



GOOD PRACTICES #2

Supporting rural youth entrepreneurship to reduce migration in Honduras

What is decent rural employment?

[Decent rural employment](#) refers to any activity, occupation, work, business or service performed by women and men, adults and youth, in rural areas that: (i) respects the core labour standards as defined in ILO Conventions; (ii) provides an adequate living income; (iii) entails an adequate degree of employment security and stability; (iv) adopts minimum occupational safety and health (OSH) measures adapted to address sector-specific risks and hazards; (v) avoids excessive working hours and allows sufficient time for rest; and (vi) promotes access to adapted technical and vocational training.

THE SITUATION

In Honduras, rural youth face considerable challenges in accessing productive and decent employment opportunities.

The rural labour markets in Honduras are characterized by significant informality, low productivity and high levels of un/under-employment. This is particularly true for those under 24 years of age, who constitute more than half of the country's unemployed population. Moreover, about 40 percent of all young workers are paid less than the minimum wage, and work long hours without access to social protection or adequate representation.

Consequently, many young people have sought opportunities elsewhere. In 2010, the number of Hondurans legally living abroad was equivalent to about 7.5 per cent of the country's total population. When accounting for those who have emigrated by irregular means, this figure is estimated to be substantially higher. **The majority of these emigrants, 65 percent, are young women and men.** This type of economic distress migration, created by lack of work opportunities, has severe consequences for the country's human capital development and future growth prospects, resulting in lower living standards and de-population of rural areas.

PROJECT DETAILS

Title: Human Development for Youth: Overcoming the Challenges of Migration through Employment (rural component)

Date: 2009–2013

Location: 22 municipalities in the Southern region of Honduras

Responsible institution(s): FAO, ILO, UNDP, UNICEF, OIM, UNFPA, UNODC, Honduras Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (implementing agencies); UN MDG Fund (funding agency)

Sub-sector: Crops

Budget: US\$595,402

HOW THE ISSUES WERE ADDRESSED

The rural component of this United Nations Joint Programme (UNJP) was led by FAO, aiming to disincentivize migration among rural youth by supporting them launch and run their own micro-enterprises. Beneficiaries were given full responsibility for the development of entrepreneurial activities, and were supported throughout the process. First, targeted youth were guided in analyzing local market opportunities and developing business plans, while being trained in agricultural and business skills needed to launch and sustain their enterprises. Next, the prospective young agro-entrepreneurs were supported in accessing credit and seed funds to launch and grow their micro-enterprises.

The programme worked with the beneficiaries to form youth business associations. Gender equality and revaluing cultural roots were crosscutting subjects. The joint programme worked with national and **local stakeholders to improve the legal, policy and institutional framework for youth employment** through the establishment of inter-institutional committees and regional worktables.



Criteria used to identify good practices

To be considered a good practice in promoting decent employment in agriculture and rural areas, a programme/project must:

1. Have been directly **relevant** to promoting decent rural employment;
2. Have had a **positive effect on employment** issues among target beneficiaries;
3. Have included measures that will ensure the **sustainability of its effects and/or support**, and;
4. Be **replicable** by other organizations, in other contexts and/or for the benefit of other groups.

IMPACT



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The rural component of this UNJP provided assistance to rural youth enterprise development, and helped ease migratory pressures.

2,180 young women and men were trained in agricultural and entrepreneurial skills, and pitched their proposed microenterprises to credit and seed capital funds. Among this group, over 1,500 youths successfully launched and continued to operate their microenterprises. Furthermore, interviews with the beneficiaries have shown that their microenterprises are sufficient to reduce their propensity to migrate, as they now consider it possible to earn decent livelihoods in the rural areas of Honduras. **The rural component of the UNJP also contributed to important institutional developments.** Two youth-led interregional commercialization networks were launched, which have provided support to other prospective young agro-entrepreneurs. The UNJP also successfully supported the development of the National Youth Employment Plan in conjunction with numerous public institutions and municipalities.



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SUSTAINABILITY

A **comprehensive exit strategy** was included in the programme to better ensure its sustainability. The strategy was put in place from the beginning, and was based on two pillars. The first was an emphasis on **capacity development and local ownership** by empowering and developing the capacities of local institutions. This was accomplished by gradually transferring responsibility for programme implementation to the targeted municipalities, as well as other local institutions such as the Youth Leaders Network. The second pillar was that the programme generated **inter-institutional worktables** for dialogue, bringing together representatives from the national government, municipalities and civil society. It created a forum in which key stakeholders could monitor and discuss the progress of the programme in the framework of an institutionalized and inter-organizational relationship that could help support the programme's continuity, while at the same time acting as a built in mechanism to support the mobilization of funds needed to finance project activities.

REPLICABILITY

The approach to supporting rural youth under this UNJP could be replicated in other regions, along different value chains and could support a wide array of young people (skilled or unskilled, rural or urban). It provides multi-faceted support to address the challenges that youth face in launching enterprises (access to skills, credit, inputs, and markets) – constraints that are universal in nature. Strong emphasis is placed on involving youth in the selection of products and planning of activities. This increases the local ownership of the initiative and ensures that specific activities are designed in accordance with local needs. Collectively, these factors make the approach highly replicable, several other municipalities in Honduras expressing interest in implementing similar initiatives.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS GOOD PRACTICE, PLEASE CONTACT:

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TO SUBMIT YOUR OWN GOOD PRACTICE, CONTACT:

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