

# **Joint Event of ECOSOC and the Peacebuilding Commission Partnerships for job creation for young people in countries emerging from conflict**

**4 June 2012, 9.15 AM, ECOSOC Chamber, NLB**

## **Objective of the meeting**

The proposed Joint Event of ECOSOC and PBC seeks to provide a platform to share experiences and draw lessons on the role of public/private partnership, social entrepreneurship and corporate responsibility in creating sustainable jobs in post conflict settings. The outcome of the meeting will inform the content of the 2012 Annual Ministerial Review on productive capacity, employment and decent work in countries emerging from conflict. It will also provide concrete ideas for the countries on the agenda of the PBC, all of whom consider creating jobs for the youth as a peacebuilding priority.

## **Background**

At its Special Event on Partnerships for More and Better Jobs for Young People held on 27 February 2012, the Deputy Secretary General called for boosting job creation for young people in post-conflict countries -- an essential part of peacebuilding and conflict prevention. For all the countries on the agenda of the PBC, creating jobs for young people represent a peacebuilding priority. In addition to the typical barriers to the labour market faced by young people in many developing countries, including limited access to education, a lack of experience and contacts in the world of work, limited access to credit, and discrimination in employment and choice of occupation, the youth in post-conflict and fragile countries also have to contend with weak institutions and private sector, crumbling infrastructure and a poor enabling environment for domestic and foreign investment.

This state of affairs compels the international community, including ECOSOC and the PBC to look at innovative and imaginative solutions that promote job creation for and by young people while at the same time reinforcing social cohesion and building peace. In this context, the ECOSOC Partnerships Event showcased two innovative business models<sup>1</sup> which can provide lessons for how to create job opportunities for young people through “affirmative action” and by connecting local producers and entrepreneurs to regional and global supply chains. The PBC has also discussed the issue of youth employment in various occasions, including in the work of the Country Specific Configurations and of the Working Group on Lessons Learned.

The celebration of the International Year of Cooperatives in 2012 is also an opportunity to highlight the cooperative business model as an important tool for job creation, self-reliance and social cohesion in countries emerging from conflict.

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<sup>1</sup> The company Leshua founded by Linda Ben and Motherhouse founded by Eriko Yamaguchi are two examples of the models cited above.

## **Focus**

While the critical need of creating jobs to support peace consolidation is well understood, how to establish a business friendly environment while institutions are been built and strengthened, how to create a substantial number of jobs and train the work force accordingly constitute a task too big for Governments to tackle alone.

This meeting aims at helping to enlarge the partnership for job creation by learning about the experience with public/private partnership, social entrepreneurship and corporate responsibility to date.

The Joint Event would therefore highlight the following:

- What are the institutional arrangements for job creation and skill:
  - a. experience of Sierra Leone as a post conflict country; and
  - b. experience of Bangladesh in job creation that could be replicated in post-conflict situation;
- How to connect young entrepreneurs to global supply chains;
- The use of Cooperatives as a vehicle for youth employment and fair trade – the experience of Rwanda;
- The contribution of multinational companies to creating jobs for young people;
- Building on the experience of women entrepreneurs to promote youth entrepreneurship;
- The institutional perspectives of the ILO and the World Bank.

## **Proposed modalities and programme of the meeting**

The meeting will be held as a half-day event in the morning of 4 June 2012. ECOSOC Coordination and Support Office, DESA and PBSO will work closely to organize this joint event as per the guidance of the Bureaux of ECOSOC and PBC. The meeting will be opened by the President of ECOSOC, the PBC Chairperson, and by a keynote speech by the Secretary-General. Four panellists (to be identified) will address the above mentioned themes.

## **Expected Outcomes**

- Share with the countries on the agenda of the PBC and other post-conflict or fragile settings the experiences and lessons at job creation in contexts similar to theirs;
- Share experience from global south: Bangladesh, in job creation and employment generation for possible replication in post-conflict countries.
- Identify policy approaches and innovative business models that spur entrepreneurship and job creation;
- Identify where ECOSOC (and its subsidiary bodies) and the PBC can provide guidance/assistance on short, medium and long-term approaches.
- Provide inputs to the ECOSOC Ministerial Declaration on Promoting Productive Capacity, Employment and Decent Work.