



African Policy Dialogues

EVIDENCE FACTSHEET **UGANDA**

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Creating productive and decent work for youth and women through agro industrialization

This document is about INCLUDE's African Policy Dialogue (APD) in Uganda which is hosted by the Economic Policy Research Centre. The APD generates and shares evidence about opportunities for productive and decent employment in agro-industrialization (AGI) value chains, labour externalisation and what it means for Uganda's AGI value chain agenda in Uganda.

Findings about employment creation in fish sub sector

- The fisheries sub-sector employs 1.7 million people directly, and over 3.5 million people indirectly.
- Over three-quarters of the jobs (77%) are in secondary or tertiary activities such as fish trade, transportation, processing and provision of other support services.
- Women and youth are mostly engaged at the fisher/production level and in trade activities which earn a lower return.
- The quality and market value for fish is adversely affected by continuous adulteration and mishandling of fish along the chains.
- There is limited value addition along the fish value chains due to lack of processing facilities, inadequate skills and capital.
- The sub sector has high potential for decent employment creation through opportunities for value addition due to many backward and forward linkages with other sectors and chains such as livestock industry, pharmaceuticals, and agricultural crop production.

Recommendations for enhancing youth inclusion in policy processes

- Training youth and women on requisite skills for the sector such as group dynamics, fish farming techniques, value addition, managing fish by-products, fish handling and marketing.
- Enhance the quality of fish through sensitisation on the costs of mishandling fish, increasing the number of fish quality control officers to monitor standards and investing in affordable techniques to enhance the fish quality and standards.
- Promote fish value addition using different techniques that support participation of women and youth such as through high value processing technologies.
- Employ a differentiated approach to exploit opportunities for each fish species value chain.
- Invest more resources in post-harvest processing activities to generate more revenues such as utilisation of fish by-products.
- Develop regulations to streamline the fish maw business for price stabilisation and product diversity.
- Licensing and organizing fish maws traders into associations for a higher bargaining power.

Findings about employment creation in the cotton sub sector

- The sub-sector employs about 2.5 million people directly or indirectly. This increased by 16 percent between 2014 and 2019.
- Lower-level cotton value chain activities such as cotton farming and ginning engage over 85% women.
- Higher level cotton value chain activities such textile and apparel manufacturing, cotton seed processing and cotton wool manufacturing engage less than 50% women.
- Fewer people are employed at higher levels of cotton value chains which are more lucrative.
- Women dominate the lower nodes of the value chain due to low skill requirements.
- Cotton is a priority commodity with high employment potential due to its backward and forward linkages to several sectors such as livestock, medical, chemical and hotel industries.

Policy recommendations for decent employment in the cotton sub sector

- Invest more in the high-end activities of the value chain for decent work and higher earning for all stakeholders, in particular youth and women.
- Promote and create awareness on the use of the agro-industrial approach as a means of creating productive and decent jobs along the cotton value chain.
- Explore the type of enterprises that should be prioritised in the cotton value chain.
- Exchange ideas on what the government and private agencies should do to operationalize the cotton value chain for agro industrialisation for productive and decent work.
- Establish a platform for actors in the cotton sector to share what works and does not work among cotton growing communities and technocrats.
- Support extension services for farming involved in cotton farming.

Key findings about labour externalization

- Although comprehensive data on labour externalisation is lacking, the number of Ugandans who secured semi-skilled or manual work in the Middle East increased steadily from 2010-2018.
- Young people seek for employment opportunities in the Middle East and take up vulnerable jobs due to few decent wage employment opportunities in Uganda.
- Labour externalisation provides short term employment, remittances, skills development and a possible route to interest migrants in re-investing in Uganda's AGI.
- Migrants seek opportunities as individuals rather than through government interventions such as bilateral agreements or any structured governance institutions for negotiating better terms.
- The government has registered over 100 labour agencies, verifies jobs abroad and plans to revise of the 2011 National Employment Policy.
- External labour markets are volatile due to changing circumstances such as the adverse effects of COVID-19 and are unlikely to provide sustainable employment opportunities for Uganda.
- Externalised workers who have returned to Uganda have not been linked into more productive sectors of the economy and find it difficult to work in AGI due to lack of land and disinterest in agriculture.

Recommendations for enhancing labour externalisation

- Strengthen data capture and monitoring systems for the Ugandan migrant workers in terms of the destination countries, operations of recruitment firms and conditions of work.
- Foster partnerships between labour companies and private sector to identify investible areas in AGI.
- Implement and revise the 2011 National Employment Policy based on labour externalization evidence.
- Speed up finalisation of the draft National Migration Policy for policy coherence as the key policy document to guide Uganda's migration patterns.
- Strengthening pre-departure training and orientation to prepare those heading abroad for jobs.
- Developing channels for workers abroad to invest back at home such as formation of associations for migrant workers to pool together their resources and reduce incidences of them being conned.
- Emphasise on skills acquisition that migrant workers can apply at home upon their return.
- Increase budget allocation to the labour externalisation unit to facilitate their mandate, including promoting decent work for all migrant workers as articulated under SDG goal 8.
- Develop policies and proactive strategies to mitigate the challenges of externalisation such as trafficking, corruption and limited financial management.



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EVIDENCE FACTSHEET UGANDA

Our publications from the APD Uganda:

- [How improving quality and standards in the Ugandan fish value chain impacts sustainable development of decent jobs](#)
- [Industrial linkages and employment opportunities in the Cotton value chain in Uganda](#)
- [Industrial linkages and employment opportunities in the fish value chain in Uganda](#)
- [Enhancing agro-industrial value chains for productive and decent work for youth and women in Uganda: A case of cotton](#)
- [A dialogue on the value addition of fish in Uganda](#)
- [The role of labour externalisation in fostering sustainable Agro-Industrial value chains in Uganda Dialogue](#)
- [Implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on employment prospects for Uganda's youth in the Middle East](#)
- [Productive and decent work for youth and women in Uganda](#)
- [Government's financing of social protection initiatives](#)
- [Low literacy levels likely to impede rural women's success in business](#)
- [Rural women entrepreneurship in Uganda: A synthesis report on policies, evidence and stakeholders](#)

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