



# ► ILO Sectoral Brief

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## COVID-19 and the impact on agriculture and food security

As the COVID-19 outbreak continues to spread across the world, it is essential to address its existing and potential impacts on the agri-food sector, from the perspective of both food supply and food demand. Ensuring the continued functioning of global and national food supply chains will be crucial in securing food supply, preventing a food crisis in countries that are already experiencing food and nutrition security challenges, and reducing the overall negative impact of the pandemic on the global economy.

Although its share in total employment has fallen from 40.2 per cent to 26.8 per cent over the past two decades, agriculture provides livelihoods to more than one billion people worldwide and remains the backbone of many low-income countries, accounting for 60.4 per cent of employment<sup>1</sup> and contributing up to two-thirds of gross domestic product in some of those countries. The sector is particularly important in Africa and Asia, where its employment share is 49 and 30.5 per cent, respectively. It is a major source of employment for women, who account for 41.9 per cent of the agricultural workforce in the developing world.<sup>2</sup>

Despite its declining share in global employment, agricultural output has continued to grow.<sup>3</sup> Coupled with urbanization, increasing per capita incomes, and export opportunities, the transformation of the food system has been translating into new jobs in the larger agri-food sector, which includes agriculture and related non-farm sectors, such as processing, manufacturing, food marketing, transportation, and food preparation. The agri-food sector already employs the majority of those in self- and wage employment in developing countries. However, at present, many of these jobs are characterized by decent work deficits resulting from inter alia: weak labour market institutions, including ineffective law enforcement, labour inspection and

compliance; inadequate environments for enterprise development; low productivity; climate change; prevalent informality; poor infrastructure; and limited access to social protection and other services, including education and health-care. Additional challenges arise from farmworkers' increased exposure to various safety, health, environmental, and biological hazards, including those related to chemicals, noise, musculoskeletal injuries, heat etc.

Agricultural workers experience the highest incidence of working poverty. A quarter of workers engaged in the sector are in extreme poverty. Despite playing an important role in national economies, providing a link with the global structures of agricultural production and trade, and feeding the world, many agricultural workers and their families suffer from poverty and food insecurity.

While agri-food sector jobs have been designated as essential in the context of the COVID-19 crisis in many countries, the measures adopted to slow down the pandemic may place further strain on the capacity of the sector to continue meeting demand, providing incomes and livelihoods, and ensuring safety and health for the millions of agricultural workers and producers. Urgent action to address the multiple decent work challenges faced by agricultural workers and to improve the functioning of the agri-food sector will be critical to effectively address crises, both present and future. Lessons need to be learned from the responses to the pandemic in agriculture with a view to "building back better." The opportunities that arise to adopt technological innovations and improve environmental sustainability should not be missed.

1 ILOSTAT, Employment by sex and economic activity – ILO modelled estimates, November 2019.

2 ILO, World Employment Social Outlook: Trends for women 2017, 2017.

3 IFAD, Rural development report 2016: Fostering inclusive rural transformation, 2016.

## ► 1. The impact of COVID-19

Since the beginning of the pandemic, no significant disruptions in the supply of food have been experienced so far. However, logistical challenges within supply chains, particularly cross-border and domestic restrictions of movement, as well as labour issues, may lead to disruptions in food supply, especially if they remain in place long-term. High-value, and especially perishable commodities, such as fresh fruit and vegetables, meat, fish, milk and flowers, are likely to be particularly affected. The health crisis has already resulted in job destruction in sub-sectors such as floriculture in a number of countries.<sup>4</sup> There may be a further reduction in job quality in the sector and job destruction, especially at the base of the supply chain. Women and youth are likely to feel the impact more strongly, as they are particularly exposed to socio-economic vulnerability.

Restrictions on movement may prevent farmers from accessing markets and result in food waste. In many countries, farmers are now unable to sell their produce in local markets or to local schools, restaurants, bars, hotels and other leisure establishments, which have been temporarily closed.

The pandemic may also have a serious impact on labour-intensive crop production and processing due to labour shortages and the temporary cessation of production. For example, Europe's agricultural sector is facing dramatic labour shortages due to border closures that prevent hundreds of thousands of seasonal workers from reaching farms that rely on their labour during the harvest period. The impact on the sector is expected to be long term. A number of major European agricultural producers, including France, Germany, Italy, Spain and Poland, are particularly vulnerable. According to Coldiretti, the Italian organization representing farmers, over a quarter of the food produced in the country relies on approximately 370,000 regular seasonal migrant workers. Around 100,000 farmworkers may not be able to come to Italy this year, and the figure may be [double that](#) in France. In Germany, where some 286,000 seasonal migrant workers are engaged every year in fruit, vegetable and wine production, the Government is exploring [different ways](#) of mobilizing sufficient workers for the harvest, including running direct flights for farmworkers and issuing temporary work permits for asylum seekers. On 2 April 2020, the European Commission has issued [practical guidance](#)



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Woman farmer in a farm in Da Nang, Viet Nam

for member States to facilitate cross-border travel for seasonal workers in critical occupations, which include food sector workers, while putting in place all necessary measures to avoid further spread of the pandemic.

The pandemic may also have a significant negative impact on the livelihoods of millions of plantation workers engaged in export-oriented, labour-intensive agricultural production in developing countries. For example, the recent temporary suspension of one of the world's largest [tea auctions in Mombasa](#), Kenya, where tea from many eastern African countries is traded, if prolonged, could have a devastating effect on local, national and regional economies. The immediate impact will be felt in various nodes of the chain, including factories, warehouses and transporters, as well as farms, which may be forced to stop production and lay off pluckers, who are often among the most disadvantaged workers and highly vulnerable to economic reversal. In Kenya alone, tea provides livelihoods to some 600,000 small-scale farmers and wage workers; whereas in Malawi, the sector is the second largest formal employer after the government, providing jobs to some 52,000 workers.

Panic-buying and food stockpiling by consumers, and national trade-related policy responses to the pandemic, especially any limitations on exports, may result in price spikes and increased price volatility, destabilizing international markets.<sup>5</sup> Previous crises have demonstrated that such measures are particularly

4 Reuters, "[No bed of roses: East Africa's female flower workers lose jobs as coronavirus hits exports](#)", 11 April 2020; Martinplaut, "[Tens of thousands of African jobs at risk as Europe dumps flowers during the Coronavirus crisis](#)", 22 March 2020.

5 International Food Policy Institute, "[COVID-19: Trade restrictions are worst possible response to safeguard food security](#)", 27 March 2020.

damaging for low-income, food-deficit countries. The 2007-08 food crisis increased the depth of poverty among those who were already poor<sup>6</sup> and pushed an estimated 130 to 155 million people into poverty.<sup>7</sup> Casual wage workers, particularly in agriculture, landless farmers, small-scale traders and commodity producers whose terms of trade declined against food grains were most affected.<sup>8</sup> According to ILO estimates, to maintain their standard of living and not fall into poverty, low-paid workers in the worst affected countries would have had to find one additional week of employment every month.<sup>9</sup> Many of these countries also observed significant increases in school drop-out rates and the incidence of child labour, due to unaffordable school costs and a lack of adequate food.

The urgency of the crisis and the need for immediate action must not be used as a pretext for jettisoning the normative framework for policy solutions. Fundamental principles and rights at work and other [international labour standards](#) provide a strong basis for solutions at the national level.

Close monitoring of food prices and markets and transparent dissemination of information will strengthen governments' capacity to ensure the effective management of the food market, prevent panic buying, and guide agricultural enterprises in making rational production decisions.<sup>10</sup> In this context, it will be critical to ensure the free flow of international trade, while guaranteeing quality jobs in food systems.<sup>11</sup>

The ILO's Decent Work Agenda is increasingly recognized as an effective instrument for alleviating poverty and food insecurity<sup>12</sup> and offering a basis for a just and stable framework for global development and effective crisis responses.<sup>13</sup> In addressing the impact of the current health crisis on the agri-food sector, national and international policy responses should be based on the ILO's framework for responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, which is comprised of four interconnected pillars:

- Stimulating the economy and employment;
- Supporting enterprises, jobs and incomes;
- Protecting workers in the workplace;
- Relying on social dialogue for solutions.

## Stimulating agricultural production and ensuring income security

In situations where the COVID-19 pandemic, or concerns over its spread, are having a negative impact on the agricultural sector, appropriate emergency measures should be adopted to support agri-food enterprises with a view to stimulating agricultural production and ensuring that workers continue to receive decent wages and other benefits, in accordance with existing collective agreements and/or relevant laws. In this context, particular attention needs to be paid to the hundreds of millions of agricultural wage workers who, while playing a crucial role in ensuring the continuity of the food supply, are often among the most vulnerable, poor and food insecure.

Providing access to unemployment benefits and social assistance for agricultural workers who lose their jobs or whose hours are cut is also critical to cushion the impact of the crisis. In addition to these immediate steps, in order to successfully address this and any future crises, the momentum should be used to make progress towards collectively financed, comprehensive and universal social protection systems.<sup>14</sup>

## Guaranteeing social security

The seasonality of agricultural production adds to the challenge of extending social protection coverage to agriculture workers who, in many countries, have traditionally been excluded from national labour

6 Compton, J., Wiggins, S. & Keats, S., "[Impact of the global food crisis on the poor: What is the evidence?](#)", Overseas Development Institute, 2010.

7 World Bank estimates cited in United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "[The global social crisis: Report on the world social situation 2011](#)", 2011, p. 63.

8 Compton, J., Wiggins, S. & Keats, S., 2010 op. cit.

9 ILO "Investing in food security as a driver of better jobs", in World of Work Report 2011: Making markets work for jobs, 2011, p. 76; ILO, "[Decent work for food security and resilient rural livelihoods](#)", 2019.

10 FAO, "[Agri-food markets and trade policy in the time of COVID-19](#)", 2 April 2020; Agrilinks, "[Preventing Global Food Security Crisis under COVID-19](#)", 18 March 2020.

11 Joint Statement by the Directors-General of FAO, WHO and WTO, "[Mitigating impacts of COVID-19 on food trade and markets](#)", 31 March 2020.

12 G20, "[G20 Food Security and Nutrition Framework](#)", 2014; United Nations, "[Zero Hunger Challenge](#)", 2012; United Nations System High Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, "[The Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action](#)", September 2010.

13 ILO, "[Decent work matters in crisis: ILO response to crisis challenges](#)", May 2003; ILO, "[The financial and economic crisis: A Decent Work response](#)", March 2009.

14 ILO, "[COVID-19: Social protection systems failing vulnerable groups](#)", 25 March 2020.

protection laws, such as those specifying minimum wages, maximum hours of work, paid sick leave and social security. The prevailing informality and the lack of infrastructure and services in rural areas have further hindered access to social protection services, where they exist.

The ILO's Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202), which promotes a universal and progressive approach to the extension of social protection for all, addresses these concerns. Ensuring that all agricultural workers have access to essential health care services, including testing, is particularly important to guarantee their safety and health at work and prevent the spread of the virus.

Other social protection mechanisms, such as cash transfers, access to loans, credit-life insurance products and weather index insurance, can be particularly important for agri-food enterprises, especially when there are temporary drops in their economic activity, as is currently the case. In regular times, such mechanisms can play a major role in sheltering agribusinesses and rural communities from crop failures, injecting finance into often cash-starved rural economies and creating infrastructure.

## Ensuring safety and health at work

There needs to be a particular focus on the safety and health of agricultural workers both when assuring the availability of adequate numbers of seasonal agricultural workers in advanced economies, and the continuity of production in developing countries.

All workers in the agri-food sector, whether temporary, seasonal or migrant workers, irrespective of their legal status or gender, have the right to work in safe and healthy conditions. In reality, however, they often lack access to appropriate personal protective equipment, water and sanitary facilities, while overcrowded production sites, which are common, especially in developing countries, increase the risk of infection.

Measures to mitigate COVID-19 safety and health risks may include: providing access to adequate personal protective equipment; re-organizing work to ensure a safe physical distance between workers, especially by reviewing processes that normally require close interaction; implementing other control measures, including permanent access to health checks and medical facilities; ensuring access to clean water and adequate sanitation facilities with soap and alcohol-based hand sanitizer; disinfecting workplace amenities and equipment; and increasing the frequency of cleaning. It is of the utmost importance to ensure that workers have access to all relevant information on COVID-19, personal protection, and hygiene in their own language.

The development and enforcement of an effective occupational safety and health (OSH) management system encompassing comprehensive OSH legislation for all sectors, including agriculture, and affording protection for all workers, should be supplemented by a national preventive OSH culture in the sector, in accordance with the Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184), and its accompanying Recommendation No. 192. These measures should enable the agriculture sector to smoothly weather any safety and health risks in the future.

## Ensuring adequate living conditions

Agricultural workers often live in close proximity to the production site and to each other, which may increase the risk of exposure to COVID-19. Where workers are provided with housing, it is important for it to be in compliance with applicable standards requiring sufficient space, per person or per family, access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitary and washing facilities.

## Strengthening labour inspection

Efforts should be continued to ensure workplace compliance through labour inspection. It may be necessary to review the working methods of labour inspectorates to improve access to services they provide, including by harnessing advances in information and communication technologies.

In countries relying heavily on migrant workers in the sector, particular attention needs to be paid to ensuring fair recruitment and putting in place all necessary protective measures and arrangements, including, for example, transport of adequate quality and sanitary conditions to the place of employment. In the absence of a well-functioning labour inspection system during the crisis, there have been reports of [migrant workers](#) facing increased risks of exploitation.

## Relying on social dialogue for solutions

The Rural Workers' Organisations Convention, 1975 (No. 141) recognizes the importance of associating rural workers' organizations with economic and social development action in order to improve permanently and effectively rural workers' conditions of work and life. Rural sector workers should thus be fully involved in the assessment of the impact of COVID-19 and governments should ensure that effective consultation and involvement of rural workers' organizations take place in the process of developing an appropriate response to the crisis. To that effect, and in accordance

with Paragraphs 11–13 of Rural Workers' Organisations Recommendation, 1975 (No. 149), governments should take active steps to ensure that rural workers' organizations are represented in social dialogue at different levels and that their voice is heard on various matters arising out of the current crisis and impacting rural communities and rural development.

## ► 2. Responses by constituents and partners

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In an open letter, "[A call to action for world leaders preventing a global food security crisis while combating COVID-19](#)", the CEOs of major companies, civil society organizations, scientists and politicians have called on world leaders to take urgent and coordinated action to prevent the COVID pandemic turning into a global food and humanitarian crisis. The proposed action focuses on: (1) keeping the supply of food flowing across the world – maintaining open trade; (2) scaling up support for the most vulnerable; and (3) investing in sustainable, resilient food systems – sowing the seeds of recovery for people and the planet.

The importance of maintaining open trade has also been emphasized in a [joint statement](#) by the Directors-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

In [a letter](#) to the heads of the FAO and the WHO, the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF) – a global union federation of trade unions with members in a variety of industries, including agriculture and food processing – has called for action to protect the lives, safety and livelihoods of the agricultural workers on whose labour food security depends. The IUF has also developed a series of demands and guidance covering [agriculture, food and beverage](#), and [gender equality](#).

A number of sectoral employers' organizations (e.g. the Indonesian Palm Oil Association [GAPKI](#) and the South African federation of agricultural organizations [Agri SA](#)) have issued guidance for their members on COVID-19. Similar guidance was also issued by a number of agricultural workers' organizations (e.g. Farm Labor Organizing Committee, [FLOC](#)).

The FAO has published a series of [policy briefs](#) on the impact of COVID-19 on the food system. As part of the United Nations Global COVID-19 Humanitarian Response Plan, the FAO has reviewed its ongoing humanitarian

programmes to focus on continued support for the most vulnerable and develop actions to address the secondary effects of the virus. The FAO's efforts are focussed on: (1) setting up a global data facility, in collaboration with the World Food Programme (WFP) and other partners; (2) stabilizing incomes and access to food, and maintaining ongoing livelihood and food production assistance; (3) ensuring continuity of the critical food supply chain for the most vulnerable populations; (4) and preventing COVID 19 transmission among food chain workers by raising awareness of food safety and health regulations, including the rights, roles and responsibilities of workers, together with national authorities and the WHO.<sup>15</sup>

In Colombia, [an agreement](#) signed on 25 March 2020 between the rural workers' union SINTRAINAGRO and the banana industry association Augura provides for support and health and safety protection measures for some 22,000 banana workers. These will include, among others, the provision of personal hygiene tools such as masks and disinfectants to all workers, disinfection and self-distancing measures for transport, regular meals, etc. All workers who are over 65 years of age and those with pre-existing medical conditions, including risky pregnancies, regardless of the nature of their employment contracts, are exempted from work for the duration of the government decree on containment measures related to COVID-19 and will receive the basic salary as well as an 8 per cent supplement.

### Examples of country-specific measures

Most national policy responses to the crisis have taken the form of financial support for agricultural businesses and short-term social protection measures to support the working population. However, very few policies are aimed at the application of labour standards in the sector or the promotion of social dialogue for the development of policy responses, which is a gap that needs to be filled.

In **Canada**, Farm Credit Canada's lending capacity has been increased by Canadian dollars (CAD) 5 billion and CAD 100 million have been earmarked for national, regional and local organizations to support food security across the country. Under the Canada Emergency Response Benefit, workers who are unable to work for medical reasons, and have limited or no paid leave benefit through their employers, can apply for up to 15 weeks of employment benefit for up to 55 per cent of their earnings, or CAD 573 a week.

In **China**, the Peoples Bank of China introduced a 500 billion Chinese yuan (RMB) expansion of re-lending and re-discounting facilities at low interest rates to support MSME's. The re-lending rate for rural areas, agriculture, farmers and smaller businesses was lowered to 2.5 per cent as well. In order to promote food security, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs released several notes to support the resumption of operation in feed, slaughtering and meat processing enterprises as well as recommendations for recommendations for field management of crops and measures to eliminate labour shortages. Several local policies benefit the agricultural workforce such as the temporary living allowance subsidies of 300 RMB for rural workers in Hubei province and the 3000 RMB cash transfer for migrant population retention in Wuhan.<sup>16</sup>

In **Egypt**, the moratorium on the tax law on agricultural land has been extended for two years. The Ministry of Social Solidarity is also planning to include another 100,000 families in existing social assistance programmes and to increase benefits to Egyptian pounds (EGP) 900 for women and leaders in rural areas. A one-time payment of EGP 500 is planned for registered informal workers.<sup>17</sup>

In **El Salvador**, US\$ 80 million will be allocated through the Emergency Fund to support the agricultural sector and ensure food security. A cash transfer of US\$ 300 has also been made to 1.5 million households working in the informal economy that do not have a financial safety net.<sup>18</sup>

In **Fiji**, an agricultural response package includes a new farm support package to support the production of short-term crops through the distribution of materials and seed. The COVID-19 Response Budget

provides for a one-time relief payment of US\$ 150 for those working in the informal sector.<sup>19</sup>

In **Germany**, the Government has temporarily extended the "70-day rule" for seasonal farm workers, who may now work up to 115 days until the end of October 2020 without paying social security contributions. It has raised additional income limits for temporary work compensation and for farmers' pensions. Paid sick leave has also been adjusted so that, where the Infection Protection Act applies, the amount received is equal to the worker's net wage for the first six weeks, and is then equal to sick leave benefit.<sup>20</sup>

In **Italy**, under the Cura Italia stimulus, qualifying conditions for unemployment benefit for agricultural workers have been eased and a one-time payment of EUR 600 has been provided for vulnerable workers, including agricultural workers. Workers earning less than EUR 40,000 a year who have to be present in the workplace are entitled to a tax-exempt one-time benefit of EUR 100.

In **Namibia**, the Economic Stimulus and Relief Package includes Namibian dollars (NAD) 200 million of guarantees for low-interest loans for farmers and agricultural businesses, including cashflow-constrained farmers and agricultural SMEs that have experienced a significant loss of revenue. A one-time Emergency Income Grant of NAD 750 will be provided to all formal and informal workers who have lost their jobs.

In the **Philippines**, a Philippine peso (PHP) 27.1 billion fiscal package includes social protection for the most vulnerable workers and support for badly affected sectors, such as tourism and agriculture. Under the Emergency Subsidy Programme, 18 million low-income households working in the informal economy will be provided with PHP 5,000 to 8,000 a month for two months. The Overseas Workers Welfare Administration has also provided cash aid to overseas Filipino workers affected by travel bans.<sup>21</sup>

16 CGTN, "PBOC increases re-lending, re-discount quota by 500 billion yuan to support small businesses", 27 February 2020; People's Daily Online, "Mitigating the impact of COVID-19 in the agricultural sector in China", 11 March 2020; World Bank, "Social Protection and Jobs Responses to COVID-19: A real time review of country measures (Version 3)", 3 April 2020.

17 Egypt Today, "Egypt takes economic measures related to pensions, agricultural taxes", 22 March 2020; Scoop Empire, "COVID-19 Updates: What is Egypt doing to curb the spread of the virus?", 2 April 2020; World Bank, 3 April 2020 op. cit.

18 ILO, "Governments' responses to COVID-19 (Countries A-L)", 6 April 2020; World Bank, 3 April 2020 op. cit.

19 Fiji Village, "Agriculture response package for COVID-19 will be implemented to ensure access to food is not affected - Reddy", 19 March 2020; The Fijian Government, "2020 COVID-19 budget response address by the Attorney-General and Minister for Economy Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Kaiyum", 27 March 2020.

20 Euractiv, "German farms need nearly 300,000 seasonal farm workers", 25 March 2020; World Bank, 3 April 2020 op. cit.

21 The Diplomat, "COVID-19: Countering the economic contagion", 24 March 2020; International Monetary Fund, "Policy Responses to COVID-19", April 2020; World Bank, 3 April 2020 op. cit.

### ► 3. ILO tools and responses

The ILO has adopted a series of instruments and tools that provide a valuable framework for emergency response measures and the longer-term development of the sector on a sustainable basis.

The ***Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129)***, in conjunction with other relevant instruments, sets out a series of principles for the establishment, functioning and organization of the system of inspection in agriculture, including recruitment and the powers and obligations of labour inspectors.

The ***Right of Association (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 11)*** secures to all those engaged in agriculture the same rights of association and combination as to industrial workers.

The ***Plantations Convention, 1958 (No. 110)***, lays down a series of principles for the engagement and recruitment of migrant workers, contracts of employment and abolition of penal sanctions, wages, annual holidays with pay, weekly rest, maternity protection, workers' compensation, the right of freedom of association and collective bargaining, labour inspection, housing and medical care. The Plantations Recommendation, 1958 (No. 110), contains detailed guidelines for the improvement of the employment conditions of plantation workers.

The ***Rural Workers' Organisations Convention, 1975 (No. 141)***, and its accompanying Recommendation No. 149, provide for the right of agricultural and rural workers to form and join all types of organizations of rural workers, in accordance with their choice, in order to have a strong, independent and effective voice.

The ***Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184)***, and its accompanying Recommendation No. 192, set out principles for the formulation and implementation of a coherent national policy on safety and health in agriculture.

The ***Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202)***, promotes a universal and progressive approach to the extension of social protection for all, which is particularly relevant in the agricultural sector and the rural economy. It promotes the extension of social protection by guaranteeing access to essential health care and basic income security at a nationally

defined minimum level for all, including the poor, food-insecure households and workers in the informal economy, who are particularly prevalent in agriculture and related sectors.

The ***Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205)***, emphasizes that crisis responses need to ensure respect for all human rights and the rule of law, including respect for fundamental principles and rights at work and for international labour standards.

The ***Code of practice on safety and health in agriculture (2011)*** provides guidance on the application of the relevant ILO Conventions, including appropriate strategies to address the range of OSH risks encountered in agriculture.

***Giving a voice to rural workers: General Survey concerning the right of association and rural workers' organizations instruments***, Report III (Part 1B), International Labour Conference, 104th Session, Geneva (2015).

***ILO Standards and COVID-19: FAQ*** - Key provisions of international labour standards relevant to the evolving COVID-19 outbreak.

The ***Portfolio of policy guidance notes on the promotion of decent work in the rural economy*** (ILO, 2019) offers guidance to policymakers, the social partners and development practitioners on ways to effectively address employment- and labour-related issues in the rural context. It provides concrete examples of ILO works in the rural economy and brings together the broad range of instruments and tools developed over the past years.

***Decent work on plantations*** (ILO, 2017) is an ILO programme that aims to improve agricultural workers' access to rights and quality jobs, while supporting enterprises in implementing core international labour standards and national labour law with the aim of improving both compliance and competitiveness in their supply chains. It does so by supporting social dialogue, strengthening labour regulation and enforcement of national legislation, and improving productivity and skills.