



# Labour and Labour Conditions and GQoL



In the context of sustainable agricultural  
production



## Learning objectives of this module

Participants are able to...

- ... **establish a link** between sustainability and labour conditions in agriculture
- ... **refer to different levels** of norms and regulations concerning labour conditions in agriculture
- ... **discuss** the difficulties and possibilities in **implementing** sustainable labour conditions in agriculture
- ... **discuss** the concept of GQoL



## Content of this presentation

The presentation is divided into two parts:

- Labour conditions
- Good quality of Life (GQoL)



# Labour conditions in agriculture

## Non-hired labour

- Farmers
- Family labour



## Hired labour

- Day/-piece-jobs
- Seasonal labour
- Plantation labour



..... 1.3 billion workers in agricultural sector worldwide  
= 1/2 of the world's labour force



## Labour conditions in agriculture...

...vary depending on **working methods**

- from highly-mechanised methods in commercial plantations to traditional methods in small-scale subsistence agriculture.

The most **vulnerable groups** are found

- in family subsistence agriculture, in plantations, seasonal or migrant workers without land, women and child labourers.



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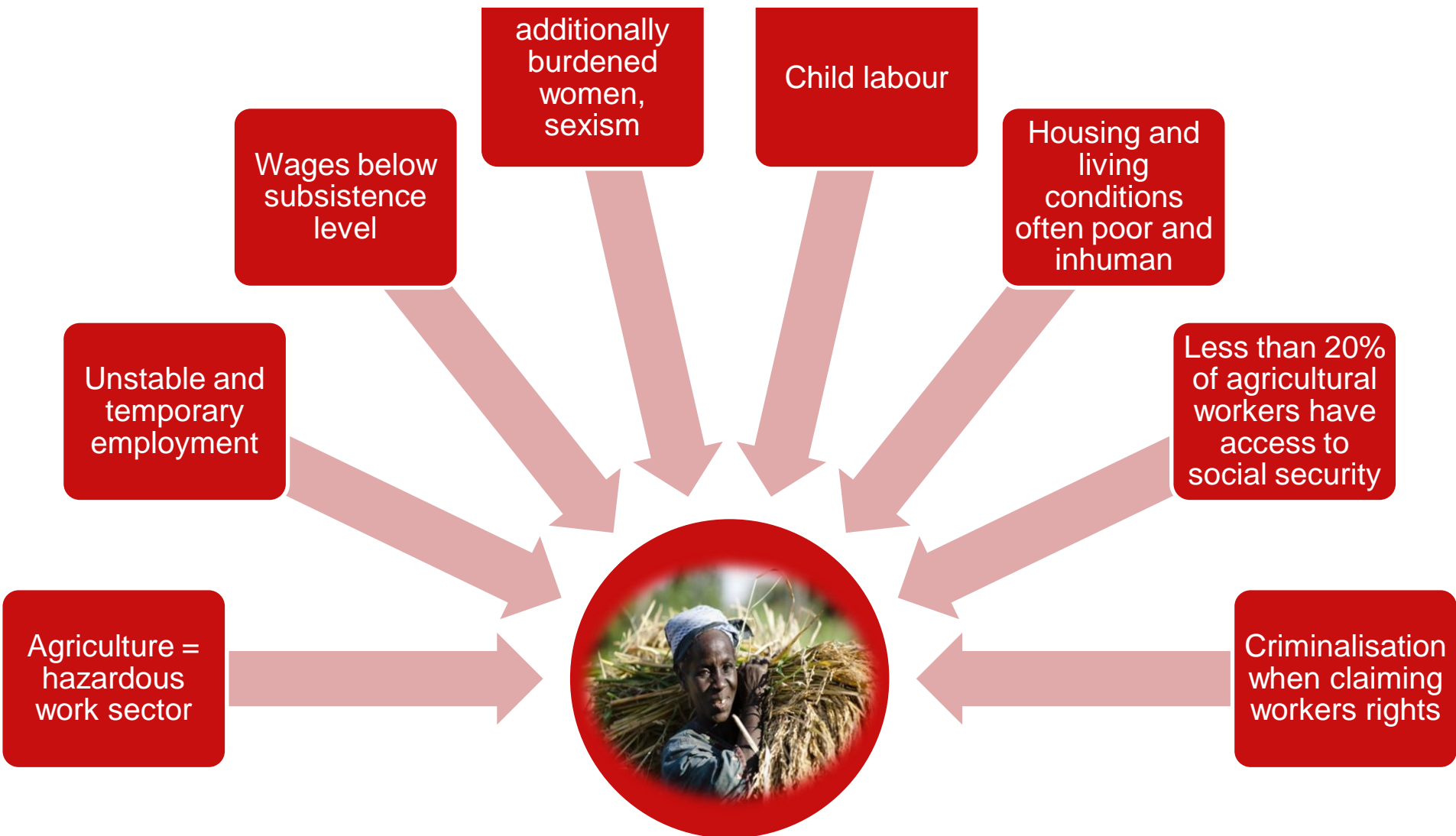


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# Challenges for workers in agriculture (peasants and labourers)





## Sustainable agriculture...

.. comprises ecological, social, economic and institutional aspects of work in agriculture

...it hence considers the labourers:

- Health and Safety
- Work Organization
- Respect of Human Rights
- Community
- Remuneration and Working Times
- Non-Discrimination



**Aspects of  
sustainable  
agricultural  
practices**



# Possible impacts of sustainable agriculture on farm labour

How is the labor situation on the small scale farm?

What do I want to achieve?

Which practice to introduce?

Trade-offs?

Adoption of sustainable practices?

Possible effects of conservation practices e.g.

- Increased labour demand (e.g. organic agriculture)
- Reduced labour demand (e.g. zero-tillage)
- Opening up of new seasons for agricultural production
- Higher wages and employment with higher returns to agriculture (on the long run?)
- Initial Investments
- Health effect (more labour vs. less inputs)





## Rice intensification in Madagascar

- high-yielding,
- low-external-input method

Promising!

→ BUT low rates of adoption!



## Sustainable agriculture and labour

- Situation analysis to understand the context
- Finding solutions together with farmers
- Development work can help to bridge gaps in order to overcome trade-offs
- Sustainable agriculture can improve on-farm labor conditions in the long run

BUT

- **There is no one-fits-all solution in sustainable agriculture!**



## The situation is approached in different ways....



The farm owner



International & national laws and regulations



Labour union/ Collective action



Private sector initiatives



International Cooperation: Human Rights  
Based Framework



## The farm owner

### Why? – Good practice incentives on farm level

#### Economic Incentives

- Higher productivity
- Fewer losses
- Risk management
- Fewer absences
- Less fluctuation



## The farm owner

Why? – Good practice incentives on farm level:

### Improved Relationships

- With workers
- With clients
- With neighbours

### Compliance with laws

- Adherence to international, national and local laws and regulation on labour



## International & national laws and regulations

### a) UN Human Rights Declaration

*Art. 23: “Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.”*

*“Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.”*

### b) Working Group on *UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and other People Working in Rural Areas* of UN Human Rights Council

### c) ILO Conventions that apply for agricultural labour



## Private sector initiatives

### Sustainability standards in agricultural production

- Sustainability standards systems define and review good social and environmental practices.
- Compliance = often assured by a certification programme.
- Examples:





## Summary – Sustainable labour and labour conditions

No sustainable agriculture without decent working and living conditions!

We have a corporate responsibility!

Better labour conditions – better produce!

Approach 1: Tackling labor limitations on farm – introducing appropriate responsive sustainable practices

Approach 2: Improving working conditions for laborers





# GQoL and Agriculture



Source: <http://blogesp.cimmyt.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2013/06/BH547-right-hand-and-BH546-left-hand.jpg>



Source: "SRI farming in Chhattisgarh":  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:SRI\\_farming\\_in\\_Chhattisgarh.jpg#/media/File:SRI\\_farming\\_in\\_Chhattisgarh.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:SRI_farming_in_Chhattisgarh.jpg#/media/File:SRI_farming_in_Chhattisgarh.jpg)



Source:  
<https://tealoveandcare.wordpress.com/2011/11/19/taiwan-oolong-study-tour-2011-day-5/#jp-carousel-1035>



## Definition: Quality of Life

“the individuals’ **perception of their position in life**

- in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live
- and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns.”

**It can be rated by**

- the importance of various aspects of life
- the level of peoples satisfaction with these aspects.”



# Social Progress Index

## Social Progress Index

### Basic Human Needs

- ▼ Nutrition and Basic Medical Care
- ▼ Water and Sanitation
- ▼ Shelter
- ▼ Personal Safety

### Foundations of Wellbeing

- ▼ Access to Basic Knowledge
- ▼ Access to Information and Communications
- ▼ Health and Wellness
- ▼ Environmental Quality

### Opportunity

- ▼ Personal Rights
- ▼ Personal Freedom and Choice
- ▼ Tolerance and Inclusion
- ▼ Access to Advanced Education

<http://www.socialprogressimperative.org/global-index/>



## Good Quality of Life: a task for sustainable agriculture?

*“Sustainable agriculture is an integrated system of plant and animal production practices (...) that will, over the long term: satisfy human food and fiber needs; enhance environmental quality (...); sustain the economic viability of farm operations; and enhance the quality of life for farmers and society as a whole.”*



## Exercise



- **What do you personally need for a good quality of life**
- Form two groups (male and female)
- Write down some keywords
- Select one presenter from each group
- Present the results in Plenum and discuss the different needs for a good quality of life



# Thank you!

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