

2023 Annual General Assembly

A FACE-TO-FACE AND VIRTUAL EVENT
ROME 26-27 OCTOBER 2023



Global Donor
Platform for
Rural Development

Session by the Thematic Working Group on Rural Youth Employment

Leveraging Change for Rural Youth Employment and Food Systems Transformation

SESSION CONCEPT NOTE

Friday 27 October 2023, 13:50-15:20 CET
IFAD HQ, Rome and on Zoom
[Registration link](#)

1. Background and rationale

The world today is home to the largest generation of young people in history at 1.8 billion people, close to 90 per cent of whom live in developing countries, and many of them in rural areas. Rural youth can be powerful agents of change, and key actors to shape the future of agri-food systems, end poverty and achieve food security. To enable this, it is key to promote their access to decent jobs in sustainable food systems and green rural economies. However, young women and men in rural areas face many challenges that hamper their transition to decent jobs¹. There are only a few incentives and support structures available for youth to transform rural areas into bedrocks of wealth creation and catalysts of inclusive and sustainable growth. Policies and investments that promote broader rural transformation process do not automatically translate into better opportunities for young people. Moreover, the current context of multiple crises has led to a severe worsening of the labour market situation for many young people and increased the number of youth who are neither in employment, education or training (NEET) in many countries including among rural youth².

While the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (GDPRD) is celebrating its 20th year of existence in 2023, the [Thematic Working Group \(TWG\) on Rural Youth Employment](#) is celebrating its 5th anniversary. The youngest TWG of the Donor Platform was formed as an outcome of the 2018 Annual General Assembly that focused on rural youth. The aim of the TWG is to catalyse donor exchange and to advise donors, governments, and civil society organisations on the most effective ways to create employment opportunities and to support the empowerment of youth to productively contribute to and benefit from sustainable rural livelihoods.

Over the past decade, there has been a notable increase in youth-specific employment programmes and financing, especially in Africa. With the aim of increasing impact of the youth employment programmes, many of these programmes have benefited from diverse innovations, going from programme design and targeting to increased involvement of governmental and non-governmental actors, as well as methodology and even governance structures.

¹ [Rural economies: Advancing social justice and decent work in rural economies \(ilo.org\)](#)

² [wcms_886467.pdf \(ilo.org\)](#)



Since 2017, the G20 Initiative for Rural Youth Employment (RYE) has underlined the need for more coordinated action to promote decent work and income-generating opportunities for young rural people. It is also a key component of the G20 Africa Partnership, which aims to facilitate alignment, coherence, and ownership of regional and international efforts to meet commitments such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union's Agenda 2063, among others.

Highlights from a soon to be published stocktaking report on the implementation of the G20 Initiative for RYE by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) shows that the quantitative targets set by the G20 on job creation and employability of African youth have been overachieved. However, several challenges remain. Alignment of donor actions, better sharing of experiences and best practices, collecting data-based evidence, and building upon existing international policy dialogue and processes could help move the RYE agenda forward. Establishing an overarching framework with well-articulated goals and measurable indicators of progress would help align donor investments and implementation of RYE projects.

Young people must be involved in all efforts to transform food systems. As stated in the UN Secretary General brief on Meaningful Youth Engagement, "youth are key to identifying new solutions that will secure the breakthroughs that our world urgently needs"³. The 2021 UN Food Systems Summit prominently involved youth groups and stressed the importance of youth in re-shaping and transforming food systems. Accounting for young people's views is crucial for the effectiveness of any given intervention. Therefore, policy, legal and regulatory frameworks need to be enhanced to empower rural youth, and youth should have a stake in the design and implementation of RYE policies and programmes.

Efforts towards more and better jobs for rural youth go hand in hand with efforts towards inclusive, sustainable, and resilient rural transformation. More coherent policies and better coordination of invested resources towards agreed goals is fundamental. Many development projects have started incorporating a comprehensive and integrated approach for RYE, which includes promoting job creation and improving employability. However, the scale of impact of these projects will remain limited unless national governments have the capacity and make deliberate efforts towards greater coordination of ODA and other donor-funded programmes around a coherent (national) rural youth employment strategy. Strategic coordination at the national level will help the extensive network of donors and development practitioners to move in alignment with one another. Such coordinated action is key given the need to scale up action on youth employment. With only seven years until the deadline for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the youth employment targets of the 2030 Agenda will not be met unless there is a collective and coordinated action by all stakeholders to address the youth employment challenge in all its dimensions.

2. Objective

This session aims to draw lessons learned on the effectiveness of interventions towards promoting more and better jobs for rural youth within a broader food systems approach. In particular, panellists will highlight the importance of enhanced donor coordination, both at global and country level, to advance the rural youth employment agenda. The role of different stakeholders in ensuring a youth-inclusive food system transformation will also be discussed. It will be an interactive session enriched by practical experiences from government officials, development partners and youth representatives.

³ UN 2023 [Our-common-agenda-policy-brief-youth-engagement-en.pdf \(un.org\)](#)



3. Agenda

Day 2 – Friday 27 October 2023, 13:50-15:20 CET (1 hour 30 min session)	
13:50 - 13:55 (5 min)	Welcome and introduction Henry Bonsu, Moderator
13:55 - 14:10 (15 min)	Setting the scene: Donor Coordination to leverage change for RYE and Food Systems Transformation <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Annira Busch, Senior Policy Officer, Division Food and Nutrition Security, Fisheries, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, BMZ- Yukiko Arai, Deputy Director and Officer-in-Charge, Sectoral Policies Department, ILO- Genna Tesdall, Director, YPARD
14:10 – 14:20 (10 min)	Presentation: A better future for rural youth Key findings from the upcoming G20 Initiative for Rural Youth Employment’s stocktaking report by the OECD Development Centre Ji-Yeun Rim , Senior Policy Analyst, OECD
14:20 – 15:00 (40 min)	Panel discussion: Coordinated RYE promotion in practice – Lessons learned from Kenya <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) <u>Youth perspective</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">- Dorothy Makayoto, Chairperson, Ingo Agrichamps Youth Association, Western Kenya,2) <u>Country policy perspective</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">- Mr. David Warui Mwangi, County Director, Vocational Education and Training (Youth Training), Nakuru County Government3) <u>Continental (African) perspective</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">- Haile Abebe, Programme Support Consultant, African Union Commission4) <u>Donor / Multilateral Organization</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">- George Yaa Mazuri, Chief Executive Officer, Ustadi Foundation- Ileana Grandelis, Programme Officer, Inclusive Rural Transformation and Gender Equality Division, FAO
15:00 – 15:15 (15 min)	Reactions from the audience and take-aways of the discussion
15:15 – 15:20 (5 min)	Wrap-up and closing , Moderator and TWG RYE Co-Chair