



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
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Information material

## Rural youth employment and agri-food systems in Rwanda

A rapid context analysis

RURAL EMPLOYMENT



# INTRODUCTION



**Rwanda**

This rapid context analysis has been developed in the inception stage of the third phase of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) **Integrated Country Approach programme (ICA programme) for boosting decent jobs for youth in the agri-food system.**

The ICA programme supports countries in adopting and implementing youth-inclusive and employment-centred agri-food system development policies, strategies and programmes.



**Two-thirds of the world's youth live in poverty**

Aligning with country and regional priorities, the ICA programme proposes an integrated approach structured in five main outputs:

1. inception phase, mappings and priority setting;
2. knowledge generation for evidence-based policy development;
3. awareness raising and capacity development for youth-inclusive and employment-centred planning;
4. policy and programme development, with focus on agroterritorial processes of job creation;
5. boosting FAO tools and internal capacity to promote youth employment in agri-food systems in a gender-sensitive manner.



**In sub-Saharan Africa, 10 to 12 million new jobs/year are needed till 2030 to absorb all new labour entrants**

Since 2011, the ICA programme has been implemented in three successive phases. It is currently active in Guatemala, Kenya, Rwanda, Senegal and Uganda (2019–2022), with financial support from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

# Overall context and rural youth employment challenges

**Small and landlocked, Rwanda is a youthful and densely populated country in Eastern Africa.** It is also one of the fastest-growing economies in Africa, and aspires to reach a Middle Income Country (MIC) and High-Income Country (HIC) status by 2035 and 2050, respectively. Driven by public investments, between 2007 and 2017, the country grew on average 7.5 percent annually. Such strong economic growth was accompanied by substantial improvements in living conditions, with the poverty rate dropping from 56.7 percent in 2005/6 to 38.1 percent in 2017 (ILO, 2018; World Bank, 2019a).

**Nevertheless, many economic challenges still limit the country's capacity to foster inclusive development.** These include limited capacity of the economy to create sufficient quality jobs, poorly skilled human capital, poor economic infrastructure that limits growth of the private sector, limited access to capital for new entrepreneurs and micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), and heavy reliance on donor funding. Even though the business establishment rates are increasing, job creation rates still do not match the absorption requirements of the growing working age population.

**Even more than unemployment, Rwanda's main employment challenges are working poverty and underemployment.**

Time-related underemployment affects 30 percent of employed people, while around 2 million people are in subsistence farming (for more details see Box 1). As a result, especially in rural areas, poverty remains high, with 49 percent of rural residents living in poverty compared with 22 percent in urban areas (IFAD, 2019). These challenges are compounded by the high child dependency burden resulting from the high and slowly declining fertility rate (UNFPA, 2017). The annual population growth rate is still very high, at 2.5 percent since 2007 (World Bank 2019a), which means that the country is expected to reach 23 million people by 2050 (UN DESA, 2019).

**Young people are particularly disadvantaged in the labour market** and struggle to find adequate work in terms of hours worked, job security or remuneration. Youth unemployment stands at 18.7 percent, while around 60 percent of youth in the labour market are underemployed. Addressing their needs is particularly urgent given that the average age in the country is 20 years, around 67 percent of the population is below 30 years (UN DESA, 2019) and those aged from 16 to 30 years old<sup>1</sup> make up 26.6 percent of the total population (NISR, 2018b). Stepping up investments in the creation of quality jobs is therefore particularly urgent to unleash the country demographic dividend.

<sup>1</sup> In Rwanda, the youth population is defined as young persons in the 16 to 30 years age cohort.



### Box 1. The Rwandan labour market and the youth

- **According to the 2018 Annual Labour Force Survey, the annual unemployment rate stood at 15.1 percent, and was higher among women (17.1 percent) than among men (13.5 percent) and higher among young people (18.7 percent) than among adults (12.3 percent).** It was also higher in urban areas (16.5 percent) than in the rural areas (14.7 percent) (NISR, 2018a).
- **However, these figures fail to represent the full scope of the challenges faced by youth in the labour market and mask persistent levels of underemployment.** Approximately 30 percent of employed people (60 percent of the youth) are underemployed, meaning they work less than 35 hours per week and would be willing to work more (NISR, 2018a; NISR, 2018b).
- **More than 60 percent of young people work in agriculture and its sub-sectors as their main job.** Youth work more frequently as independent farmers than as wage farmers. The second source of jobs is wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (10.2 percent) (NISR, 2018b).
- The share of the informal sector in non-agriculture employment (72.6 percent) is substantially lower than the corresponding share in total employment (83.3 percent). This implies that **only relatively few agriculture holdings are formal** (NISR, 2018a).
- **Around 50 percent of enterprises are micro and 16 percent are small ones**, employing less than 5 people each (ILO, 2018).
- **The Rwandan labour force is low skilled.** In 2017, primary school enrolment was higher than 93 percent, while secondary school enrolment was at 27.7 percent (World Bank, 2019b). Yet, the level of educational attainment of 77.5 percent of the labour force is primary education or below, while only 15.4 have secondary education (lower and upper) and 7.1 percent tertiary education. Only, 3.1 percent of youth have attended technical or vocational schools (NISR 2018b).
- Despite important achievements in gender equality in Rwanda, the labour market faces persistent **gender inequalities**. Women continue to be underrepresented in non-farm wage employment and over-represented in both non-standard forms of work and unpaid family labour (ILO, 2018). In particular, crop farm labourers, stall and market sales persons and domestic cleaners and helpers are female dominated occupations (NISR, 2018a).



**Rwanda's agriculture sector already plays a critical role in absorbing the working age population, including the youth.** The sector accounts for 28 percent of the GDP (NISR, 2019a), and 50 percent of total goods exports (see Box 2). It occupies 63 percent of the workforce (sum of employment and subsistence agriculture) (NISR, 2018a) - and more than 60 percent of young people - as their main job (NISR, 2018b).

## Box 2. Agricultural exports in Rwanda

**Agriculture plays a central role in Rwandan exports.** In 2016, exports of agricultural and agro-processed goods were about 252 million USD, around 50 percent of total goods exports (formal and informal). About 65 percent of agricultural exports are formal and 35 per cent derive from informal cross-border trade, mainly with the Democratic Republic of Congo (MINAGRI, 2018).

**In 2016, formal exports continued to be dominated by coffee and tea,** representing respectively 35 and 39 percent of formal exports by value. Agro-processing exports (predominantly milled products) constituted 18 percent of formal exports (MINAGRI, 2018).

**The Government is promoting non-traditional export crops such as horticulture and animal products.** Rwanda already exports dry beans, potatoes, maize, rice, cassava flour, maize flour, poultry and live animals within Eastern Africa (FAO, 2019). The recent increase in flight routes in and out of Rwanda to Europe and Asia has facilitated an increase in exports of fresh agriculture products from Rwanda (ITA, 2019). Flowers are also emerging as a new commodity.



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**In spite of its importance, the potential of the sector to generate gainful employment is not fully harnessed.** The agriculture sector maintained an average annual growth of 5.3 per cent from 2000 to 2016, more than doubling in value during this period (MINAGRI, 2018). Nevertheless, the majority of workers are in subsistence agriculture (61.4 percent compared to 38.6 percent of workers in market-oriented agriculture)(NISR, 2018a) (see Box 3 for more info on Rwanda's production systems). The bulk of

workers in market-oriented agriculture is paid employees (81 percent), mostly working on daily basis contracts (94 percent) and whose average monthly salary is 20 351 Frw (around 22 USD). Own account workers represent 12 percent while contributing family workers represent 5.5 percent (NISR, 2018a). Poverty is higher (76.6 percent) among households who obtain more than half of their income from working on other people's farms compared to the self-employed (24.2 percent) or non-farm wage workers (22.8 percent) (ILO, 2018).

**Small plot size and limited land availability act as constraints on productivity and profitability for most farmers.** Other constraints relate to issues of low value chain development, market connectivity and low farmer professionalization, as well as challenges in accessing credit due to risk perception. Products matching farmers' needs are still in early stages, with collateral requirements that often go beyond the loan-size, and interest rates as high as 21 percent. Compared to men, women have limited access to formal finance - only 25.5 percent of loan beneficiaries are women (MINAGRI, 2018).

Rwanda's vision to embrace a digital transformation of agriculture, outlined in the **National Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for Agriculture (ICT4Rag) Strategy 2016–2020**, places youth at the center

stage and stresses their role as early adopters in the ICT-enabled journey into profitable farming. However, despite the country's outstanding efforts to transition to a knowledge-based society, only four in ten citizens currently subscribe to internet services and just about 5 percent are active social media users (Hootsuite & We are social, 2019). **Key barriers to large-scale adoption of ICT in rural areas, especially among women and youth, include the affordability of devices and services, a shortage of digital skills and largely the lack of locally relevant content** (GSMA Intelligence, 2019; MINICT, 2019). Further, there is limited availability of digitalized extension material, lack of a road map for systematic capacity building for agronomists and other agricultural extension workers, and limited communication and knowledge/information sharing culture (MINAGRI, 2016).

### Box 3. Rwanda's agricultural production systems

**Agriculture is dominated by small-scale, subsistence, rain-fed farming**, relying on traditional technologies and practices, which renders the sector vulnerable to rainfall variability. According to the 2019 Seasonal Agricultural Survey (SAS), irrigation is practiced in only 3.4 per cent of all cultivated plots, equivalent to 2.1 percent of the total land size and 3.2 percent of farmers (NISR, 2019b).

The agricultural sector accounts for 28 percent of GDP, with food crops being the dominant subsector accounting for 15 percent, followed by forestry (6 percent), livestock (4 percent), and export crops (2 percent) (NISR, 2019a). Main crops are maize, sweet potato, Irish potato, cassava, paddy rice, banana, vegetables and fruits (NISR, 2019b). Export crops have seen an average annual growth of 3.8 percent between 2000/2016, with high year-to-year volatility due to price variations in the dominant crops, tea, and coffee. Livestock is the fastest growing sub-sector, growing 8.3 per cent p.a. between 2012 and 2016 (MINAGRI, 2018).

**The period for cultivation can be divided** into the first cultivable season (from September to January) and the second cultivable season (from February to June). In the marshlands, where water is abundant, there is also a third agricultural season for the cultivation of rice and vegetables (FAO, 2019).

**A major challenge for the inclusive growth of the sector is represented by the skills gap in agriculture.** The 2016 Seasonal Agricultural Survey (SAS) notes that, in Rwanda, 66 percent of agricultural operators had attended primary level education, 26 percent had no education, 6.6 percent attended secondary level education and only 1.4 percent had attended tertiary level education. However, beyond formal education, farmers lacks a range of agronomic and "farming as a business" skills to optimize land and cropping practices and to make well-informed investment choices for greater production and/or profitability (MINAGRI, 2018).

**Another critical challenge is limited land availability.** Rwanda is a small country, with arable land estimated to be around 13,000 km<sup>2</sup>. The average plot size is 0.6 ha. About 30 percent of the households cultivate less than 0.2 ha and almost 15 percent less than 0.1ha, many of which are female-headed households who cultivate only 1.32 percent of national cultivable land. Extremely small farms are concentrated in the Western Province, like in Rubavu, where almost 70 percent of farmers have plots smaller than 0.2ha (MINAGRI, 2018).

**To increase productivity, while taking into account limited land availability, the Strategic plan for agriculture transformation 2018-24 (PSTA4) promotes switching to higher value agricultural commodities**, such as horticulture, vegetable, poultry, pork, and fisheries. Also, it focuses on facilitating private sector investment in fruit and vegetable production through upgrading provision of sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures /quality standards as well as supporting demonstration of better technologies such as green houses, hydroponics, and other small-scale irrigation solutions.

**In spite of these numerous constraints, Rwanda's agri-food system development has potential to induce more job-rich growth.**

High economic growth is creating domestic and regional markets for an expanding array of Rwandan agricultural products (MINAGRI, 2018). The government has prioritized agriculture as one of the key economic sectors in the country's transition into a middle-income country and has emphasized the importance of value addition, commercialization, and resilience to climate change.

According to the Strategic Plan for Agriculture Transformation 4 (PSTA 4), increased yields will have different effects on employment in various crop-varieties. If, in general, productivity growth will cause decelerated creation of on-farm jobs, with the projected productivity effects, export crop production will employ 20 percent more labourers, rice and wheat 30–40 percent more labourers, and livestock sector 30 percent more labourers. On the other hand, tubers and banana production will employ 20 percent fewer labourers. In addition, increased agricultural production will generate jobs along the agricultural value chains,

like in food processing, trade, and other related services. Already, according to the PSTA 4, most new jobs are generated off the farm as well as outside the agri-food system in general. Over the period 2011–2014, business establishments in Rwanda increased by 24.4 per cent. In rural areas, the increase was 38.1 per cent compared to 7.3 per cent in urban areas. During the same period, 34.5 per cent of new jobs were created by businesses (47.9 percent in rural areas compared to 22.4 per cent in urban areas) (MINAGRI, 2018, p. 20).

Following the above logic, the PSTA 4 scenario, with significant productivity growth in agriculture, projects that 45 000 jobs will be created within the agri-food system and this number represents 21 percent of the 214 000 jobs per year projected in the National Strategy for Transformation (NST 1) (2017–2024). Of the jobs in the agri-food system, 28 000 jobs will be created in agricultural production, while the remaining 17 000 jobs will be created in the agriculture-linked value chains: agro-processing, agro-inputs, trade in agri-products, and hotels & restaurants using agro-products (MINAGRI, 2018).



## Current response

**Rwanda's overall policy framework** (see Box 4 for more details) is very conducive to decent rural youth employment promotion. In particular, the adoption of the PST4 and the Gender and Youth Mainstreaming in Agriculture Strategy of the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI) offer an important framework for youth-inclusive agri-food system development in the country.

### Box. 4 Policy context relevant for rural youth employment in Rwanda

- **Rwanda vision 2020** lays out the strategy to transform Rwanda's economy into a middle-income country by 2020, transforming it from a subsistence agricultural economy to a knowledge-based society, with a vibrant class of entrepreneurs and reducing underemployment and unemployment, especially among the youth and women in both urban and rural areas.
- **The National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) (2017–2024)** aims to create annually 214 000 decent and productive jobs, with agriculture as a target sector.
- **The National Agriculture Policy (NAP) (2017)** promotes the development of the agri-food economy, with a strong emphasis on the role of the private sector, including farmers. Among other aspects, this policy will promote inclusiveness through mainstreaming preferential treatment and better participation of women and youth in agriculture programmes.
- **The Strategic plan for agriculture transformation (PSTA 4) (2018–2024)**, which implements the NAP, prioritizes job creation and youth engagement in the sector. Under Priority Area 1: Innovation and Extension, Output 1.3.4 is on Youth in agribusiness development.
- **The Gender and Youth Mainstreaming in Agriculture Strategy (2019–2026)** aims to enhance the youth and women inclusiveness of the PSTA4 actions and investments.
- **The National ICT for Rwanda Agriculture (ICT4RAg) Strategy (2016–2020)** makes specific commitments to create local jobs through an increased usage of ICTs in the agricultural sector.

Source: public policy documents retrieved from FAO Decent Rural Employment (DRE) database at <http://www.fao.org/rural-employment/policies/results/en/>





**A certain degree of collaboration and exchange of information is already in place** between the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the Ministry of Public Service and Labour and the Ministry of Youth. The latter reflects the recognition of the vital role of the rural youth population to boost the agricultural sector and hence the country's economy. **Nevertheless, the lack of a dedicated strategy to achieve NST1/PSTA4 decent job targets limits the actual coordination of activities, as well as the monitoring of progress.**

**In terms of initiatives, most youth programmes target youth aged 18–30, providing vocational and business training, access to loans and entrepreneurship support, including in agribusiness** (see Box 5 for details). Youth graduated from secondary school or university receive a large share of support provided by these initiatives, while less skilled youth or more vulnerable young workers along the value chain seem overlooked. Moreover, most youth initiatives focus on the economic dimension of youth livelihoods, while broader decent work aspects are not addressed, such as occupational safety and health (OSH), or labour standards.



Rural youth and young agripreneurs are well organized and represented in governance and social dialogue processes. There are two main connected networks:

- The **Rwandan Youth in Agribusiness Forum (RYAF)**, which was initiated by MINAGRI and Ministry of Youth with FAO support, counts on about 1 400 members, even though it reaches to more than 12 000 youth through its website and social networks. It is a platform established to bring together different youth organizations, individual youth farmers and entrepreneurs working in one or many of the following sub-sectors: crop production, livestock, agro-processing, inputs and other agro-services (extension, marketing, food packaging, farm mechanization, seed multiplication etc.), as well as ICT for Agriculture. It aims at changing the old mind-set among the youth vis-à-vis the agricultural sector in Rwanda, while orienting youth to reach out to other farming groups to raise awareness on the practice of business oriented agriculture. RYAF has already managed to establish an effective business model, signing contracts with various entities (including MINAGRI and the International Fund for Agricultural Development – IFAD) to organize internships in cooperatives for young graduates, as well as to provide extension services through its members (ex. in coffee, milk collection, for mastitis prevention and treatment, cooperative establishment and to support the collection of food prices).
- The **Youth Engagement in Agriculture Network (YEAN)** (5 000 farmers) is a network of young people engaged in agriculture in Rwanda. It aims to help young people to be leaders of change in the sector through direct and indirect engagement in agriculture research and development activities.

Both networks are highly recognized by policy makers and already collaborate with MINAGRI, IFAD and other development partners as providers of extension services. Furthermore, the **Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD)** Rwanda-Chapter has been very active in supporting both network mentioned above.



### Box. 5 Main ongoing initiatives on rural youth employment promotion

- **The National Employment Programme (NEP) (2013–2018), coordinated by the Ministry of Public Service and Labour (MIFOTRA)**, was designed to provide a national framework for coordinating all employment promotion activities in Rwanda, especially skills training and access to finance initiatives. Among its main intervention are the following: Vocational Trainings; Coaching of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to develop bankable micro business projects through Business Development Advisors (BDA); Support to MSMEs through the **Business Development Fund (BDF)** loan guarantee scheme. According to a mid-term evaluation of the NEP, beneficiaries are, however, mostly urban- and peri-urban based, and few, if any enterprises in rural areas have been supported (Sida, 2017, p. 11). According to an interview with NEP officials in June 2019, the Agribusiness Investment facility under Pillar II of the NEP, which is administered by the BDF, has supported so far 60 agribusiness projects.
- The **YouthConnekt** is another major initiative initiated by the Government of Rwanda and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2012. It aims to provide “youth with the skills, networks and information needed to scale their initiatives and gain meaningful employment”. In 2018, more than thirty young innovators from different part across the country have won cash and in kind prizes in YouthConnekt Awards competition. Before the YouthConnekt Awards competition at national level, 90 top young innovators attended a three days Boot Camp to equip them with entrepreneurial skills, business management among others skills, and top 30 among them scooped awards. Awarded innovators include several agripreneurs, like Mukandayisenga Clementine from Kamonyi District who produces wine and juice from sugar canes or Sanejo Youth Ltd from Burera District, which produces juice and cooking oil from pumpkins. Since 2012, over 500 young innovators have participated in YouthConnekt Boot Camps, 180 among them have been awarded with cash prizes, which resulted in the creation of 8 309 new jobs. After several years of success in providing skills training and facilitating entrepreneurship and job creation for youth, the programme is scaling-up into the continental initiative YouthConnekt Africa (YCA) Hub, which will operate through National YouthConnekt initiatives. The initiative receives the financial support of the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) (7.5 Million USD).
- **Other programmes supported by development partners** include the: **UN Joint Youth programme** (2019–2023); the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Rwanda **Hinga Weze youth integration programme** (2019–2020), which seek to facilitate inclusive agribusiness investments in five agriculture value chain crops that promote and support youth groups and entrepreneurs; the IFAD **Climate Resilient Post-Harvest and Agribusiness Support Project** (2013–2020) which aims at reducing post-harvest losses in key value chain commodities (maize, beans, cassava, Irish potatoes and dairy), thus increasing the incomes of smallholders and rural labourers, especially women and youth.
- Among non-governmental organizations (NGOs), interesting work is led by AgriProFocus (focus on youth engagement in potato, beekeeping and pineapple value chains), Oxfam with its Sustainable Livelihood microbusiness support initiative (2015–2020), and Plan International through its Village Savings and Loan programme benefitting women and youth.

Source: Online search and public programmatic documents retrieved from FAO DRE database at <http://www.fao.org/rural-employment/policies/results/en/>

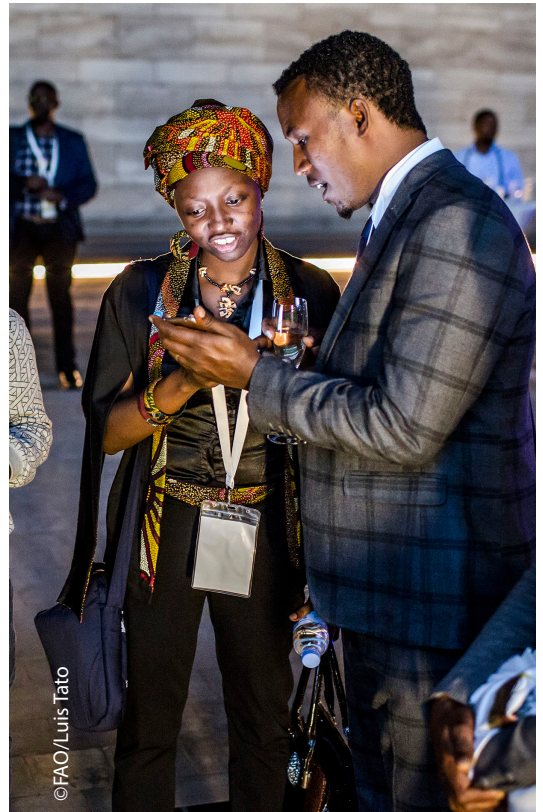


# Results and lessons learnt from FAO's work on decent rural youth employment in Rwanda

FAO has supported youth empowerment and networking in agriculture for long time, which has contributed to identify lessons learnt and set up successful models.

A quick overview is provided below:

- **FAO supported the strengthening and consolidation of the RYAF forum**, which was initiated in 2016 by MINAGRI in collaboration with the Ministry of Youth. The support provided by FAO was considered very effective, and included among the main results achieved: i. the development of the RYAF 5-year strategic framework; and ii. increased capacities and visibility for the youth network, which is today the main interlocutor of Ministries and development partners on youth in agribusiness in Rwanda. For the establishment of the RYAF, MINAGRI was awarded in 2019 at FAO Headquarters the Edouard Saouma Award, for its outstanding efforts in involving youth in Rwanda's agriculture transformation. Nevertheless, the capacity of RYAF to be fully inclusive and represent non-graduated and less-skilled youth in rural areas remains limited and needs additional support.<sup>2</sup>
- **From 2008 to 2014**, 12 United Nations (UN) agencies, including FAO, implemented a **Joint Project on Support to Youth and Women Employment**. The programme focused on strengthening youth and women skills for employability and their enterprises competitiveness. FAO interventions focused on enhancing fish handling, processing and storage practices, and use of modern technology to enhance quality through supply and training on use of vacuum packing machine, hatcheries and greenhouses for horticulture production. According to the project terminal report, the project reached 790 members of 6 different cooperatives with positive effects on vegetable production and farmers' access to local and regional markets for vegetables, as well as on the participation of women in the sub-sector. Furthermore, FAO, in collaboration with Rwanda Agriculture Board and Rwanda Housing Authority, trained 120 farmers' representatives as master trainers, in sanitary, hygiene and fish post-harvest technology, ponds management, hatchery and incubation system management, and greenhouse management. A crucial aspect of the joint programme has been the multi-stakeholder involvement during the design and implementation of the project through a strong partnership between FAO, Ministry of Trade and Industry (MINICOM), National Industry and Research Development Agency (NIRDA), Rwanda Agricultural Board (RAB), Rwanda Housing Authority, Districts and Beneficiaries. **The second phase of the UN Joint Youth Programme (UNJP) will cover the period 2019-2023.** UNDP and UNFPA are leading agencies, while FAO is one of the implementing agencies. A significant component of the programme is dedicated to the UNDP-led Youth Connekt initiative.



<sup>2</sup> Further need for support identified with RYAF in 2019 include: 1. Join forces for the development of a Youth in Agribusiness Strategy, where RYAF could lead the organizations of policy dialogues and local consultations, as well as the monitoring of the action plan to be established; 2. Implement a strategy to strengthen young women's engagement in agribusiness (currently young women represent only 25% of RYAF membership); 3. Support the RYAF research team for enhancing the assessment of current employability and skills levels in the sector, as well as working conditions; 4. Technically support RYAF members on aspects related to climate-smart technologies and practices and post-harvest food handling; 5. Technically support the design and establishment of the RYAF planned Fund, which aims to negotiate a reduction in bank guarantees and introduce a RYAF membership fee; and 6. Technically support the enhancement of the RYAF website and digital tools.

- In 2018, FAO and the Government of Rwanda organized a regional conference on **Youth Employment in Agriculture as a Solid Solution to ending Hunger and Poverty in Africa: Engaging through Information and Communication Technologies**. As a result of the discussions, five major recommendations were registered, namely: (i) to initiate a web-based regional platform for information and knowledge sharing on job opportunities for the youth in agri-food systems, as well as on services offered by different stakeholders (the youth, governments, development partners, financial institutions, academia, etc); (ii) to explore options for institutionalizing similar dialogues/consultations on an annual or biennial basis; (iii) to support the establishment of National Youth Platforms, similar to the Youth in Agribusiness Forum of Rwanda; (iv) to support the launch of a Youth Innovation Technical Assistance Facility for Africa and encourage other African countries to join the initiative; and (v) to convene follow up consultations and develop a detailed roadmap/ Action Plan, taking into consideration the key outcomes, commitments and pledges from the conference. While there is no evidence of follow up actions at the regional level, the Government of Rwanda committed to put in place a Technical Assistance Facility for Youth (TAFY) in order to support youth efforts in investing in agribusinesses (whose design is currently being supported by FAO Social Policies and Rural Institutions Division - ESP).
- In addition, FAO has a long-standing experience in the implementation of the Farmer Field Schools (FFS) and Junior Farmer Field and Life-skills Schools (JFFLS) in Rwanda.** The JFFLS approach in particular has been successfully implemented in 2011/2012, and at least 7 master trainers are available in the country. The methodology uses agriculture skills as springboard to enhance life skills that are crucial for holistic rural communities.
- The technical cooperation project Support to Agricultural Services and Digital Inclusion in Rwanda (2018-2019)** aimed to provide high quality information services to family farmers and extension workers, observing special attention for the specific needs of women and youth. Four digital services (Weather and crop calendar, Cure and feed your livestock, Agrimarket place and E-nutrifood) have been developed , tested and deployed (officially launched) using two delivery mechanism: Progressive web app (PWA): <https://digital.apps.fao.org> for smart phones and Rapid pro for dummy phones by receiving SMS after registration. FallyArmyworm Monitoring and Early Warning System (FAMEWS) has been recently added to the four digital services mentioned above
- The Joint programme on accelerating progress towards Empowerment of Rural Women (RWE),** implemented by UN Women, FAO, IFAD and the World Food Programme (WFP), reached 2 083 farmers (1 713 women and 370 men) by December 2018. The Joint Programme targeted most vulnerable individuals, including single mothers, and teenage mothers. In addition, the Joint Programme continued to target men as a way to overcome deeply-rooted cultural norms such as defined gender roles and ownership of resources. While not specifically targeting youth, the project implemented successful practices that could be further replicated with youth groups. In particular, around 1 150 members of 10 farmer groups increased their knowledge on the laws governing land, matrimonial regimes and succession in Rwanda, while 50 Voluntary Saving and Loans Associations (VSLAs) were established, with positive effects on women's access to bank loans.



## Future priorities for FAO's work on decent rural youth employment in Rwanda

### At normative/policy level:

- At the request of MINAGRI, support the **development of a National Strategy for Youth Employment in Agriculture/agribusiness**, in consultation with major stakeholders, including the existing youth networks.
- **Generate missing knowledge** to inform the design of the National Strategy for Youth Employment in Agriculture/agribusiness, especially in terms of decent work and employment potentials in prioritized value chains.
- **Advocate for increased attention to inclusiveness of vulnerable categories of rural youth** (so beyond graduated youth/champions) in government and development initiatives, including low-skilled rural youth, informal young workers, young women and youth below 18 years of age.



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### At programmatic level:

- **Raise awareness and provide technical support for the design of more inclusive value chain and employment approaches** that take into account the needs of more vulnerable categories of rural youth.
- **Continue to support existing rural youth organizations and networks**, such as RYAF and YEAN, for them to develop more inclusive business models and to aggregate more young rural workers along the agriculture value chains.
- **Continue to support the capacities of youth agripreneurs and their networks** to effectively engage in agriculture and agribusiness.
- **Provide technical support to ongoing efforts to boost youth access to agri-finance in Rwanda.** While several products and initiatives are already on the market, access for rural youth and young farmers seems very limited, especially due to lack of information, collateral requirements and limited targeted products. FAO is already supporting a feasibility study to design a Technical Assistance Facility for Youth (TAFY) to boost entrepreneurship among youth in Rwanda and their investment into food value chains.



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## Annex: Migration patterns and dynamics in Rwanda

Given Rwanda's peace and stability since the genocide in 1994 and its geographical location, the country has attracted people fleeing conflicts and other hardships in the region. The country hosts around 145 000 refugees, mostly from the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi. Around 50 percent of the refugee population is younger than 18 years old. **A Strategic plan for refugee inclusion (2019–2024)** was adopted by the Ministry in Charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA). As the Government of Rwanda (GoR) ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention, any refugee in the country enjoys the right to work and to owning immovable and movable property, among other rights (MINEMA, 2019).

Additionally, the country is also receiving Rwandan nationals who are returning home after years spent as refugees or asylum seekers abroad. Over 3.4 million refugees returned after 1994 (OIM, 2019).

**Rwanda also has an important diaspora community** across the world, with major concentrations in neighbouring countries, but also Western and Central Europe and North America. In 2009, realizing the importance of the Rwandan diaspora in the national development, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation (MINAFFET) adopted the **Rwandan diaspora policy**. The policy is the guiding framework that sets out how the GoR wishes to see the Rwandan diaspora contributing and being integrated into the national development of the country. Remittances from the Rwandan diaspora contributed an estimated 2 per cent to the GDP in 2016 and grew by 34.4 percent since 2007. These remittances are mainly used for: poverty alleviation purposes, as well as for community development through programmes such as the One Dollar Campaign (2008–2010), No Rwandan Left Behind (2016) and the One Cow Per Family (2006–2015) initiative (OIM, 2018).



**The stock of the migrant population at the time of the 2018 Labour Force Survey was 1 455 070 persons**, representing 12.2 percent of the total population. The bulk of migrants were internal migrants (1 348 168). The share of international migrants in the total population of Rwanda remains low, at 0.9 percent. They come mainly from Uganda and Burundi, followed by Congo-Kinshasa and Tanzania, and almost 20 percent of them work in agriculture (plus 5.6 percent in subsistence foodstuff production) (NISR, 2018a).

**Internal migration in Rwanda is a relatively recent phenomenon** (WB, 2017). Population movements were limited before 1990, but picked up in the 1990-2000 period in the aftermath of the war and the 1994 genocide against Tutsi, which led many people to leave rural areas. Since 2005, there has been a new increase due to economic growth, rising education levels and improvements in transport infrastructure, combined with increased population pressure on arable land. In 2014, about 7 percent of rural dwellers and 23 percent of urban

dwellers were recent internal migrants (WB, 2017, p.3). In addition to Kigali, recent migrants make up 14 percent of the population of the secondary cities, with Muhanga and Nyagatare, in the Southern and Eastern Provinces having the largest share.

However, even though migrants constitute a larger share of the population in urban than in rural areas, this does not mean that most urban migrants came from rural areas. Indeed, rural-to-urban migration represented only 20 percent of all internal population movements between 2011 and 2014, while rural-to-rural migration accounted for 34 percent and urban-to-rural migration for 27 percent. **Overall, rural areas were the destination for 61 percent of internal migrants since 2011** (WB, 2017). As for the pattern of employment of internal migrant workers in terms of branch of economic activity, most of them are employed by households (24.0 percent), in agriculture (18.5 percent, plus 8.9 in subsistence foodstuff production), in wholesale and retail trade (15.6 percent) and in construction (9.6 percent) (NISR, 2018a).





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