture presents a huge opportunity for the creation of employment to absorb “potential migrants” and provide alternative viable livelihoods to rural out migration. However, the sector is yet to fully exploit its potential and efforts are needed to support an innovative, commercially oriented, and modern agriculture to be able to attract them.

### 2) The UN just convened the Food Systems Summit the other day. What is the essence of food system transformation, and what role can youths play in this process?

Let me check what resources I can share with you with regards to the role of youth in food system transformation.

In the meantime, on the migration side, for the Food Systems Summit we have issued together with the UN Network on Migration this statement: Towards Sustainable Food Systems: the Critical Role of Migrants

<https://migrationnetwork.un.org/statements/towards-sustainable-food-systems-critical-role-migrants>.

You might also want to take a look at the [HLPE report](#) “Promoting youth engagement and employment in agriculture and food systems” prepared for the Committee on World Food Security.

### 3) Do we have any work with Venezuela which is really crisis based migration

Yes, we have work related to Venezuela which is led by our Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean. We participate in the regional processes related to Venezuelan migrants and have specific work at country level with Venezuelan migrants and host communities, most notably in Colombia. Some aspects of the approach can be found in the publication: Towards durable solutions: FAO’s programming in forced displacement contexts available here:

<http://www.fao.org/resilience/resources/resources-detail/en/c/1369341/>

### 4) We encounter a lot of problems with COVID 19 due to the return of our workers

COVID-19 has indeed impacted migration flows, including in some cases waves of reverse migration to rural areas. If you are interested in this area, FAO has put together a brief with an overview of the situation: "Reverse migration to rural areas of origin in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic" available at <http://www.fao.org/policy-support/tools-and-publications/resources-details/en/c/1402168/>



We have also: "Migrant workers and the COVID-19 pandemic" available at <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ca8559en/>  
Seasonal migration in Europe and Central Asia in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic <http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb5718en>

**5) What are the main investments of FAO in LAC, especially in Honduras, to reduce or mitigate the migration? What are the projects that now are implemented?**

In LAC, FAO is concentrating its work in this area in the countries of Northern Central America (Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras) and more specifically in the area of the Dry Corridor. I invite you to check out this document/infographic: <http://www.fao.org/3/cb5228en/cb5228en.pdf>

FAO is supporting processes to increase opportunities in rural territories and address some of the adverse drivers of migration: food insecurity, environmental vulnerability, rural poverty and lack of economic opportunities for rural populations. There are about 26 projects in this area, with some of the largest being the EU-financed "Support for the Comprehensive Development Plan for Central America" project, which aims to improve resilience of people in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to extreme weather-related events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters that cause the forced displacement of hundreds of thousands of people each year, and the Mesoamerica Hunger Free AMEXCID-FAO" project financed by the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation.

In Honduras specifically, FAO has been implementing several projects: 1) "Empowerment of Women for Climate Action in the Forestry Sector" financed by Canada, 2) "EUROSAN: Agricultural and Nutritional extensive systems" financed by the EU, 3) "Promoting recovery from COVID-19 and boosting smallholder resilience through socio-economic empowerment of the most vulnerable rural population in Honduras" financed by Canada, and 4) "Forest protection in the arid-humid biological corridor of south-western Honduras" financed by UNDP and the Global Environment Facility. FAO has also worked in Honduras specifically on youth employment strategies and incorporating migration into the related policy dialogues.

**6) Thank you, Jacqueline, for your informative presentation. You mentioned the importance of boosting youth in agri-food industry! How to do so? What are actual programs in this theme?**

FAO has several projects focused specifically on engaging youth in the agri-food industry and supporting their decent employment. I invite you to check out our youth employment webpage <http://www.fao.org/rural-employment/work-areas/youth-employment/en/> and also to take a look at our programme the [Integrated Country Approach for boosting decent jobs for youth in the agri-food system](#) with some country examples.

**7) I would like to know about the available tools to quantify internal migration (of youth), especially due to slow onset climate incidents?**



Indeed, there is often a data gap on internal migration, and migration related to slow-onset climate change is often particularly difficult to capture as many factors interplay influencing whether people can adapt in place to the slow-onset climate issues or whether they decide to migrate, and people don't always report on the climate-related factors. We have some hints on data collection tools in the FAO Migration Framework. We are also currently working on an E-learning course specifically on climate change and migration and related tools. Keep your eyes out for these.

**8) While rural outmigration can affect labour supply, can it also positively stimulate greater uptake of labour-saving innovations?**

As you mention, when there are high rates of out-migration there can be an increased work burden and need for labour saving technology/innovations. For example, FAO has been working with women in Nepal in areas of high male out-migration to increase women's access to technologies/mechanization and related services.

**9) Dear Joy, thank you so much for your presentation. Given that activities such as agriculture are exposed to several shocks among which climate change, what is done to build the adaptive capacity of youth to attract back to agribusiness?**

FAO is a champion for Climate Smart Agriculture- an agriculture that “sustainably increases productivity, enhances resilience, reduces/removes greenhouse gas emissions, and enhances the achievement of national food security and development goals”. Through the project, youth have been trained on Climate Smart Agricultural Practices, while adopting modern technology/innovations in their agri-enterprises.

**10) Where is this project based, Joy? I would like to visit for bench-marking.**

The project is based in Kiambu County. We are working in six sub-counties, Lari, Limuru, Kabete, Githunguri, Gatundu North and Gatundu South.

**11) I would like to know whether digital agriculture has been considered as one of the opportunities for such projects to attract the youth considering that Kenya is leading in digitalization.**

Yes. With improved global access to mobile phones, computers and the internet, many people/businesses are using these ICT platforms to foster business growth including adopting e-commerce for supply chain management, access to financial services, as well as research and development.

ICT is an important addition to agriculture and has a great contribution to the agricultural value chain and a catalyst for resolving the sector's challenges to improve efficiency and increase profitability. It has eased access to information to aid decision making and facilitate learning.

Other studies including some by Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) have established that through ICT, smallholder farmers access technological tools, input



supply, extension services, markets and market prices, financial services among other essential resources.

**12) We want to protect the natural environment, especially forest resources**

Yes, natural resources are so important. FAO is working on natural resource management around refugee and IDP camps for example, such as the Safe Access to Fuel and Energy (SAFE+) project in Bangladesh.

**13) Joy, can this tool for practitioners and policy makers be shared?**

Yes. Although a working document that is currently being piloted, I can be reached through [Joy.Mulema@fao.org](mailto:Joy.Mulema@fao.org) for information sharing on the “Guidance Tool for Integrating Migration into Development Planning”.

**14) Joy, you have done well with the youth project, however you seem to be concentrating on one county in Kenya- Kiambu. What are your plans for other counties since the problem of urban migration affect almost all counties in Kenya?**

This was a pilot project as it is a first of its kind looking at migration, social protection and agriculture. Now that we have a model, we are exploring scaling up to other areas. FAO also has youth projects in other counties.

**15) Can you provide more information about the mechanisation component?**

Please visit FAO corporate page on Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization - <http://www.fao.org/sustainable-agricultural-mechanization/en/>

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