



PARTNERSHIPS FOR DECENT WORK



International
Labour
Organization

Newsletter

June 2010 No. 16

Key Resources

[UN Millennium Development Goals](#)

[MDG Monitor: MDG 1](#)

[End poverty 2015: Millennium Development Campaign](#)

[Basic facts about MDGs](#)

[2009 UN MDG report](#)

[ILO MDG information](#)

[ILO Guide to MDG employment indicators](#) (pdf 1885 kB) [FR](#) (pdf 2157 kB) [SP](#) (pdf 2338 kB)

[Facts on the ILO and MDGs](#)

[Food and Agricultural Organization \(FAO\)](#)

[World Food Programme \(WFP\)](#)

[Global Jobs Pact](#) (pdf 93 kB) [FR](#) (pdf 105 kB) [SP](#) (pdf 107 kB)

[Global Jobs Pact website](#)

[Recovering and sustaining growth and development: The contribution of the Global Jobs Pact](#)

[Social Protection Floor *Manual and strategic framework*](#)

[CEB Issues Paper: The global and financial crisis and its impact on the work of the UN system](#)

[CEB Communiqué: On crisis action](#)

[G8 Joint Statement on Global Food Security](#)



Better Factories Programme, Cambodia

Millennium Development Goal 1

Millennium Declaration and Development Goals + 10

The next session of the UN General Assembly in September will review progress towards the Millennium Development Goals adopted in 2000 and agree on the action required to achieve the goals by the target date of 2015. UN agencies have prepared reports identifying successful case studies that can be replicated and scaled up, highlighting lessons learned, identifying remaining challenges, and making recommendations for progress. The ILO, the World Food Programme and the Food and Agricultural Organization jointly coordinated the preparation of the report on MDG 1 (Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger) with input from other UN agencies and the World Bank. The ILO also contributed to the reports on MDG 2 (Achieve universal primary education), MDG 3 (Promote gender equality and empower women) and MDG 6 (Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases).

The goal of “full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people” is target 1.B of MDG 1. It was set in 2005 in the conviction that without the inclusion of decent work goals it was unlikely that poverty could be halved by 2015 or that the other MDGs could be achieved. Halving extreme poverty and hunger and realizing decent work for all are the targets under MDG 1. Each has a distinctive focus, but they are interconnected: lack of decent work leads to hunger, poverty and deprivation. With five years until the MDG deadline, the current state of achievement of the MDGs is mixed, with remarkable progress in some countries and major constraints in others.

Target 1.A, to halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1 a day, is projected to be met at the global level. Enhanced efforts are still required at regional and country levels where success is varied, especially in sub-Saharan Africa.

Target 1.B, on full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people, has been severely affected by the crisis: in 2009 some 215 million more workers lived with their families on less than \$1.25 a day than in 2008, and young people comprised 40 per cent of the world’s unemployed, totalling 10.2 million in 2009. If this target is to be reached, sustained and accelerated progress is required.

Target 1.C, to halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger, is among the worst performing of all MDG targets. High food prices and the economic crisis have increased hunger globally. Out of 103 developing countries, only eleven have reached the target and only 45 are on track.

Building decent work opportunities for all

Now more than ever, we must boost decent work, foster social inclusion, and reduce inequalities.
– Ban Ki-moon, 21 May 2010, UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

Decent and productive work for all is attainable because it can be provided in all sectors and at all levels – it is the best route out of poverty. Country experiences over the past decade have shown that reducing poverty does not require sophisticated infrastructure or highly trained workers. Instead, the right mix of policy options can stimulate economic growth, generate productive employment (particularly in labour-intensive sectors such as agriculture), and guarantee minimum

social protection for all. Decent work programmes have been increasing around the world and with a view to the September MDG Summit, successful examples are highlighted in both the [MDG 1 2010 Review of progress report](#) and the [MDG Good practices report](#). See also [Keeping the Promise: Report of the Secretary-General](#).

In **Cambodia**, the Better Factories Cambodia programme has improved human rights through improved working conditions which have resulted in higher productivity.

Employment generation has been supported in **India** through the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS), providing a legal guarantee of 100 days of unskilled manual work at minimum wage every year to rural adults.

The **Iraq** Reconstruction and Employment Programme (IREP) addresses poverty alleviation through temporary emergency employment for the most vulnerable, including unskilled and semi-skilled unemployed youth and women.

Mali has focused on **youth employment** where 5 625 young people received training under various government schemes and 3 556 business plans were created.

The Innovation for Equitable Development programme in **Mexico** generates income opportunities and formal employment for poor artisans through partnerships with universities, the private sector, public institutions and migrant communities.

In **South Africa** active social dialogue between the government and social partners led to agreement on a collective response to the crisis.

Such success stories give crucial information on what is effective as models for future work. However, a number of critical gaps must still be addressed before full and productive employment and decent work can be reached:

- Environment: The loss of biodiversity, the deterioration of natural resources and other problems seriously affect the achievement of all MDGs - low-carbon decent work opportunities are essential.
- Policy: Decent work opportunities in many countries are hindered by the lack of policy on such issues as youth employment, migrant workers, rural workers and micro-, small and medium enterprises.
- Weak national institutions: A culture of decent work can only be implemented through strong institutions able to deliver on programmes and build capacities, empower women and offer basic public services to all while remaining accountable for their actions.
- Greater knowledge is needed of how decent work can be enhanced, and the related skills must be developed. Human capital must be strengthened so that service delivery and public sector governance are improved.
- Accurate and detailed data on employment and productivity trends is urgently required – it provides valuable feedback on whether the development process is heading in the right direction and makes critical international comparisons possible.

Strategies for reaching MDG 1

International priorities show unanimous and unprecedented political will to recognize the pertinence of decent work in poverty reduction efforts, as well as renewed determination to move towards a global low-carbon economy. In the context of this new economic and financial climate, strategic and policy-oriented tools have been proposed by the ILO and other multilateral stakeholders.

The [Global Jobs Pact](#), adopted by the ILO's 183 Member States, is a portfolio of tested crisis-response and recovery measures focusing on employment and social protection that countries can adapt to their needs. The crisis has reinvigorated determination to reorient growth towards job creation, and the Global Jobs Pact provides nations and the multilateral system with tools and strategies to accomplish this.

The UN Chief Executives Board **Social Protection Floor Initiative (SPF)** offers policy strategies and tools for ensuring a minimum level of access to services, including health and security for all. Co-led by the ILO and the World Health Organization, the SPF Initiative recently released a *Manual and strategic framework for joint UN country operations*. It indicates that all countries, even low-income countries, can provide some elements of basic social protection.

The UN CEB Joint Crisis Initiatives, the L'Aquila Food Security Initiative and a global focus on the creation of green jobs are other areas where the multilateral system is working in conjunction with governments to achieve the MDGs.

By adopting and implementing the Global Jobs Pact, the Social Protection Floor and other initiatives to their full potential, the achievement of the MDGs can become a reality.

To unsubscribe from the list, [click here](#)



Copyright and Permissions 1996-2010
International Labour Organization (ILO) - [Disclaimer](#)

Partnerships and Development Cooperation Department
International Labour Office
CH-1211 Geneva 22
Switzerland
Tel. +41 22 799 7604
exrel@ilo.org
www.ilo.org/pardev