

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (ILO)

Support to NEPAD

Period of Report: August 2005 to August 2006

Support to the implementation of NEPAD

The ILO contributes to NEPAD's objectives by advocating the systematic integration of employment as a key element of national, regional and continental development frameworks (PRSPs, MDGs, etc.). The ILO also helps integrate social objectives into NEPAD by showing how employment promotion, social protection and poverty reduction can be approached in an integrated and mutually reinforcing manner.

During the period under review (August 2005-August 2006), the ILO has continued to implement programmes related to the following:

- employment strategies and productivity;
- entrepreneurial initiative;
- the promotion of human resources and skills that are directly relevant to employment and income generation;
- labour-intensive and infrastructure development projects;
- rehabilitation programmes following natural disasters and cessation of political conflict;
- the promotion of cooperatives;
- the promotion of the Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work;
- the promotion of social protection and its extension to the informal economy;
- labour migration;
- the fight against HIV/AIDS in the world of work;
- gender mainstreaming.

Challenges and constraints

Collaboration with NEPAD suffers from the current unclear delineation of responsibilities between the NEPAD Secretariat and the African Union Commission.

Lack of clarity in the work and impact of the NEPAD Cluster structure: ILO is co-chair of the Cluster on Human Resources Development, Employment and HIV/AIDS (Convener: UNICEF). The ILO Office in Pretoria has taken part in the coordination of UN support for NEPAD under the cluster, but the status of these cluster arrangements and their impact on the work of NEPAD is unclear.

Advocacy and awareness-raising

In Africa the ILO operates at national, subregional and regional levels in a unique manner through two-track channels: our unique tripartite structure and the UN system. That means that the ILO's social partners (governments, employers and workers) and civil society, including in the informal economy, are involved in the development approach advocated by the ILO – the promotion of decent and productive employment as a means of working out of poverty. With ILO support, regional workers' organizations (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions/Organization of African Trade Union Unity - ICFTU/OATUU) have been part of NEPAD's governing structures since 2001.

Despite the fact that employment and decent work were not included in the initial NEPAD agenda, the ILO acts as a faithful partner in the operationalization of NEPAD and the promotion of growth and development in the African continent, and the ILO's Decent Work approach is the key instrument in this respect. The ILO endeavours to help NEPAD assess job creation potential in its priority areas (energy, transport, education, and infrastructure, agriculture) and to devise appropriate tools and policies for promoting the proactive use of employment creation in the fight against poverty.

Existing cooperation between ILO and the African Union will serve to map out cooperation between the two institutions, especially in relation to the implementation of the outcomes of the AU Extraordinary Summit on Poverty Alleviation and Employment (Ouagadougou, 2004). Partly as a result of this Summit, Decent Work is now a Global Goal adopted by the nations convened in UN General Assembly in September 2005 (Paragraph 47). NEPAD also acknowledges that the report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization is in line with NEPAD's policies and goals.

It is expected that a more detailed framework for ILO/NEPAD cooperation will be developed in the framework of the AU in the course of the year. The ILO brings a comparative advantage in mainstreaming decent work into NEPAD and including the social partners in consultative processes through social dialogue, complementing NEPAD's spirit of transparency, consultation and participation.