

VI. ACTIVITIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION IN RELATION TO THE ICPD PROGRAMME OF ACTION AND THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE MILLENIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

ILO Programme on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work

ILO is pleased to provide this report on how the Organization's activities relating to the Programme for Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), in all its aspects, are relevant to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Although not specifically mentioned in the Programme of Action,¹ the International Labour Organization implements the Programme of Action with regard to poverty alleviation and eradication, the 15 principles expressed in the preamble and the specific recommended actions,² including:

- skill development, job creation and elimination of workforce inequities for sustainable growth and development; and strategies for income generation and employment in areas with environments at risk (paras. 3.17-3.21, 3.29 (b))
- ensuring equal access of women to the labour market and social security, and enabling women to combine maternal roles with workforce participation (para. 4.4 (b, d, f, g))
- integration of youth through education, training and work opportunities, while enforcing laws against economic exploitation of children and youth (paras. 6.10, 6.13-6.14, 7.39)
- ensuring intergenerational equity and solidarity through social security (para. 6.18)
- integration of HIV prevention [into workplace-related health services] (paras. 7.30-7.32)
- increasing the safety of the workplace and broadening access to health services [through workplace-related services] (paras. 8.4, 8.7, 8.10, 8.11)
- extending integrated health services (e.g. prenatal care) [via the workplace] to enhance child survival, and promote [workplace] policies that enable breastfeeding (paras. 8.17, 8.18)
- expanding provision of maternal health services [through workplace-related services] to improve the health of women (para. 8.22)
- paying attention to and investigating the socioeconomic factors underlying the HIV/AIDS epidemic, including demographic/development impact on health infrastructure, household income, the labour force, productivity, orphanhood; mobilize all segments of society, including the private sector; protect the rights of individuals; and eliminate discrimination (paras. 8.30, 8.32, 8.34)
- seeking to achieve a balanced spatial distribution of production, employment and population, through training for non-farm jobs for youth; encouraging rural business, industry and income-generating projects; and investment in rural productivity, credit, and cooperatives, while facilitating access to employment of migrants to urban areas (paras. 9.4-9.6, 9.15)
- protecting and providing assistance to internally displaced persons through employment opportunities and vocational training (para. 9.22)
- addressing the root causes of migration by maintaining an emphasis on job creation in countries of origin, while safeguarding wages and work conditions of all workers and easing return migration by ensuring transferability of pensions and benefits (paras. 10.3, 10.5)
- integration of documented migrants by extending rights such as equal treatment regarding working conditions and participation in trade unions

- preventing exploitation of undocumented migrants, and of refugees by adopting effective sanctions against international trafficking in women, youth and children, and ensuring protection from exploitation and violence against refugees (paras. 10,18, 10.24)
- contributing to the achievement of universal access to education by giving priority to investments in technical education and job training, taking account of future workforce skill requirements (para. 11.7)
- monitoring the attainment of social-equity goals by giving due consideration to gender-disaggregation in data collection and analysis, in particular women's contribution to economic development, women's labour force status, and women's unpaid economic activities at home and in the informal economy (paras. 12.3, 12.7)
- building human resource capacity for population and development strategies by giving consideration to training and employment of women (para. 13.9)
- contributing to mobilization of the resources needed to meet social development goals by the private sector (para. 13.23)
- strengthening cooperation with the private sector in matters pertaining to population and sustainable development by enjoining private sector employers to meet employees' needs for services, health benefits and means to combine work with family responsibilities (para. 15.20)
- implementing the Programme of Action through the assistance of organizations of the United Nations system in national capacity-building and strengthening evaluation (paras. 16.10, 16.11)
- all specialized agencies of the United Nations system implementing the Programme of Action by strengthening and adjusting activities to take into account follow-up to the Conference (para. 16.29).

ILO has activities in virtually all areas listed in the Programme of Action, and the Organization is *de facto* contributing broadly to its implementation. The group of relevant ILO activities can be divided into six major areas. In addition to these areas of work, ILO's tripartite structure has facilitated several actions recommended to engage the participation and involvement of the private sector as well as social partners. The six relevant areas of ILO's work are:

- employment, including job creation and skills development
- social protection, including enforcement of standards for international labour migrants, maternity protection, and safety and health at work
- child labour (notably the goal of global ratification of ILO's Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)
- gender promotion (ILO moreover addresses gender equality as a cross-cutting objective)
- HIV/AIDS
- youth employment (ILO provides the secretariat for the joint ILO-UN-World Bank Youth Employment Network (YEN).

The role of ILO with respect to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) is twofold, and the work of ILO in follow-up to ICPD is relevant to both aspects.

First, ILO contributes prominently and directly to the implementation of MDG 1 (eradicate extreme poverty and hunger), MDG 3 (promote gender equality and empower women), MDG 6 (Combat HIV/AIDS...), and MDG 8 (develop a global partnership for development), and the Organization contributes substantially to the implementation of MDG 2 (achieve universal primary education), MDG5 (improve maternal health), and MDG 7 (ensure environmental sustainability). The work of ILO in implementing these Goals will be described later.

Secondly, ILO contributes to the broad institutional international effort to monitor progress towards the Millennium Development Goals that includes the agencies and organizations of the United Nations system and others. As such, ILO is one of the organizations responsible for indicators that measure the achievement of MDG 3 and MDG 8. Specifically, ILO is the responsible organization for the indicators for the following targets:

- MDG 3, target 4: Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector
- MDG 8, target 16: Unemployment rate of young people aged 15-24 years, each sex and total.

ILO is a member of both the *Employment Sub-Group* and the *Gender Sub-Group* of the *Inter-Agency and Expert Group on MDG Indicators*, which have made proposals with regard to new or elaborated indicators for the two targets. Those proposals are under review.

The relevance of ILO's work in all aspects of the ICPD Programme of Action can be directly linked to the Organization's implementation of the MDGs, which are summarized as follows.

A. MDG 1: ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER (TARGETS 1 AND 2)

ILO's contribution to MDG 1 is paramount, and derives from ILO's mandated commitment to social justice, founded on employment, equality and social protection. Employment is recognized as the main route out of poverty for many people, but ILO also recognizes that the burden of poverty is greater than lack of income: it encompasses lack of dignity, disempowerment, violations of human rights, lack of self-worth, and the lack of capacity to organize in order to reclaim these entitlements. Beyond employment itself, promoting *decent and productive work* in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity serves to give new voice to those excluded by poverty, and to the recognition of their rights, which can more truly, fundamentally and irreversibly serve the eradication of poverty.

Striving to secure decent work for women and men everywhere is the natural convergence of all four of ILO's strategic objectives: the promotion of rights at work; employment; social protection; and social dialogue. Consequently, it comprises the overarching goal that guides its policies and defines its international role.

Accordingly, ILO's work in the areas listed in paragraph 3—employment; social protection; child labour; gender promotion; and youth employment—that relate to the principles and recommendations of the ICPD, and ILO's broad programmatic dimensions of Employment, Social Protection and Social Dialogue, as well as the Organization's Cross-Cutting Objectives of *decent work* and *gender equality* are all designed and intended to contribute forcefully to the eradication of extreme poverty. Furthermore, the necessary link between the promotion of decent work and productive employment and the promotion of social protection for those unable to earn their living, notably persons who are ageing, is directly implicated in the eradication of poverty. The World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization which published its report in 2004 has called for minimum standards of protection, such as a socio-economic floor that would protect older persons as well as families and children.³

B. MDG 2: ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION (TARGET 3)

The programmed elimination of child labour releases children to attend school, increasing the proportion of children who start primary school, raising enrolment rates, and increasing the literacy rate

of the population. ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) is given emphasis as an *InFocus Programme*. IPEC has developed a multi-sector strategy to strengthen the capacity of countries to address the causes and consequences of child labour, including creation of a supportive national policy framework and application of protective legislation.⁴ Accordingly, by mid-2004, ILO's Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) had been ratified by 150 member States, reaching one of the highest ratification rates for an ILO Convention, and ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) had been ratified by 138 member States.

C. MDG 3: PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER WOMEN (TARGET 4)

Similarly, ILO's activities in the areas of gender promotion, and the Organization's Cross-Cutting Objective of *gender equality*, serve to maintain a focus on the stated primary goal of ILO to promote opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity.⁵ ILO strengthens the capacity of its constituents to mainstream gender and integrates gender concerns in its own programmes. ILO's technical cooperation has targeted the promotion of women workers' rights, women's employability and competitiveness, income generation, skills training, entrepreneurship development, social finance and empowerment, and self-organization, with special attention to the informal economy and home work. ILO's work has also focused on the critical links between poverty, trafficking in women and children, and exposure to the migration process. The work of the Organization to promote gender equality is rights-based.

D. MDG 5: IMPROVE MATERNAL HEALTH (TARGET 6)

Maternity protection has been a core issue for ILO since its establishment in 1919. It is essential for women workers and society to ensure that women's health is not threatened by their work during pregnancy and the post-partum period, and this is usually ensured through national legislation. It also ensures that women can return to work after maternity leave and not lose their employment because of childbirth. The current international labour standard is the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183), with its accompanying Recommendation (No. 191). The standard provides for paid maternity leave, a preserved level of income, health protection at work, access to medical care, a right to breastfeeding breaks, employment protection, and non-discrimination due to maternity.⁶

ILO Conditions of Work and Employment Programme promotes maternity protection and its expansion through collaboration with ILO constituents and other concerned organizations, by developing tools and providing technical support for enhanced maternity protection at national and workplace level. As a result, there is growing awareness among employers about the link between healthy birth outcomes, occupational reproductive health, productivity and the enterprise's economic status.

E. MDG 6: COMBAT HIV/AIDS, MALARIA AND OTHER DISEASES (ESPECIALLY TARGET 7)

ILO Programme on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work (ILO/AIDS) was established in 2000 and ILO became a co-sponsor of UNAIDS in 2001. ILO developed a *Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work* through tripartite⁷ consultations in 2001; the *Code* then received the support of the General Assembly at its Special Session on HIV/AIDS in 2001.⁸ It lays out key principles and practical guidelines for comprehensive action to address HIV/AIDS in the world of work and has become a benchmark for

national, sectoral and workplace policy worldwide.⁹ The role of ILO is to mobilize governments, employers and workers to take action to safeguard workers' rights, promote HIV prevention, and provide care, treatment and support for workers living with HIV/AIDS. ILO/AIDS' activities respond to the manifest potential for workplace action on four fronts. Advisory services assist in integration of workplace issues in national plans, revision of labour laws to address HIV/AIDS, and development of policies to address HIV/AIDS at all levels. Education and training programmes are designed to support the implementation of the Code of Practice, and strengthen the capacity of governments and social partners to address HIV/AIDS in the workplace. Advocacy includes dissemination of examples of good practice in workplace action and of national laws and policies, and research findings. Research and policy analysis focuses on documenting the socio-economic impact of HIV/AIDS via its multiple effects on the labour force (notably by publishing global estimates of its labour force effects and overall economic impact), elaborating on consequences of the epidemic for the world of work, underscoring the role of the workplace response and its remarkable potential to address HIV/AIDS, and analyzing legal and policy changes.

F. MDG 7: ENSURE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY (ESPECIALLY TARGET 11)

Whereas the majority of poor live in rural areas in developing countries, urban poverty, which is equally severe, is under-reported, underestimated, unacknowledged, and unaddressed. Improving the lives of slum dwellers helps to control HIV/AIDS, to strive for environmental sustainability, and to address gender inequality. Infrastructure and services can be adequate and affordable through the design and innovative structures of tariffs and subsidies. Access can be improved at lower cost when communities are involved in providing services and upgrading infrastructure. Slum upgrading must include employment promotion, which can be conducted at city level so that building infrastructure and creating jobs can occur simultaneously. Tendering to small enterprises and community-based organizations can be an instrument of social policy without compromising efficiency. Stimulating small enterprises also makes good business sense, allows the promotion of labour standards and fosters local economic development.

ILO's work in job creation, employment for youth, and promotion of micro-credit for women's activities in the informal economy have all paid special attention to the particular problems of slum dwellers, which addresses Target 11. Related aspects that include housing tenure and the political rights of women are also being examined. Increasingly, legislation in low- and middle-income countries gives recognition to the consolidated rights of slum dwellers in settling urban spaces and creating communities. This is especially important for women, who find better access to income-generating activities in the slums than in their villages.

G. MDG 8: DEVELOP A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT (ESPECIALLY TARGET 16)

The Youth Employment Network, a joint initiative of ILO, the United Nations and the World Bank, was created as part of the general momentum that led to the Millennium Summit in 2000, where Heads of State and Government resolved, *inter alia*, to "develop and implement strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work", on the basis of a proposal of the Secretary-General, who sought to convene a "High-Level Policy Network on youth employment" to draw on "the most creative leaders in private industry, civil society and economic policy to explore imaginative approaches to the global challenge of youth employment." ILO supports the effort to increase youth employment to help end the vicious cycle of poverty and social exclusion. ILO pursues advocacy among its constituents, and documents innovative ways to keep youth in school and pursue higher education.

ILO has also established a Youth Employment Team aimed at assisting governments and social partners to identify the main youth employment issues and to design and implement integrated policy responses. YET enhances the capacity of national and local-level institutions, trade unions, employers, women's and youth organizations to strengthen their policy framework and knowledge base in order to increase productive employment opportunities for young people. ILO has also implemented school-to-work transition surveys in eight countries and provided policy advice to national action programmes. A general discussion on youth employment will be held at the International Labour Conference in 2005.

In conclusion, ILO's work priorities, programmes and activities, as well as the particular focus and emphasis the Organization gives to a range of issues, can be seen to be broadly consistent with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development of 1994 and also to have continuing relevance for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

NOTES

¹ The International Labour Organization is listed as a specialized agency represented at the Conference; the record shows that a statement was made by the then Deputy Director-General at the 10th plenary meeting of the Conference.

² The actions include, but are not limited to, those specifically mentioned in the Programme of Action and can all be regarded as *inter alia*. Several actions clearly have implications for services (e.g. health services) in, or in connection with the workplace, to the extent that they exist, or for extending workplace-based services; and for relevant workplace policies, even if not stated explicitly in the Programme of Action. The implicit workplace applications are given in square brackets ([...]).

³ <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/fairglobalization/index.htm>, para. 627.

⁴ <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipecc/index.htm>.

⁵ <http://www.ilo.org/gender>.

⁶ <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/cgi-lex/convde.pl?C183> and <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/condtrav/family/maternity/maternity.htm>.

⁷ ILO is based on the principle of tripartism, which is enshrined in its Constitution. Hence, all its constituent bodies consist of governments of member States, employers' representatives and workers' representatives from all regions.

⁸ <http://www.ilo.org/aids>.

⁹ <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/trav/aids/code/codemain.htm>.