



International  
Labour  
Organization

# ILO Decent Work Country Programmes



## A Guidebook

Version 1

# **ILO Decent Work Country Programmes**

**A Guidebook  
(Version 1)**

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# Preface

Decent Work Country Programmes will be the main delivery vehicle for the 2006-07 Programme and Budget. This guidebook sets out the essential methodological elements in preparing a Decent Work Country Programme and putting it into practice. A number of points are highlighted here.

## **Decent Work: A global goal rooted in each country**

Making decent work a global goal is the Organization's leading policy theme for 2006-09. This encompasses international, regional, inter-country, national and local ILO action.

It is in countries that decent work policies and programmes can significantly impact on people's lives. The ILO is mandated to invite and convince each member State to embrace decent work as a national objective and develop a strategy for its progressive realization. The decision to adopt decent work as a national objective belongs to each member State.

In each country, the ILO works with constituents to put decent work at the heart of economic and social policies.

## **The role and purpose of Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs)**

In every member State, ILO action is directed at the adoption of decent work as a national objective and assisting ILO constituents in advancing towards that objective.

ILO action combines advocacy, demonstration and cooperation in defining and implementing a decent work strategy in accordance with national characteristics and possibilities. Policy advice and technical cooperation are provided in areas in which ILO has a comparative advantage in contributing to the overall national effort.

At every stage in this cooperation, the ILO contribution is to be framed in a Decent Work Country Programme.

Countries with similar interests in their respective DWCPs can join in sub-regional, regional or international ILO initiatives or programmes.

## **A flexible instrument for effectiveness and sustainability**

DWCP are the main instrument for ILO cooperation with member States throughout the world. Each DWCP organizes ILO cooperation in a coherent framework that effectively enables a country to make progress towards achieving decent work goals.

DWCPs vary significantly from country to country, in size, composition, sequence, in tune with the needs and commitment of each country, and the overall means and resources – national and international, including ILO – available in a country for achieving decent work.

The ILO is a key player, but not alone. Its contribution should be carefully identified and firmly integrated with the national development strategy and international efforts supporting it.

## **Joining forces and building partnerships**

A DWCP works closely with constituents in placing decent work at the centre of national policy.

DWCPs are the specific ILO contribution to international development frameworks such as poverty reduction strategies, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), national MDG strategies and other integrated development plans.

Full involvement of ILO constituents and partnerships with national and international actors and institutions are essential to DWCPs and indispensable to their success.

## **Identifying focus, priorities and entry points**

An effective DWCP responds to one or a few key priorities, determined together with ILO constituents. For each priority, one or several outcomes are defined, that is, results expected to be achieved by the direct beneficiaries of ILO cooperation. Thereby, ILO resources (technical, organizational and financial) are directed at these essential priorities. Once identified outcomes have been achieved, a new set of outcomes within the same priorities (or with changing priorities) can be defined.

A critical decision lies in determining entry points for ILO action. On-going programmes and activities may provide the point of departure towards a more focused and effective DWCP. Establishing credibility and trust with national institutions and international partners is essential.



## **Common and specific responsibilities: pooling ILO's capacities and resources**

All ILO staff have the responsibility to contribute towards DWCPs. Regional Directors have overall oversight and approval responsibility for DWCPs in their respective regions. Field Office Directors have responsibility for preparing and implementing DWCPs in the countries of their jurisdiction.

Technical units at Headquarters have responsibility for providing technical support to DWCPs, including regular budget and extra-budgetary resources. Other headquarters units, in accordance with their respective mandates and competencies, are responsible for providing guidance and organizational, administrative and logistical support as required.

## **Resources**

A DWCP needs resources. Every DWCP should make the best possible use of resources available from within and outside the ILO, and blend these in an effective way.

A significant part of regular budget resources, both from the regions and from technical and support units at headquarters should be devoted to DWCPs. PROGRAM and PARDEV will assist regions and technical and support units in organizing joint programming and cost-sharing arrangements.

DWCPs should link with national resources. In complement, innovative and proactive mobilization of extra-budgetary resources, centrally, regionally and in the country should support DWCPs. There is also need for strategic alliances and partnerships with other international organizations to channel resources towards decent work objectives.

## **Short, simple and strategic**

The preparation of a DWCP document should be short and simple. It starts with mapping the situation and identifying priorities and partners, defining outcomes and determining an implementation plan. No elaborate analyses or procedures are required. There is ample flexibility to build on current activities and to accommodate changing circumstances. DWCPs build on previous experiences and pilot cases and will evolve and be refined over time. Progressively, all ILO involvement and action in a particular country will be part of its DWCP.



## **Let's talk**

There are vast opportunities for exchanging, discussing and learning around Decent Work Country Programmes. The intranet can facilitate forums and interactive exchanges to gradually build a common body of experience and knowledge. Overall progress will depend on our ability to communicate and share. The fundamental premise is that we all understand and agree on the crucial role that DWCPs are to have in the delivery of the ILO's Decent Work Agenda, and that we all commit to its continuous improvement and success.



## Acknowledgements

Version 1 of the guidebook was prepared by Kanyhama Dixon-Fyle, Philippe Egger and Folke Kayser. Sarah Alvarez was responsible for the presentation and Geraldeen Fitzgerald edited the text.

A large number of colleagues in external offices and at headquarters have commented extensively on earlier drafts. Their comments have decisively shaped the content of this version of the guidebook. We express our gratitude to these colleagues. Special thanks are due to María Angélica Ducci.

The guidebook will be regularly updated, as we learn from experience, with detailed examples of actual practice, tips, and linkages to important materials and sites. Your input will be appreciated in continuously improving its content and design, so please do not hesitate to send us your comments and suggestions at [dwcp@ilo.org](mailto:dwcp@ilo.org).

May 2005



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# Introduction

The overall goal of the International Labour Organization is decent work for all women and men in all countries. Decent work is about opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive employment in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. ILO assistance to member States in achieving decent work objectives is to be prepared and implemented within time-bound and resourced programmes called Decent work country programmes (DWCPs). The DWCPs put the ILO's knowledge, instruments and advocacy at the service of tripartite constituents to advance the Decent Work Agenda within the fields of competence of the Organization.

Basic orientation is contained in Circulars No. 598 and No. 599 issued by the Director-General in May 2004. The task ahead is clearly defined.

*“Progressively [Decent work country programmes] will be the main delivery vehicle for the 2006-07 Programme and Budget.”<sup>1</sup>*

This guidebook aims to bring further specification to all ILO colleagues in external offices and headquarters units on Decent work country programmes: what they are, why they are needed, how they are developed and implemented. Particular attention is given to the responsibility and accountability of field directors and directors of technical units at headquarters. The booklet intends to:

*Rationale and benefits of a DWCP*

- explain the rationale and current policy of DWCPs in the ILO;
- clarify terminology, responsibilities and procedures with regard to DWCPs; and
- provide recommendations and good practice in relation to DWCPs.

Decent work country programmes are the operational framework for ILO activities in a given country. They constitute a programming tool to deliver on a limited number of priorities over a defined period within a more visible and transparent strategy, to maximize the impact of the ILO's work.

<sup>1</sup> Report of the Director-General, International Labour Conference (93rd Session, 2005).

DWCPs provide a means to integrate:

- **Different technical areas.** Many domains in which constituents seek ILO cooperation require complex policy responses based on a comprehensive decent work approach drawing on more than one of its dimensions – for example, eliminating the worst forms of child labour, improving working conditions and productivity in small enterprises, strengthening the social dimension of globalization, introducing social security to informal employment. Whatever the domain, international labour standards and tripartite social dialogue are integral to the ILO response.
- **Various means of action,** combining advocacy and technical advice, capacity building and services, and direct demonstration projects and research. A sequence of different modalities over time often proves to be most effective.
- **External offices and headquarters units** aiming for greater reciprocal support towards common country programme outcomes and outputs. Field directors can have greater influence over headquarters programmes and resources by showing how DWCPs contribute to the achievement of operational outcomes in the strategic ILO programme and budget (P&B). Headquarters units will be able to commit resources contributing to the country outcomes that field offices have identified, thereby justifying the allocation of resources for the requested expertise.
- **Different funding sources** (regular budget, extra-budgetary, PSI, RBTC, surplus) in support of one coherent programme. ILO activities are increasingly funded from a variety of sources, which can be effectively combined in one programme. This can also lead to a better alignment of external resource mobilization with priorities established in country programmes.
- **Reporting requirements** and procedures (gradually) into one comprehensive report on country programme implementation, which could significantly reduce the current workload in preparing similar but separate reports.

DWCPs also provide for:

- More transparent accountability. A DWCP clearly sets out what the ILO intends to do in a country over a specified time period. The performance of managers in achieving intended outcomes can be more clearly assessed.
- More transparent use of resources: it will be possible to know what ILO units/offices are doing, and where and on what resources (all sources combined) are expended.
- Better monitoring of performance leading to better knowledge of how good results are achieved; this can prove decisive in attracting more resources in a competitive environment.
- Direct participation of ILO constituents in countries in determining, implementing and evaluating country programme priorities.
- Better information for the Governing Body on costs and benefits of outcomes achieved in countries.

Decent work country programmes require and foster greater team work as well as satisfaction and recognition in relation to outcomes achieved. This in turn leads to better service to the ILO's tripartite constituency.

DWCPs are still in a developmental stage. Their further elaboration calls for participatory organizational learning drawing on the experience, practice and views of all field and headquarters colleagues.

Hence this guidebook is subject to further developments. Inputs and feedback from DWCP practitioners on their experience, what has worked, what has not worked and why, and what kind of support is needed, are all critical elements for the success of DWCPs. Suggestions on how to improve the guidebook are particularly welcome. Any comment, reaction and query can be sent to:

**[dwcp@ilo.org](mailto:dwcp@ilo.org)**.

This booklet will in due course be complemented by other elements of support in order to make DWCP a genuine organizational learning opportunity.



## Section 1.

# ILO Decent work country programmes

### 1.1 What is a DWCP?

A decent work country programme is the operational framework for all ILO activities in a given country. It is a management tool enabling the Office to organize its work to assist its constituents in each country to achieve progress towards the goal of decent work for all women and men.

The DWCP Circular No. 599 of 20 May 2004 notes that a country programme exercise:

- starts with problem analysis and lessons learned;
- identifies a limited number of country programme priorities<sup>2</sup> in line with national development plans, country programming frameworks such as the CCA and UNDAF, the views and priorities of constituents in the country and the ILO's Strategic Policy Framework (SPF);
- sets intended medium-term (4-6 years) and short-term (biennial) *outcomes*<sup>3</sup> to be achieved;
- defines an implementation plan with *outputs* and resources; and
- monitors and evaluates *performance* in order to adjust activities and outcomes accordingly.

The above elements are compiled in a brief document (the decent work country programme for ... name of country) that is public, once approved. The public document does not include the implementation plan which remains a separate and internal document. The implementation plan will eventually be an IRIS-supported module in the Strategic Management Module (SMM).

<sup>2</sup> The term “country programme priorities” is preferred to “priority areas of cooperation”, used in the Circular, for practical reasons.

<sup>3</sup> You can look up words in *italics* in the glossary at <http://www.ilo.org/intranet/english/bureau/program/plan/guida/index.htm>

Decent work country programmes can be revised partly or wholly as appropriate taking into account national planning, programmes and budgetary cycles (or indeed decisions by the ILO Governing Body or its standards supervisory bodies). Medium- and short-term *outcomes* should ideally align with the cycles of respectively the four-year Strategic Policy Framework and the biennial programme and budget. However, DWCP outcomes can be repeated, adapted or changed as required.

For relatively small and homogeneous groups of countries, a subregional decent work programme may be considered. In general, country programmes are not exclusive of a decent work programme in a region or indeed globally.

Decent work country programming is both a process (analysing, consulting, programming, evaluating, adjusting) and a product (the DWCP document defining an ILO strategy and programme in a country).

DWCPs are a product of ILO experience with different strands of country objectives and programmes. In particular, the Decent Work Pilot Programme launched in 2001 has explored the operational and integrated content of the Decent Work Agenda. Close cooperation between field offices and headquarters units has led to the design and implementation of programmes in eight countries. Circular No. 599 has drawn on this experience. Updates and lessons learned in the pilot programmes can be found at: <http://mirror/public/english/bureau/dwpp> and <http://mirror/intranet/english/bureau/dwpp/pilot>.

The value of applying one unified approach whilst retaining the diversity of country situations and ILO responses will greatly enhance the *effectiveness* of the ILO. Exchange of experience and lessons will be facilitated and so will organizational learning.

## 1.2 Ownership: Whose programme?

A DWCP identifies labour and social issues in countries, including within national plans and strategies that are relevant to the Decent Work Agenda. From among those issues, constituents and the Office select and define country programme priorities. These priorities take due account of the ILO's own strategic objectives and the programmes of other development partners and institutions, with a view to identifying where the ILO's comparative advantage can be put to best use in furthering the goal of decent work.

*An ILO programme for constituents and national development*

A DWCP, developed with the active participation of constituents, is a programme in support of constituents, national policy and institutions. The Office retains full responsibility and accountability for delivering the outputs described in the programme. Converting *outputs* into *outcomes* requires the active engagement of constituents and beneficiary institutions.

In each country, national authorities define national development goals and plans. Many such plans make reference to internationally agreed goals (Millennium Development Goals, Poverty Reduction Strategies). International cooperation, including the ILO, supports the achievement of national development goals, plans and programmes.

Better alignment between national goals and international cooperation is a shared concern. More effective aid also means better aid coordination. The CCA and UNDAF, as well as Millennium Development Goal Reviews (MDGR) and PRSP, are instruments for better aid coordination and alignment with national goals. The DWCP defines the ILO contribution to such frameworks.

### 1.3 In which countries are DWCPs prepared and implemented?

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In principle, ILO cooperation in all member States should take the form of a DWCP.

In practice, ILO cooperation can take other forms for a number of reasons: cooperation with high-income countries follows different patterns, special political circumstances (forced labour, cases of freedom of association, major crisis), or wholly inadequate capacity in a host country. In some countries, exceptional circumstances may dictate that a DWCP is not appropriate in a specific period. The responsible field office director should decide whether it is appropriate to develop a DWCP or not.

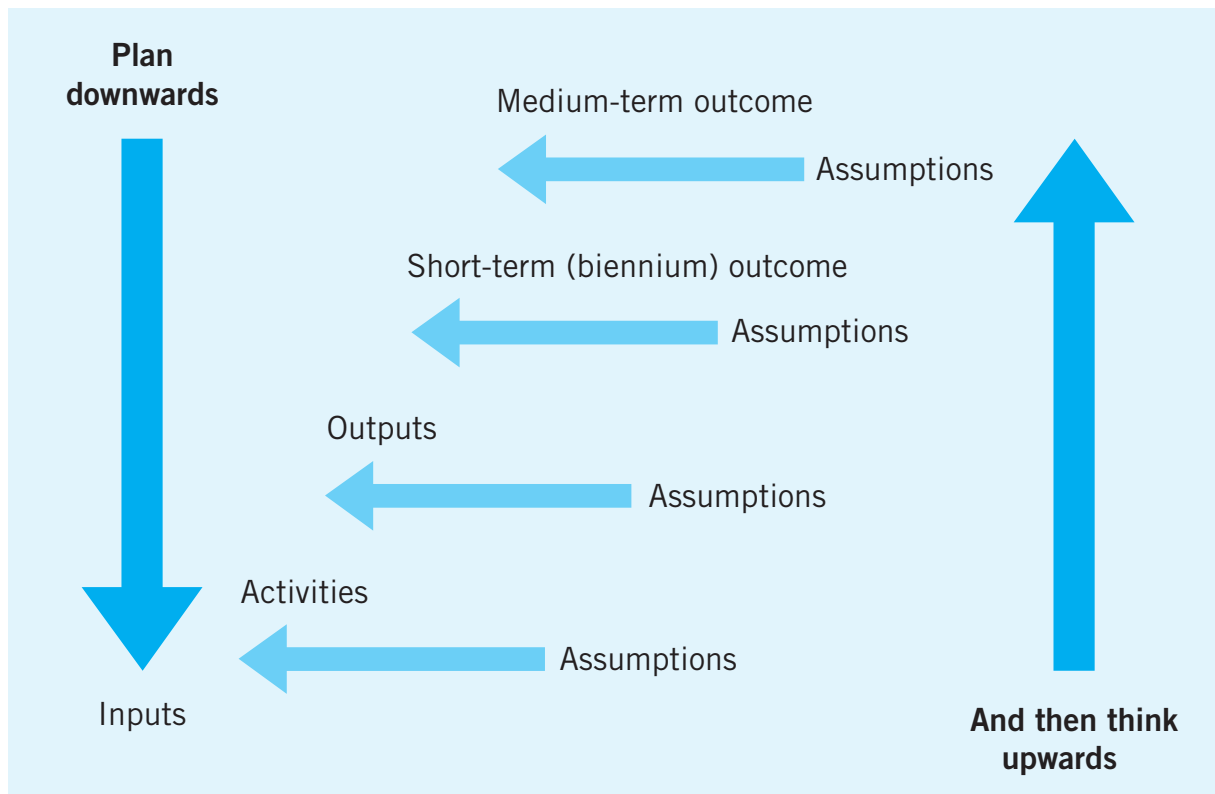
## 1.4 DWCP and managing for results

A DWCP applies *results-based management*. This approach is now widespread in development cooperation.<sup>4</sup> Development partners have emphasized country ownership, aid *effectiveness* and development *results*.<sup>5</sup>

*Results-based management applies a logical framework*

Results-based management focuses on achieving defined results in order to improve programme and management effectiveness, *efficiency* and *accountability*. It includes identifying measurable or describable changes (outcomes) to be achieved, based on appropriate problem and context analyses; designing strategies, outputs and activities that will lead to these changes; balancing expected results with the resources available; monitoring and reporting on progress regularly; and periodically evaluating outcomes achieved.

Managing for results applies the principles of a *logical framework* as follows:



Source: Adapted from UNFPA Results-Based Management Orientation Guide, June 2001 at <http://www.unfpa.org/spo/management.htm>

<sup>4</sup> See the Managing for Development Results web site at [www.mfdr.org](http://www.mfdr.org) or the United Nations Development Group web site at [www.undg.org](http://www.undg.org).

<sup>5</sup> For example, the International Conference on Financing for Development (Monterrey, Mexico, 2002).

Here the ILO simply follows good practice. *Results-based management* is widely adopted throughout development agencies, be it the UNDP, UNFPA, the World Bank, bilateral aid agencies and non-governmental organizations.

When planning is restricted to activities, there is no means of verifying whether the activity served any purpose beyond the fact that it took place. This is not effective.

Results-based management requires determining the expected *outcome* that is sought (within a defined context and given certain *assumptions*), then by planning downwards, identifying what is required to achieve the expected outcome (within defined resources). Walking back (or thinking upwards) enables one to check if there is logical consistency between what is produced (*activities* leading to *outputs*) and the expected outcome. This iteration often involves revising initial drafts.

Determining expected outcomes implies looking ahead. The validity of the expectation is enhanced when qualified by one or a few explicit assumptions (hypotheses about factors or risks which could affect the progress or success of a development intervention). Achieving the expected outcome depends on whether or not the assumptions made were verified or not.

***An outcome is defined as a policy change in support of decent work, or any measurable or describable change in regulatory frameworks, institutions and resource allocation.***

## 1.5 DWCP, ILO policy and other ILO programming exercises

It is important to point out that a DWCP is not exclusively a country demand-driven programme. The ILO constituents (Governing Body and International Labour Conference) define the overall orientation and priorities of the ILO which de facto apply to DWCP.

The 2006-07 Programme and Budget has identified five mainstreamed strategies, namely a fair globalization,<sup>6</sup> working out of poverty,<sup>7</sup> advancing gender equality,<sup>8</sup> greater influence of international labour standards in development<sup>9</sup> and expanding the influence of social partners, social dialogue and tripartism.

Particular obligations derive from ratified international labour standards, the 1998 Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, gaps in implementation of such obligations and any observations made by the supervisory bodies.

*DWCPs apply ILO strategies in a country*

Circular No. 599 refers to tripartism and social dialogue as fundamental principles and tools to strengthen assistance to, and participation of, ILO constituents in the promotion of decent work. The Resolution concerning tripartism and social dialogue (International Labour Conference, 90th Session, 2002) is relevant here.<sup>10</sup>

A DWCP expresses the best possible intersection between country characteristics and policies, constituent priorities and ILO objectives. Each DWCP uniquely combines country characteristics, constituents' priorities and ILO priorities. Country programme priorities and *outcomes* should be relevant to these three dimensions and offer the best possible prospects of achieving decent work goals.

Medium-term outcomes in DWCPs should be broadly aligned with the priorities and strategies expressed in the Strategic Policy Framework (SPF) (currently 2006-09).

<sup>6</sup> See <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/integration/globaliz/events.htm>, and <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/fairglobalization/index.htm>

<sup>7</sup> See <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/recon/poverty/index.htm>, and <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/integration/poverty/index.htm>

<sup>8</sup> See [http://www.ilo.org/dyn/genderintranet/gender.home?p\\_lang=en](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/genderintranet/gender.home?p_lang=en)

<sup>9</sup> See <http://webfusion.ilo.org/public/db/standards/normes/index.cfm?lang=EN>

<sup>10</sup> See <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/relm/ilc/ilc90/pdf/pr-21res.pdf>  
In March 2005, the Governing Body recommended the development of a protocol on consultations between ILO departments and the Bureaux for employers' and for workers' activities. This is under development.

Short-term outcomes (within the biennium) in DWCPs should be broadly aligned with the operational outcomes formulated in the programme and budget (check the 2006-07 version).

In effect the DWCP translates ILO medium-term and biennial objectives into a country programme.

The Implementation Plan (in the SMM on IRIS) is being so designed as to link outcomes in countries and outcomes in the strategic budget of the ILO, both under a country view (outcomes in a country) and under a strategic budget view (countries having prioritized a given outcome).

See appendix for the relationship between ILO programming frameworks.

## Section 2.

# Preparing a decent work country programme

Preparing and delivering DWCPs is a joint responsibility of ILO field offices, regional offices and headquarters units.

### 2.1 Geographic responsibilities

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Circular No. 236 (25 March 2003) on Reorganization of the ILO Field Structure (as amended) applies.

## 2.2 Management responsibility

DWCPs are an Office-wide responsibility of all managers and staff. It is the responsibility of all to ensure the success of each and every DWCP. At the same time, there are specific responsibilities and accountabilities.

*Joint and multiple responsibilities*

Under the overall responsibility of the Regional Director, field office directors (office and subregional office directors each, in their geographic area of responsibility) have management responsibility for preparing and implementing DWCPs. They are the country programme managers. ILO technical specialists (including employers and workers relations specialists) from the Office, subregion, region or headquarters should be consulted. Field office directors are accountable for the results achieved in DWCPs.

Headquarters managers are responsible for contributing technically and financially to DWCPs and planning activities in countries in close coordination with field offices. They are accountable for results achieved under operational outcomes.

Regional offices and other units (such as ED/MAS, GENDER, INTEGRATION, PARDEV and TURIN) provide support.

## 2.3 Approving a DWCP

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Draft DWCPs are submitted to the regional office and to headquarters technical units for comments (precise circulation to be announced). Queries on methodological matters can be addressed to the dedicated mailbox: [dwcp@ilo.org](mailto:dwcp@ilo.org). PARDEV and PROGRAM will coordinate responses.

Field office directors can revise draft DWCPs following receipt of comments. The draft is then submitted to the regional director for final approval.

Approving the DWCP with constituents can follow different modalities, from the very formal (signing of a memorandum of understanding with the attached agreed country programme priorities) to the more informal (exchange of letter, meeting, verbal agreement). For reasons of legal liability, only the programme priorities should form part of the agreement.

## 2.4 Preparing a DWCP: A six-step cycle

### Country context: Step 1

Usually requires a brief description of the main labour and social issues and policies in a country and information on work of the ILO and partners, to determine strategic developments and trends of interest to the ILO. In most countries, a wealth of information, data and experience is available and can be drawn upon to this effect.

#### Key points:

- What are the major trends surrounding decent work and what are the principle causes driving these within the country?
- How do these trends relate to national priorities and frameworks, including supporting frameworks and strategies (CCA, MDGR, PRSP, UNDAF)?
- What are the priorities of constituents, including agreed and discrete priorities?
- What commitments have been undertaken under ratified international labour standards, and what implementation gaps raised by ILO supervisory procedures need to be addressed?
- How does the country situation intersect with the ILO strategy as found in the Strategic Policy Framework and the programme and budget. This intersection should define the ILO comparative advantage.
- Where and for what are major donors investing development aid resources?
- What has been learned from previous ILO experience in addressing these problems in the country or elsewhere that can make response more effective?

*Determining the scope*

**Possible approaches:**

- Major trends in relation to decent work components and indicators can be recalled, including brief assessment of how effective policies have been in promoting these. In most countries plenty of material is readily available to compile this section.
- The section should be more strategic (it is about choices) than analytical and exhaustive. This is definitively not the place to review the development achievements of a country.
- How are other major actors in the country addressing decent work components and issues?
- Drawing salient lessons from past ILO cooperation (what has worked well and less well).
- Determining ILO comparative advantage(s) in a particular country implies knowing and putting forward the Organization's comparative advantages and means of action. This requires identifying major actors present in the fields in which ILO is working.
- Establishing partnerships for results – the ILO cannot deliver on the Decent Work Agenda on its own. Partnerships and collaborations are critical, each partner contributing in the areas of its comparative advantages.
- It is possible to start with a DWCP that is limited in scope and draw in other dimensions subsequently as the programme gains in credibility by achieving its intended results.

**Agreeing on country programme priorities: Step 2****Key point:**

- Agreeing with ILO constituents on country programme priorities.

**Possible approaches:**

*Agreeing on what the CPP are*

- Having defined the context in the country for an ILO intervention, country programme priorities (CPP) define the best intersection between a country situation (in the areas relevant to the ILO mandate), expressed priorities of constituents, ILO objectives and comparative advantage (what it can potentially best contribute and where). This requires the strategic determination of the areas in which the ILO is likely to be most effective over the medium term.
- Defining CPP is about making choices: retaining those few areas in which the ILO can over the next medium-term make a genuine contribution.
- Country programme priorities not only respond to the specific characteristics of a country and the views of ILO constituents in that country; they are also informed by the ILO's programming documents and the priorities defined by the tripartite constituency globally.
- Country programme priorities form the basis of the tripartite agreement in a country on where the ILO should be concentrating its resources.
- Employers' and workers' relations specialists have a critical role to play here.
- Country programme priorities correspond to "development objectives" in the technical cooperation logical framework, and to operational objectives in the programme and budget structure. Contrary to outcomes, they are not set within a particular time or resource frame.

**Defining intended outcomes: Step 3****Key points:**

*Projecting into the near future: Intended outcomes*

- An intended *outcome* defines the expected result (change) or effect of one or a set of ILO *outputs* (products, capital goods and services). Outcomes imply an active response on the part of the immediate beneficiary group that should flow logically from delivering the outputs. Medium-term outcomes (four or more years) are distinguished from short-term outcomes (two years or the time frame of the implementation plan). A sequence of short-term outcomes can be linked to the same medium-term outcomes.
- The nature and number of outcomes will vary from country to country. In one country, the ILO may assess that the scope for action at a certain point in time is limited to one modest outcome. In another country, a more complex and sequenced set of outputs may stand a good chance of achieving a more ambitious set of outcomes.
- Each outcome requires one or more *performance indicators*.
- Each outcome is followed by a brief section on strategy. Who is the final *target* or population? What is the immediate *beneficiary* institution or group? With whom will the ILO work and how? What will be the role of constituents?
- Decent work country programmes are formulated in gender-sensitive terms, specifying how intended outcomes will affect women and men.

**Possible approaches:**

- The total number of outcomes in any one DWCP should remain small and manageable. A few good results in areas of priority are always preferable to a larger number of unfocused activities.
- Determining intended outcomes implies a good assessment of the capacities and commitment of the beneficiary or target institution. It may involve identifying a number of assumptions.
- Thinking about what is to be achieved (outcomes) with whom, is a good way to define a strategy.
- Defining an outcome for each and every decent work deficit is not a good approach. However, defining an outcome leading to a relevant decent work approach is useful.
- Shorter term (biennial) outcomes can be defined as intermediary results towards the achievement of medium-term outcomes.
- Workshops and seminars do not constitute *outputs*! They are *activities* that should lead to outputs contributing to achieving intended *outcomes*.
- A common difficulty is to strike the right “distance” between an intended outcome and an output. There can be quite a distance between an outcome in relation to poverty alleviation and an output regarding recognition of the views and roles of employers and workers in a national poverty programme, or between a manual on working conditions in small enterprises (an output) and small enterprise competitiveness. There is a closer link between government approval of a pension system reform (an outcome) and a pension reform proposal prepared by the ILO (an output) and discussed by constituents.
- How is one to determine whether an output has indeed been effective in achieving an intended outcome? There is often an issue of “attribution” between the delivery of an output and the achievement of the actual (versus the intended) outcome (the action taken by the immediate beneficiary as a result of an ILO output). This is both an issue of measurement (is the outcome or expected change measurable or describable?) as well as an issue of strategy (is the outcome not too distant from the output?). Often, the ILO is not alone in contributing to an outcome. Nevertheless, an effective ILO output should always contribute to the achievement of an outcome, even if other contributions were present, not least that of the immediate beneficiary.

## Implementation planning: Step 4

### Key points:

- For now, this is presented in a simple table including the intended outcomes, the main outputs (but this is optional and can be revised as the strategy evolves) and the planned or committed resources. See below. In a year or less this table will feature within the IRIS/SMM implementation planning module (accessible to all).
- The implementation plan is an internal ILO document.
- The DWCP and the implementation plan are tools for negotiation between field offices and headquarters units. Preparing the implementation plan is the opportunity to negotiate commitments set across headquarters units and field offices.
- Aligning technical cooperation resources with DWCPs is a priority. Initially this may require aligning the DWCP with ongoing technical cooperation activities. But very soon it means aligning technical cooperation funding and resource mobilization with DWCP objectives and intended outcomes.
- The DWCP and the implementation plan are tools for local resource mobilization.
- The implementation plan should not include 100 per cent of resources available to any one country. Field offices should retain some flexibility to address unforeseen and unprogrammed requests. Some leeway for contingencies, ad hoc response and short-term actions is necessary.

*The internal implementation plan links resources to outputs and outcomes*

### Possible approaches:

- Field offices prepare an indicative implementation plan, which is simply a plan on resources available or likely to be available for any intended outcomes and sets of outputs required.
- Consultations and negotiations take place between field offices and headquarters units (particularly during preparation of the programme and budget and during implementation planning in the three months preceding the new biennium, and at any other time), and between field offices and other development partners.
- Resource mobilization, including local resource mobilization requires special attention.
- The implementation plan invites checking for resourcing of all outputs.

**Management and implementation: Step 5****Key points:**

- Field office directors are responsible for results achieved in countries and accountable to the regional director.
- Headquarters managers are responsible for planning and supporting activities in countries in line with the DWCP and in close consultation with the field directors. Headquarters managers are responsible for achieving operational objectives and outcomes within the Strategic Budget, many of which take place in countries. They are accountable to the Executive Director.
- ILO constituents participate actively in the implementation of DWCPs, particularly in converting outputs into outcomes.

**Possible approaches:**

- Both field office directors and headquarters managers need to rely on each other to implement their respective but convergent programmes. Each needs the support (technical, financial, administrative) of the other to give full effect to their responsibility.
- Field office directors initiate programming and report annually on implementation; the regional office has oversight responsibility.
- Different persons planning to work within a specific country over a set period can establish informal networks or teams to facilitate the implementation of different parts of the DWCP.

**Monitoring, reporting and evaluation: Step 6****Key points:**

- The implementation plan can be tracked periodically (quarterly, six-monthly or when required) in order to update activities within the DWCP. With IRIS, this will be facilitated.
- Field offices carry out at least one annual self-evaluation of DWCP. An annual or biennial review/self-evaluation with constituents is recommended.
- Main conclusions and lessons of the self-evaluation should be submitted to the regional director and posted on the Intranet (together with the DWCP document).
- With the guidance of the ILO's Evaluation Unit (EVAL), periodic independent evaluations are organized. Lessons are widely shared.

**Possible approaches:**

- Involving ILO colleagues (including those from headquarters) or other persons not directly involved in the DWCP can be useful. Reflecting together on what has worked well and less well is an important means of building knowledge, learning lessons and improving capacity to achieve good results.
- Indicators (identified at the design stage) are essential to sound evaluation.

## 2.5 Practicalities

*Six components of the DWCP document*

The DWCP document (in Word) should, as a rule, be no longer than 12 pages (approximately 5,000 words) with the following six sections. It is a programming tool, guiding future decisions, not an analytical document. All six sections are mandatory. The content of each section is only briefly described here and makes no claim to be exhaustive. This depends very much on each situation.

	Heading	Suggested length (pages)	Description of content
1	Country context	2-5	Salient points only, not an exhaustive analysis; includes main trends and issues in decent work; reference to national development goals, development cooperation frameworks (UNDAF and related); priorities of constituents; commitments under ratified standards, and other implementation gaps; relevant government/donor/other programmes; relevant lessons learned from past cooperation.
2	Country programme priority (CPP)	1	Statement only of CPP (justification follows from prior analysis); hard choices will have to be made because limiting the number of CPP is critical, one to maximum four seems adequate range, one to three is better, fewer is possible, more than four is not advised.
3	Medium-term and shorter term outcomes, and indicators and brief strategy	1-3	Outcomes are formulated in as concise and precise language as possible. Short-term outcomes can be numbered. For each outcome, there are one or several indicators to measure performance. Each outcome is followed by a brief strategy statement indicating how and with whom work will proceed (who is partner, who is immediate beneficiary, if different from partner, who is target group or population). Assumptions and risks can be mentioned. Fewer outcomes are better!

	<b>Heading</b>	<b>Suggested length (pages)</b>	<b>Description of content</b>
4	Implementation plan, including outcomes, outputs and resources for the biennium	½ -2	Internal document only. One table saying who will produce which outputs with what resources. From information in IRIS/SMM (see 2.8). May be completed with a workplan.
5	Implementation and management	½	Very brief description of arrangements. Mention main partners.
6	Performance monitoring and evaluation arrangements	½	Brief description of arrangements planned (updating the implementation plan forms the basis for a periodic but at least annual internal implementation report based on planned versus actual delivery of outputs, and an annual self-evaluation).

## 2.6 Timelines

*Aligning  
timelines  
(flexibly)*

- A DWCP may not always follow the programme and budget cycle. There may be reasons to align with other programming frameworks (PRSP, UNDAF, etc.).
- As a rule DWCP implementation plans should follow the programme and budget biennial cycle. Therefore implementation plans should be readied and fine-tuned on the eve or start of the new biennium. But practical circumstances may dictate otherwise.
- In turn, DWCPs will prove valuable in preparing the programme and budget and refining the operational outcomes and strategies.
- Technical cooperation components will usually span more than two years. Outputs and activities of technical cooperation projects can be repeated from one biennial implementation plan to the next.
- How many countries should be covered by when? This is a decision for each region, subregion and office. The DWCP Circular (No. 599 of 20 May 2004) was effective immediately. Many field offices have already started. But not all can be done at once.

## 2.7 Communication

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- **Draft** DWCPs should be circulated for comments. Rules for circulation will shortly be specified.
- **Draft** DWCP documents should be posted on a dedicated web site on the Intranet (under preparation).
- **Approved** DWCPs are public documents. They should be posted on a dedicated web site on the public Internet. This can feature both under decentralized web sites of country offices and under a central page on DWCPs (in preparation).
- DWCPs are important tools for communication on the ILO work. They can be adapted for various purposes (pamphlets, components of technical cooperation proposals, donor briefings).

## 2.8 Implementation plan template

This template describes the information that is entered in and available on the IRIS/SMM implementation planning module.

Country programme objective 1:				
Outcome 1 for biennium	Planned outputs	Indicative resource plan (in USD)		
		<i>Planned/estimated budget for outcome (i.e., sum of all output costs) following IRIS/SMM model:</i>		
<i>Specify outcome in full sentence and in present tense</i>  <i>Usually more than one outcome per country programme priority</i>	<i>Can be filled in at beginning or during process, and revised during implementation</i>  <i>Usually more than one output per outcome. Key notion with verb/action is enough. Outputs are outputs of the ILO office e.g., "actuarial study carried out/submitted/available by date"</i>	Regular budget:	Planned	Committed
		Staff costs		
		Non-staff costs		
		RBTC		
		Extra-budgetary:		
		Staff costs		
Non-staff costs				
PSI				
Total				
Indicators for outcome				
Strategy for outcome				
<i>Very brief description, specifying actors and responsibilities, of how outcome will be achieved.</i>				
Outcome 2 for biennium	Planned outputs			

## 2.9 Work plan

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Each unit in the ILO should keep an up-to-date work plan specifying what each member of the unit is expected to do, by when. The work plan is an extension of the implementation plan.

## 2.10 DWCPs and the Integrated Resource Information System (IRIS)

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IRIS will provide important support to DWCP. Under IRIS, starting in 2006-07 (but pending the full incorporation of field offices into IRIS) all budgets and transactions can be linked to the relevant country, where relevant. At the same time, under IRIS there is also information for the same budgets and transactions on:

- the ILO units responsible for the resources;
- the relevant strategic objective and operational outcomes from the programme and budget; and
- financial information on the source and type of funds.

The IRIS/SMM will establish a link between the operational outcomes in the programme and budget and the medium-term outcomes in each country.

This information can be useful in several ways:

- Office directors can see all resources that they can count on to achieve their DWCP outcomes, whether under their direct control or through collaboration with headquarters or subregional offices.
- Subregional directors can plan the use of their resources within the framework of DWCPs, and with information on resources available from the responsible field office and from headquarters.
- Managers at headquarters can see the resources allocated to programme and budget operational outcomes across regions and countries. They can plan the use of their resources based on information on DWCP outcomes as well as on resources available locally.
- Everyone will be able to see the relevant resources, for all sources of funds (RB, RBTC, PSI, extra-budgetary, surplus).

With all budgetary information in one place, linked to information on the Strategic Framework and the DWCP, collaboration will be both easier and more results-oriented. Consultation and decisions about the use of resources can be based on expected results.

Further details will be provided as soon as the implementation planning module of the IRIS/SMM is finalized.

All this will mean that implementation planning for 2006-07 will have to be organized in a new way. For example, joint programming may take place over a longer period and by region instead of ILO-wide.

Implementation reporting will also be simplified, since the expected outcomes, outputs and resource use will be centrally available.



## Section 3. Further guidance and resources

### 3.1 Definition of terms: Sources

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*Handbook and terminology*

- ILO Programme Planning Handbook for Unit Chiefs and Programmers
- Terminology: Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results-Based Management
- Both available at <http://www.ilo.org/intranet/english/bureau/program/plan/guida/index.htm>

## 3.2 Guidance and support

### *Support for country programming*

- Circulars (see below)
- This guidebook
- Dedicated DWCP web page: in preparation
- Email for inquiries and support: [dwcp@ilo.org](mailto:dwcp@ilo.org)
- Ask a Decent Work Focal Point or Regional Programmer/Programming Unit
- Learn from experience (yours, others)
- Experience in other organizations

### *Circulars*

- Circular No. 598: A Framework for Implementing the Decent Work Agenda  
<http://www.ilo.org/iloroot/intranet/english/bureau/program/mas/circulars/1/n598rac/index.pdf>
- Circular No. 599: Decent work country programmes  
<http://www.ilo.org/iloroot/intranet/english/bureau/program/mas/circulars/1/n599rac/index.pdf>
- Circular No. 236: Reorganization of ILO Field Structure  
<http://www.ilo.org/iloroot/intranet/english/bureau/program/mas/circulars/2/n236rac/index.pdf>

### *Policy documents*

- Strategic Policy Framework 2006-09  
<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/download/pdf/06-07/gbspf.pdf>
- Programme and Budget for 2006-07  
[Link to finalised P&B]
- Technical Cooperation Manual of CODEV  
[once finalised, link here]
- More to come!

Additional guidance and support will be generated and shared as more experience is gained. A glossary, tips and frequently asked questions could be developed. In particular, examples of decent work country programmes will soon be available, enabling all to learn and compare from the programmes designed by different field offices.

## Appendix: Relationship between ILO programming frameworks

Demand	Logical framework components				Supply
<b>Decent work country programme</b>	<b>Goals/ Objectives</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Means of verification</b>	<b>Programme and budget</b>
	→				
National Development Objectives, Plan, Strategy	SPF, P&B, National Development Framework, UNDAF, Donor guidelines	Development Impact	Evidence of sustained development change	Data, reports, measurable, describable change	Strategic Policy Framework, Country priorities, Strategic objectives, Thematic priorities
<b>DW Country Programme</b>	<b>Programme components and processes</b>				<b>Programme and budget</b>
Country programme priorities	Development Objective	Beneficiary Impact	Use of services by beneficiaries	Evaluation	Operational Objective
Intended outcome	Immediate Objective	Outcomes	Use of outputs by direct recipients	Evaluation	Operational outcome
Outputs	Outputs	Outputs	Delivery milestones	Monitoring (planned vs. actual outputs)	Strategy
Activities (not specified)	Work plan (who does what by when)	Activities tracking			Activities (not specified)
Inputs (regular budget and extra-budgetary resources)				Financial monitoring	Inputs (regular budget)

This diagram illustrates the relationship between the programming frameworks used in the ILO, specifically the programme and budget and the decent work country programme. Both derive from a logical framework. The hierarchy (vertical reading) moving from broader goals and purposes to intended outcomes and related outputs, activities and inputs (budget, staff time, travel) is applied in both programming frameworks. The horizontal reading illustrates the corresponding levels between the programme and budget and the DWCP. Both programming frameworks seek change in beneficiary behaviour, development impact or intended outcome, within a defined context (the ILO Strategic Policy Framework or the country development framework). Indicators and means of verification (measurable or describable change) are specified for reporting purposes, in an implementation report or an evaluation (external or self-evaluation).