



39 Side-events

“Employment and agricultural value chains”

17th October 2012 – 6pm

Lebanon room (FAO, Rome)

“Dealing with the employment challenge of the most vulnerable to ensure food security: Acknowledging the role of agriculture and agricultural value chains”

Background

Most debates on agriculture and food security focus on issues such as food availability, land tenure and price volatility -- all linked primarily to the supply of food.

Similarly, many public policies try to deal with food security issues by targeting growth in agricultural production, increasing self-sufficiency of farmers hoping as a side effect for an increase of farmers' income and marketable surpluses.

By focusing on production, this vision has some limitations and the aim of this side event is to bring attention to a broader approach, by including other rural activities directly linked to agricultural value chains (from inputs to agro-processing of food, fiber and materials), and goods and service provision to rural consumers. This approach, rooted in local development and the strengthening of rural-urban linkages, is a way to deal with the employment challenge and the necessary generation of income so critical to food security.

Indeed it has been acknowledged for some time that one of the main reasons why people may not have access to food—even when enough is available in the aggregate—is poverty. Therefore poverty reduction and income generation are fundamental to achieve food security for all.

IFAD's 2011 report on rural poverty reminded us that a very large majority of poor people are living in rural areas, and that they depend substantially on activities linked to agriculture for their livelihoods. The expected population boom in sub-Saharan Africa (an additional billion people by 2050) exacerbates those issues in the region, knowing that rural population will continue to grow strongly and keep exceeding urban population till around 2035. Additionally, the active population in sub-Saharan Africa is broadly engaged in agriculture, and employment alternatives in urban industries and formal services will stay limited in the two coming decades. These facts bring the development of rural activities to the center of the policy agenda for poverty alleviation.

The French development agency AFD, the French research center Cirad, the FARM foundation, a French think-tank on world agriculture and rurality, and the Future Agricultures Consortium, a United Kingdom-based international network of researchers, have joined to shed light on this important topic at the Committee on World Food Security (CFS). Indeed with its diversified audience and the representation of more than one hundred countries, the CFS is an excellent forum to discuss these questions and exchange knowledge and points of view with stakeholders involved in the international policy debate on food security, including representatives of farmers' organizations, policy makers, donors, and researchers.





39 side-events

“Employment and agricultural value chains”

17th October 2012 – 6pm

Lebanon room (FAO, Rome)

Program

The side event will be held on **Wednesday 17th October at 18:30 in the Lebanon room at the FAO headquarters in Rome.**

The program includes a presentation followed by a round table and an open discussion with the audience on the following topics:

Employment and agriculture: what is the challenge?

Results from the **RuralStruc Study**—a joint World Bank, IFAD, and French cooperation (Agence française de développement, ministère des Affaires étrangères, ministère de l’Agriculture et de la pêche, Cirad) initiative- presented by Bruno Losch (Cirad and World Bank).

Round table with different stakeholders and debate with the audience:

- a representative of the **Future Agricultures Consortium research program** “Young people and agri-food” (Jennifer Leavy, Future Agricultures Consortium, IDS, University of Sussex),
- a representative of **NEPAD** (Tobias Takavarasha, NEPAD Agency),
- a representative of **farmers organization** (Ibrahima Coulibaly, Coordination nationale des organisations paysannes du Mali - Cnop),
- a representative of **ILO**.

Final remarks:

Olivier de Schutter (UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food).

Interpretation

English, French and Spanish.

Cocktail

Organizers

Cirad (Nicolas Bricas), FARM (Mathilde Douillet), AFD (Marie-Cécile Thirion) and Future Agricultures Consortium (Jennifer Leavy)

Contacts

Nicolas Bricas nicolas.bricas@cirad.fr

Mathilde Douillet mathilde.douillet@fondation-farm.org

