

## Extended Abstract

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<b>Paper/Poster Title</b>	<b>What prospects for green jobs in the rural G5 Sahel?</b>
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<b>Abstract</b>	<b>200 words max</b>
<p>The G5 Sahel — Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger, must undergo a green transition over the medium term. Their economies must become environmentally sustainable, must adapt to a changing climate, and must reduce emissions of greenhouse gases to (net) zero. This applies especially in agriculture and the rural economy where most people live and earn their living.</p> <p>At the same time, the G5 Sahel countries have some of the fastest growing populations in the world: over the next ten years almost 25M new jobs have to be created. Can a rural green transition provide these?</p> <p>From a survey of the literature, public plans and opinion in the region, a rural green transition will likely involve making farming environmentally sustainable and climate-smart; restoring and enhancing rural ecosystems above all woodlands and wetlands; expanding irrigation; and switching rural energy from fossil fuels and biomass to electricity generated largely from solar panels.</p> <p>Initial estimates suggest more than half the jobs needed for youth can be created by such transitions. Moreover, many changes will result from private investment and initiative. Some important public goods are involved, however, which will require public action and financing by governments and their development partners.</p>	
<b>Keywords</b>	Sahel; environment; climate change; green transition; youth employment; irrigation, solar power, climate-smart agriculture
<b>JEL Code</b>	e.g. Energy: Demand and Supply Q41 see: <a href="http://www.aeaweb.org/jel/guide/jel.php?class=Q">www.aeaweb.org/jel/guide/jel.php?class=Q</a> )
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>100 – 250 words</b>
<p>The countries of the G5 Sahel — Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger, must undergo a green transition over the medium term. Their economies must become environmentally sustainable, must adapt to a changing climate, and must reduce emissions of greenhouse gases to (net) zero.</p> <p>At the same time, the G5 Sahel countries, all of them low-income. endeavour to develop their economies and societies to overcome poverty and need. Above all, they aim to provide decent livelihoods and jobs — jobs with humane conditions that provide a living wage — to their populations. The populations of all five countries are</p>	

still growing rapidly with large cohorts of children: over the next five years, 11.4 million youth will turn 16 years old when most will begin to seek jobs; 24.8 million over the next ten years. At the time of writing in late 2022, the workforce of the region is expanding by 4.4% a year.

If jobs are not created, then disgruntled youth may either migrate in desperation seeking work elsewhere — perhaps swelling the numbers trying to cross the Mediterranean, or they may turn to crime and insurgency.

Societies in the G5 are largely rural; their economies are still predominantly based on agriculture and the food supply chains. Can green transitions in agriculture and rural economy create decent jobs for the many youth seeking work? What may a green transition entail? What jobs may be created? And what should government do to facilitate change?

### **Methodology**

*100 – 250 words*

Data were compiled from reviews of existing literature on employment, youth employment, green transitions, environmentally-sensitive and climate-smart agriculture in the G5 countries.

Policies and projects of governments and civil society were examined, by reading existing plans, reports and reviews.

Key informants were interviewed to gain their insights and perspectives on the questions set.

### **Results**

*100 – 250 words*

The main potential changes in a green transition include:

- 1 Changes on farms to crop and livestock systems that conserve soil and water, use resilient cultivars and breeds, that adopt agro-ecology and agro-forestry;
- 2 Capturing carbon on farms which will benefit farmers to some extent, but very largely benefits everyone else on this earth.;
- 3 Irrigation where water is available, without overdrawing water in aquifers or depriving downstream users of supply.;
- 4 Conservation to protect and enhance local ecosystems, above all woodlands and wetlands; and,

5 Rural energy transition from use of fossil fuels to electricity for vehicles, pumps, machinery and domestic lighting — with electricity coming first and foremost from solar panels and in some cases from hydroelectricity.

Many of these changes involve private gains and so we may expect private initiative and investment to drive them. But some create public goods that will need to be paid for if they are to be generated sufficiently.

How many new jobs may be created over the next ten years? Initial estimates suggest that more than half of the jobs needed can be created by these changes. Making green transitions will not be at the expense of jobs: on the contrary they should make a major contribution to addressing the pressing concerns of youth employment.

**Discussion and Conclusion**

*100 – 250 words*

A green transition in agriculture and food chains is already underway in the G5 Sahel. That effort needs to be redoubled over the next ten years. As we have shown, the actions necessary are neither complex nor difficult; moreover, the promise is that half or more of the jobs that youth will need over the next ten years can be created.

A green transition is both desirable and feasible: all that is required is political commitment and financing.

Because much of what needs to change can be driven commercially, governments in considerable part do not need to do much other than to create an enabling environment for private investment. That said, the transitions will be incomplete without recognising public goods and financing them: this is where national governments should focus their efforts. It also where development partners and development financiers, including the green climate funds, need to focus as well — it is a disgrace that so few of the international climate funds created currently go the G5 Sahel.