



International Labour Organization

A note on the implementation of the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018–2027)

24 April 2020

Background

1. Decent Work is a fundamental pillar of the 2030 Agenda that calls for “Promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all” (SDG 8). Creation of decent work for all is a goal as well as a challenge set in SDG 8, but also a broader objective that guides policies towards poverty eradication and ensuring that no one is left behind.
2. The ILO supports the implementation of the inter-agency, system-wide plan of action for eradicating poverty in accordance with its mandate. This entails a range of interrelated policies such as providing enhanced financial and technical support to developing countries to develop productive capacities, increase the access to social protection, eliminate of child and forced labour, tackle discrimination in employment, enhance skills, create an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises especially small businesses, and promote social dialogue based on respect for fundamental principles and rights at work.

Valuable lessons learned on eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity

3. ILO has supported developing countries enhancing their capacity to increase the impact of infrastructure investments on livelihoods and employment. This involves capacity building of national and local government agencies responsible for infrastructure development as well as capacity building of contractors responsible for implementation. The ILO promotes an inclusive approach towards infrastructure development in developing countries including LDCs. This approach optimizes the use of local resources and the participation of local (vulnerable) groups.

The approaches introduced also aimed at creating quality community assets, imparting technical and vocational skills and addressing the impact of climate change.¹

4. Public employment programmes such as those in India, Brazil and poverty alleviation measures such as those in Bangladesh have proved effective in addressing underemployment and seasonal employment, increasing wages and incomes, reducing child labour, enhancing rural market capacity, halting of distress migration and generating greater workforce participation by women.
5. Cooperatives provides over 272 million jobs in the world and have proven to be an essential organizational form in combatting social exclusion and poverty. Cooperatives have the advantages of identifying economic opportunities for the poor; empowering the disadvantaged to defend their interests and to take part in decision-making concerning them; and providing security to the poor by allowing them to convert individual risks into collective risks. It is in this regard that different types of cooperatives (e.g. savings and credit cooperatives, agricultural cooperatives, workers cooperatives) mediate the access of their members to assets that they utilize to earn a living.²
6. ILO have supported private sector development, for instance on regulation assessment, entrepreneurship, market system analysis, cooperative management, SME productivity training, or CSR with the Tripartite Declaration for multinational enterprises. The ILO has provided assistance to the governments and employers' and workers' organizations in Benin, Burkina Faso, Mozambique, Nepal, Sierra Leone and Zambia, to engage more effectively with MNEs operating in, or sourcing from, their countries. The Tripartite Declaration of Principles Concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy provides guidance to both governments and multi-national enterprises on how to maximize the contribution of MNEs to economic and social progress and the realization of decent work for all. ILO supports countries to establish or strengthen tripartite and dialogue structures to foster policy coherence across ministries and to engage in dialogue with MNEs on issues of mutual concern. These dialogues sometimes also include representatives of the home countries, whose policies also strongly shape MNE operations.
7. Informality is an obstacle to inclusiveness and domestic resource mobilization. ILO has promoted transition to formality guided in its work with member States and social partners by Recommendation 204 on the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy (2015). The

¹ Good examples can be found in Comoros, the Gambia, Lao PDR, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nepal, Somalia and Sudan.

² ILO (2014) *Cooperatives and the Sustainable Development Goals: A contribution to the post-2015 development debate*, International Labour Organization, Geneva. http://www.ilo.org/empent/Publications/WCMS_306072/lang--en/index.htm

Recommendation contains guidance on integrated policies for the progressive transition to formality of the large informal economies of many member States in which a high proportion of the world's poorest women and men work. Action on the policies proposed in the Recommendation by governments, workers' and employers' organizations and supported by the ILO and partners would consolidate progress towards all of the SDGs. The Recommendation and its plan of action are recognized as important policy frameworks for joint action with other UN agencies and multi-stakeholder partnerships.³

8. Many countries have identified the reduction of inequality in all of its forms as a critical policy goal for poverty reduction and sustainable development and efforts are being undertaken in several countries to increase minimum wages, strengthen collective bargaining and promote gender equality, including closing the gender pay gap.
9. Evidence of the impact of employment on peacebuilding has led to an enhanced inter-agency collaboration aimed at jointly contributing to SDG 8 and SDG 16. In 2018, the ILO and the UN Peacebuilding Support Office aligned their programmatic approaches to enhance employment programmes as a key peacebuilding instrument and facilitate the broader UN effort to efficiently and effectively use employment programmes to sustain peace.⁴
10. The transition to low-carbon economies should focus on creating jobs high in both quantity and quality, and requires well-coordinated policies developed by governments in cooperation with the social partners through social dialogue. The ILO *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all*, adopted through tripartite consensus in 2015, offers a guiding framework to advance action through planning and anticipation, the articulation of rights, employment, skills, social protection and other measures in a coherent framework to support those negatively impacted by the transition.⁵ The Solidarity and Just Transition Silesia Declaration adopted by Heads of States and governments at the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change reflects the ILO's approach to just transition, which focuses on the creation of decent work and quality jobs in accordance with nationally defined development

³ILO "Recommendation No. 204 concerning the transition from the informal to the formal economy" was adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 104th Session in Geneva, on 12 June 2015 http://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/104/texts-adopted/WCMS_377774/lang-en/index.htm

⁴ Specific joint UN programmes with ILO participation are currently being implemented through the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund and under the ILO Jobs for Peace and Resilience global flagship programme in Lebanon, Liberia, Sierra Leone, the Solomon Islands, Somalia and Sri Lanka.

⁵ On the ILO and just transition, see also GB.332/HL/2 as the discussion document for its input to the 2018 high-level political forum.

priorities and the importance of the participatory process of social dialogue involving all the social partners.⁶

- 11.** ILO is leading the discussion and action on “Just transition”, that is, the need to consistently promote economic transformation toward a greener economies while generating good jobs. The [Solidarity and Just Transition Silesia Declaration](#) adopted by heads of States and government at the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP24) reflects ILO’s approach to just transition of focussing on the creation of decent work and quality jobs in accordance to nationally defined development priorities and the importance of participatory process of social dialogue involving all social partners.⁷ [Nearly 50 countries](#) have made commitments to formulate national just transition plans to make climate change a people-centered agenda and decent job creation. The United Nations Secretary-General has announced a [Climate Action for Jobs initiative](#) and invited the ILO to spearhead its implementation. Several G20 countries (Argentina, France, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Republic of Korea, and United Kingdom) have made commitments to formulate just transition plans. Key to just transition policies is the need to build the skills needed for smooth transitions in labour markets, enabling enterprises to increase productivity and workers to take advantage of emerging occupations in the green economy.
- 12.** ILO has supported capacity building and partnerships for strengthening of statistical data collection and economic, social and environmental analysis. High-quality, timely, reliable and disaggregated data are needed by governments to evaluate their current situations, establish baselines, develop effective policies, review progress and make policy adjustments to generate decent work and eradicate poverty. Green Jobs Assessment Model (GJAM) projects has been deployed to develop national institutional capacity in the production and integration of environmental data with other socio-economic statistics for policy analysis in countries like Zambia, Kyrgyzstan and Guyana. These included employment projections, industrial, fiscal and labour market policies and assessment of their economic, environmental and social sustainability.
- 13.** Creating financial and non-financial partnerships. The ILO itself is by design a three-way partnership between governments, employer and worker organizations – the social partners. Our partnership is working closely with other partners, including members of the UN Development System (UNDS), on a number of SDGs. Examples of effective partnerships in which ILO is actively engaged are: Alliance 8.7 to eradicate forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking

⁶ See [Solidarity and Just Transition Silesia Declaration](#).

⁷ See the following resources from the last climate summit ([2019 UN Climate Action Summit](#) and on [social and political drivers](#))

and child labour; the Global Partnership for Universal Social Protection and the Social Protection Inter-agency Cooperation Board; the Programme for Action on the Green Economy (PAGE).