



SULTANATE OF OMAN

Decent Work Country Programme
2010-13

June 2010



**Memorandum of Understanding
Between
the Sultanate of Oman
and
the International Labour Organization**

Stemming from the excellent relations between the government of the Sultanate of Oman and the International Labour Organization, which is concerned with cooperating with Member States for the purpose of achieving the objectives and principles set forth in its Constitution as an international organization;

In continuation of the technical cooperation between the ILO and the tripartite constituents in the Sultanate (the government- Employers-Workers) and their desire to work together to achieve the objectives of the Decent Work Country Program prepared for this purpose (attached);

It has been agreed between the Sultanate of Oman, represented by the tripartite constituents (the Ministry of Manpower, the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the General federation Of Oman Trade Union) and the International Labour Organization on the following:

ARTICLE ONE

Cooperation to implement the National Decent Work Country Program that is attached to this Memorandum of Understanding in accordance with its strategic objectives, and with the view to enforce the capacities of each of the tripartite constituents in the Sultanate, each in its respective field, to achieve these objectives.

ARTICLE TWO

The International Labour Organization avails itself to provide the necessary technical support to implement this program, and will undertake efforts to raise funds for the financing of its activities.

ARTICLE THREE

This program shall be implemented within a period of four years commencing on the date of the signature on this Memorandum of Understanding. In case of incomplete implementation, this period shall be automatically extended for one more year.



ARTICLE FOUR

This Memorandum is executed in five original copies in both the Arabic and English languages, all texts being equally authentic. In case of discrepancy, the English text shall prevail.

This Memorandum is signed on Tuesday 15th of June 2010 in Geneva, Switzerland.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nada Al Nashif'.

On behalf of the International Labour
Organization
Nada Al Nashif
Regional Director
Regional Office For Arab States

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Abdallah Nasser Al Bakri'.

On behalf of the Government of the
Sultanate of Oman
Abdallah Nasser Al Bakri
Minister of Manpower

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Khalil Abdallah Al Khonji'.

On behalf of the Oman Chamber of
Commerce and Industry
Khalil Abdallah Al Khonji
Chairman of the Board of Directors

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Saud Ali Al Jabri'.

On behalf of the General Federation of
of Oman Trade Unions
Saud Ali Al Jabri
Chairman of the Federation

1. Introduction

Decent work sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives – their aspirations for opportunity and income in conditions of freedom, security, equity and human dignity.

The purpose of this Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) is to ensure a coherent, comprehensive and integrated approach to the promotion of decent work in Oman. The DWCP is a strategic framework for the ILO's interventions and expresses the common commitment of the Government, workers' and employers' organizations and the ILO to collaborate on specific objectives aiming at improving employment conditions, social justice and equity, in line with national development plans. This document defines the priorities based on an analysis of the labour issues, identifying results to be achieved and strategies for implementation within a defined period of time.

2. Country context

2.1 Socio-economic context

Oman is a middle-income monarchy located in the south-east of the Arab Peninsula with a surface area of 309,500 km² and a population of 2.5 million with a rapid growth rate of 3.1 per cent.¹ Its major products are crude oil and refining, liquefied natural gas, construction, cement, steel, chemicals, optical fibre and copper, which developed in the early 1980s to diversify the economy. Sustained high oil prices in recent years have helped build Oman's budget, trade surpluses and foreign reserves. The GDP per capita (PPP) has reached US\$15,259.²

Foreign labour in Oman

Since the 1970s, Oman has been witnessing steady progress in the political and socio-economic fields. However, the country has had to rely on expatriates to implement its ambitious socio-economic programmes of the five-year consecutive development plans due to the limited number of qualified Omanis in these areas.

The Ministry of Manpower (MoM) is facilitating the issuance of permits for foreign workers, especially in the sectors that witness shortages in the number of qualified national workers. Expatriates work in different economic sectors; unskilled and semi-skilled expatriates are concentrated in the construction sector, which represents 32.5 per cent of the total expatriates in the private sector, according to the statistical bulletin of 2007.

According to the second population census in 2003, the labour force constitutes 37.3 per cent of the total population (3.2 million), with a growth rate of 4.7 per cent³ per annum. Expatriates, who represent 23.9 per cent of the population, constitute almost half of this labour force. Women account for 24.7 per cent of the total Omani labour force in both the public and private sectors. A high unemployment rate, estimated at 15 per cent and reaching

¹ The population situation in the Sultanate of Oman 2000-05 – Ministry of National Economy, December 2006.

² UNDP: *Human Development Report 2006 – Beyond scarcity: Power, poverty and the global water crisis*.

³ Economist Intelligence Unit (UIT) 2007 estimates.

one-third among youth aged 15-24 years, shows that the employment challenge for the local population is immense.

The total size of the expatriate labour force in the private sector is 799,754, classified in the total expatriate labour force as follows: 10.4 per cent professional, 6.8 per cent technical, 21.7 per cent vocational, 19.1 per cent skilled and 41.8 per cent semi-skilled. The majority of unskilled workers are furthermore concentrated in the domestic services (drivers, domestic workers and childcare). The percentage of workers from Asia, Bangladesh, India and Pakistan reached 85.5 per cent of the total number of expatriates in the private sector in 2007.

As a labour-receiving country, Oman has adopted a Labour Law that does not discriminate between nationals and non-nationals. Recruitment of foreign labour through certified recruitment agencies is governed by Ministerial Decree No. 59/1993. Although a small percentage of migrant workers are hired through agencies in sending countries (mostly Bangladesh, Pakistan and India), the MoM is presently working on organizing the contractual process of foreign labour and is promulgating the necessary legislation and regulatory frameworks in compliance with international labour standards.

Within the above context, the Ministry continues to review, amend and implement the necessary legislation and laws in conformity with the developments of the labour market. The Labour Law issued by Sultanate Decree No. 35/2003 stipulates that migrant workers should be proficient and have technical skills that the country needs. Migrant workers should further meet conditions of legal entry, obtaining the necessary residential permits required for foreigners.

Despite the above, the vast majority of foreign workers, especially women domestic workers, are hired through personal contacts. Little information is available on the types of contracts negotiated through formal private employment agencies, or whether the employer adheres to the contractual clauses. The processing fees demanded by recruitment agencies are very high relative to what the prospective migrant would earn. The means of recruitment of this category is blurred, and it is not clear whether migrant workers and women migrant domestic workers are treated equally.

Migrant women workers are an issue of special concern to Oman as well as other Gulf States, especially with regard to the contractual and the sponsorship systems. Some sending states have called upon Gulf member States to adopt measures to protect women migrant workers. They also called for consultation with the receiving Gulf States to identify problem areas and adopt measures for addressing them. Discussions continue among the Gulf States to unify bilateral agreements with the sending countries. The ILO is taking an important lead in this regard.

Oman's experience in nationalization of the labour force (Omanization)

Oman is striving to create job opportunities for its nationals in various economic sectors. The Sultanate is striving to best use its human resources, seeking to secure job opportunities, increase economic growth and maintain equilibrium between supply and demand in the labour market. Human resources development is high on the Government's agenda, where employment of nationals is a national objective, as made explicit in the Omanization policy.

Broadening of the labour market, increasing national labour force participation, and expanding and enhancing the role of the private sector to create more jobs for Omanis, continue to be at the top of the Government's priorities. The Government is also working to improve the education system, updating and increasing the number of vocational technical education centres.

Work in the public sector

To reduce unemployment and limit dependence on foreign labour, since 1988 the Government has pursued the Omanization policy, aiming at gradually increasing the participation of qualified Omanis in the labour market with special emphasis on increasing female participation in both the public and private sectors to replace expatriate labour. Despite these efforts, the Omani labour force remains unbalanced, primarily in the public sector, where supply outstrips demand because Omanis tend to resort to public service with the perception that it provides better incentives such as higher earnings, better working conditions and pension benefits after the end of service, which provides them with social security. The inability of the public sector to absorb the Omani labour supply has led to a real problem of unemployment.

Note that the issue of resorting to work in the public sector has witnessed, very recently, a setback because of the measures taken by the Government, represented by the Ministry of Civil Service. The Ministry has put in place special arrangements and requisites to restrict the employment of nationals in this sector, except for replacement purposes, because of the availability of job opportunities, better wages and social insurance coverage in the private sector. Despite this, private-sector enterprises continue to depend on expatriates in different fields.

2.2. National response and priorities

The seventh five-year development plan (2006-10) was designed to promote economic growth, create employment, encourage investment and accelerate the gradual privatization of several state-owned enterprises. It is worth noting that, among the 16 main goals of the plan, five are directly linked to employment and decent work issues, as per below:

- Prioritization of the employment of nationals and formulation of a clear and specific programme for the whole period of the plan.
- Continuation of the efforts exerted to upgrade and enhance the efficiency of the State's administrative apparatus and control of its performance.
- Special attention to population and sustainable human development issues, social care and enhancing women's participation in conformity with economic growth and with continued sensitivity to Omani culture.
- Development of small and medium sized enterprises through providing them with financial, technical and administrative support.
- Upgrading the financial institutions so as to enable them to achieve optimum allocation of savings, financial investments and improve the situation of pension

funds by upgrading the approaches of their administration, operation and enhancing their investment efficiency.⁴

The Sultanate's economic reform programme is primarily geared to meet the growing demand for jobs created by the sustained growth in the youth population. Economic reform continues to focus on diversifying the economy into labour-intensive areas, expanding and enhancing the role of the private sector, and developing human resources by increasing the capacities of young Omanis with the necessary skills through improvements in technical education, vocational training and higher education. The MoM has stipulated a fixed Omanization ratio in six areas of the private sector: transport, storage and communications are to have 60 per cent of national workers; finance, insurance and real estate 45 per cent; industry 35 per cent; hotels and restaurants 30 per cent; wholesale or retail trading 20 per cent; and contracting 15 per cent.

The Oman Future Vision 2020 embraces the strategic changes in the Oman development process to shape up the national economy, boost it and diversify sources of national income in a bid to reduce dependence on oil and expatriates. The objective is to rely more on the private sector and the national labour force to achieve better living standards.

Within this context of rapid growth and economic reform, the social protection sector and mechanisms will play a key role in addressing the growth of the informal sector (sub-contracting, home-based work and self-employment) and ensuring that working conditions and occupational safety and health issues are properly applied.

There is no United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for the country as the presence of United Nations agencies is limited.

Role of women in the development process

The participation of Omani women in different economic sectors is one of the important and influential contributions in the Omani society. The challenges of globalization and free economy compelled Omani women to participate more actively in a knowledge-based market economy, to the extent of running their own businesses from their homes. The Government has encouraged this trend and continues to stimulate women's participation in the economic development process by providing various kinds of support and encouragement, such as training, counselling, capital and marketing support.

According to the recent human resource report published by the Ministry of National Economy in Oman (2006), females constitute 49.5 per cent of the population. Compared to other countries in the Gulf region, where women are still lagging behind in public life and the labour force, Oman is witnessing significant progress in the area of female education. Omani women have taken leading positions in both the public and private sector.

Despite this, Omani women have a rather low participation rate in the labour force. The percentage of females working in the public sector is 31 per cent, concentrated in lower job

⁴ Statement by his Excellency the Minister of National Economy on the occasion of ratification of the seventh five-year development plan, April 2007.

categories such as clerical and administrative jobs. In the private sector, on the other hand, female participation is as low as 17.9 per cent, concentrated in feminized professions such as nursing and teaching. Women are still not in the decision-making positions, nor are they at the top of the information and communication technology job scale. Nonetheless, there is consensus among all employers that Omani women are more organized, dedicated, precise and persistent. The Ministry of National Economy report further indicates that only 2 per cent of women are self-employed, and make up less than 1 per cent of Omani employers. The modest participation of women in the formal economic and social sectors is primarily attributed to the Omani socio-cultural norms, which constrain women's participation and mobility.

Despite the increase in the number of businesswomen in the Sultanate, there are still many free-trade business opportunities open to Omani women. The long-term development strategy Oman Future Vision 2020 provided an encouraging start-up for those interested in establishing their private businesses and investments.

Women's participation in informal sector jobs such as handicrafts and traditional industries is becoming increasingly significant. However, information on the exact extent of the economic participation of women is still uneven, partly because of the way participation is defined and partly because of undercounting workers in the informal sector. It is therefore likely that the economic participation of women is much higher than official statistics show. If under-reported activity in the informal sector were to be counted, the proportion of working women would be even higher. The Labour Law includes special provisions for women, such as restrictions on night working hours, dangerous workplaces and maternity leave.

National Strategy for Advancement of Omani Women

The formulation of the National Strategy for the Advancement of Omani women is an extension of the Government's efforts to reinforce the role of women in society. It has been designed to achieve the following objectives in the period 2007-20:

- promote the full participation and involvement of women in the economic and social development process, as a integral part of the national general policy;
- design strategies and policies to enhance the situation of women in all spheres of development;
- expand the representation of women in decision-making positions enabling them to effectively participate in national decision-making and planning;
- review the legislation to ensure equal rights between men and women with the view to eliminating all forms of discrimination against women.

2.3. International labour standards

Oman has been a Member of the ILO since 1994. It has ratified four out of the eight core Conventions, namely:

- Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) (30 October 1998).
- Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105) (21 July 2005).

- Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) (21 July 2005).
- Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) (11 June 2001).

In 2007, the International Labour Conference witnessed the first tripartite presence of the Oman constituency. The country has made a great effort toward greater democracy and respect of fundamental principles and rights at work. The Labour Law was reviewed to integrate ILO core Conventions, particularly the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98) and the child labour Conventions in line with the Government's call for greater awareness and prevention of child abuse. Child labour issues are coherently addressed in the Government's revision of its Labour Law, especially child labour exploitation and trafficking children as camel jockeys.

Although Oman shows great progress in the transition towards greater democracy and the respect of fundamental principles and rights at work, there is still a need to consolidate and accelerate this progress. The ILO will provide technical assistance to Oman to ratify the remaining core and other Conventions, specifically:

- Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100).
- Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102).
- Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111).
- Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122).
- Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155).
- Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985 (No. 161).
- Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187).

According to the results of the occupational safety and health (OSH) review study conducted by the ILO and the ILO Regional Office in Beirut at the end of 2007, Oman has not ratified any of the core OSH Conventions, notably Conventions No. 155 and No. 161, nor the latest Convention No. 187. Oman, however, has expressed clear willingness to ratify these core Conventions. Oman has three OSH-related decrees that need to be updated:

- Sultanate Decree No. 40/1979: Occupational diseases and accidents compensation law.
- Ministerial Decree No. 10/1982: OSH Regulations.
- Ministerial Decree No. 19/1988: OSH Act.

2.4. Tripartism and social dialogue

Unions and legal institutions in Oman are in a formative phase and rely on support from the ILO and other regional and international union confederations. Workers' committees established in a small number of enterprises derive their legal standing from the Labour Code, which was reviewed based on ILO standards. However, organizing workers generally has been slow due to inexperience and lack of the necessary organizational skills.

Establishment of trade unions followed a gradual progression in the Sultanate. It started with the formulation of independent bodies in accordance with the old Labour Law 34/73, then representatives' committees. The number of these committees reached 34 as per Ministerial Decree No. 17/2007 (Establishment, Registry, Role of the Trade Unions, and General Federation of Oman Trade Unions (GFOTU)).

The establishment of trade unions has been outlined in Ministerial Decree No. 24/2007. According to the Decree, a trade union unites a number of workers in an enterprise, sector or specific profession. The objective of trade unions is to protect the interests of workers, defend their rights, improve their financial and social conditions and represent their interests.

In line with the recent amendment of the Labour Law, and on the basis of a Constitution and internal rules that were developed with ILO technical assistance and in line with ILO core Conventions, the GFOTU held its founding congress in February 2010 in a step forward toward promoting a genuine democratic and free representation of workers without distinction. The DWCP will build on this momentum and the ILO will continue its collaboration to anticipate this important milestone in the social dialogue process through the design of more capacity-building activities within the context of the second phase of the ILO Declaration project. However, promoting social dialogue and true tripartism in Oman will require more work on Labour Law reform, particularly in the field of freedom of association and collective bargaining, for it to be in conformity with the Declaration.

It is worth noting that Omani women's participation in unions began in the course of the Child and Women Committee, which was part of the main committee representing Omani workers. The role of Omani women, during the last period, was visible at the enterprise level, particularly in the textile and garment factories, where the majority of women workers are concentrated. The presence of women in workers' unions is expected to be influential in the development of the workers' unions' movement in the Sultanate. The ILO will accordingly give priority to supporting women's participation in workers' unions.

The Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) represents the employers. It was established by a Sultanate Decree on 15 May 1973. It plays an important role in stimulating the country's economic activities through its active participation in implementing national development plans, including private sector development aimed at diversifying the economy. The OCCI has taken progressive steps toward creating a new support service unit for SMEs to improve the existing training programmes, including expansion to the representation of businesswomen. With the increased responsibilities of the OCCI, capacity-building and skills development are required to cope with rapid developments in the market. The OCCI attaches importance and priority to training and retraining of its senior staff, particularly those responsible for support and advisory services to member enterprises.

The social partners have expressed the need for capacity-building and training on the ILO Declaration and its follow-up, and for other promotional activities. The Government has stressed the need for the employers' and workers' organizations to understand their obligations, especially with respect to collective bargaining and the right to strike.

Oman joined the World Trade Organization in November 2000, and continues to liberalize its markets. It ratified a free trade agreement with the United States in September 2006. The country actively seeks private foreign investors, especially in the industrial, information technology, tourism and higher education fields. Industrial development plans focus on gas resources, metal manufacturing, petrochemicals and international transshipment ports.

With the need to adjust the national economies to respond to the global economic requirements and changes, it is anticipated that more labour and social issues will emerge and will have implications on the social situation, such as creating more job opportunities and social insurance for nationals. This needs to be addressed and will require enforcement of the social dialogue process on socio-economic issues.

3. Previous and ongoing cooperation with the ILO since 2003

At the regional level, Oman benefits from ILO technical assistance agreed upon within the framework of the ILO/Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the Arab Labour Organization and the Arab Centre for Labour Administration and Employment plans of activities.

A technical cooperation framework was developed and charted following two employment policy missions in 2003 and 2004. It provided the overall framework of the DW agenda in the country to date, focusing on:

- employment and labour market policies, labour market information system (LMIS) and labour statistics;
- vocational education training (VET) policies development, and skills development;
- small and micro-enterprises development;
- social protection (social security);
- international labour standards (ILS), particularly the Declaration.

Main activities and achievements:

ILO strategic objective 1

- A technical advisory mission was fielded in May 2006 to review the Labour Law provisions with special focus on freedom of association, collective bargaining and the right to strike. The background material for the Oman Labour Law reform, prepared by the ILO Legal Specialist, was translated into Arabic. The draft revision integrated ILO core Conventions, particularly Conventions No. 87 and No. 98 and the child labour Conventions.
- Oman participated in the subregional seminars organized by the GCC with financial and technical assistance from the ILO on the Declaration as follows:
 - Fourth subregional seminar, Kuwait 2006.
 - Hosted the fifth subregional seminar, 2007.
 - Sixth and seventh subregional seminars, Yemen 2008 and Dubai 2009.
- Oman hosted the subregional meeting on the support of labour administration policies for labour inspection in GCC countries during the period 1-3 February 2009.

ILO strategic objective 2

- Assistance was provided to the Ministries of Manpower and National Economy in designing and launching the labour force survey in 2006.
- The ILO carried out an assessment for the vocational training centres (VTCs) and the technical colleges in 2007 in preparation for the introduction of Know About Business (KAB) through a pilot phase. A KAB introductory workshop for teachers in the Higher College of Technology in Muscat was held in June 2007.
- The ILO provided fellowships to five Omanis on KAB. Of those, two women conducted a training of trainers (TOT) in the Oman College of Technology, jointly with an international expert.
- Two TOT workshops were organized for a total of 35 teachers of vocational training centres and technical institutes in September and November 2007. Four VTCs have started the implementation of KAB immediately after the TOT was held in September 2007. KAB replaced the national entrepreneurship curriculum in the 2007-08 academic year.
- As a preparatory step for Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB), an assessment of the SME regulatory framework was conducted at the end of 2007. Subsequently, two business management training courses were implemented for Sanad (national business development services (BDS) provider) clients in November 2007; one on SIYB and one on Improve Your Business (IYB). This led the MoM to request that a non-financial BDS arm be added to the Sanad programme, which is a national reference for SME support.
- English/Arabic preliminary feasibility study for the BDS centre was conducted in 2008.
- The ILO submitted a project document to Sanad in April 2009 for the introduction of SIYB with the objective of its inclusion in the Sanad programme as a follow-up to the two earlier studies.
- A first KAB follow-up workshop was organized in April 2009, at the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry, for six training centres. Twenty-five participants attended, among them seven trainers that were previously trained by the ILO in 2007.
- A technical mission to prepare and present the recommendations for the future implementation of KABs to the Government was undertaken. A second follow-up workshop took place in May 2010 to introduce the new Arabic 2009 version of KAB and monitor the delivery of KAB by the teachers for certification.
- The ILO completed the implementation of the two-phase community-based rehabilitation project, funded by AGFUND and the Government (represented by the Ministry of Social Development).

ILO strategic objective 3

- A peer review of the report on the actuarial valuation of the Public Authority for Social Insurance was conducted by the ILO's Social Security department in 2007. The final report has been issued with recommendations for further strengthening financial governance.
- Public Authority for Social Insurance (PASI) officials have regularly taken part in the training programme on social security offered by the ILO International Training Centre in Turin.
- ILO NORMES provided technical comments on the conformity of draft regulations on occupational safety and health with international labour standards, based on the Law on Safety and Health of 1982, with the view that the Government would consider possible

ratification of one or more of the ILO occupational safety and health Conventions. The OSH overview study, conducted by the ILO in 2007, helped identify the challenges and opportunities to improve the OSH situation in Oman.

- The ILO is currently undertaking a holistic review, study and evaluation for the OSH system in Oman with a view to putting in place an OSH policy, a national OSH profile and guidance packages.
- In May 2009, the ILO organized a training workshop on occupational safety and health in collaboration with the GFOTU. The workshop focused on ILO core Conventions and those relating to OSH, with specific reference to Conventions No. 155 (including the Protocol of 2002), No. 161, No. 170, No. 174 and No. 187. This was followed by a national OSH profile, prepared by the ILO in November 2009.

ILO strategic objective 4

- The USDOL Declaration project, launched in 2006, for promoting fundamental principles and rights at work and social dialogue in Oman, has made a remarkable impact in the Sultanate. Several training programmes were designed and delivered within the context of the project to assist trade unions. Forty trade unions were formed with the assistance of the project. The total number of trade unions is currently 45.
- Technical advisory services and assistance, including workshops, were provided during 2007 to formulate the constitution, structure, internal rules and legal framework for the GFOTU.
- Capacity development training programmes were organized during the period 2007-10 to train labour inspectors on enforcing the newly implemented labour reforms and monitoring anti-trafficking activities. The Ministry recruited 92 new labour inspectors in 2007. A total of 170 labour inspectors were trained during the period 2007-10, of which ten leading inspectors were sent to Singapore on study tours to be trained as trainers. The training incorporated ILO Conventions, particularly the eight core labour standards with emphasis on trafficking.
- The ILO organized tripartite capacity-development workshops to train representatives of the Government, employers' and workers' organizations, on tripartism and social dialogue, including development of the regulatory framework for establishing a tripartite labour advisory board/committee to settle labour disputes and other labour issues. This is especially relevant in light of the upcoming formation of the GFOTU.
- The ILO organized, within the context of the Declaration project, a training workshop on dispute resolution for officials of the dispute settlement department and the trade union unit within the Ministry. The workshop focused on forced labour, migration, collective bargaining, freedom of association, prevention and settlement of disputes, trafficking and termination of employment. Special attention was also given to highlight issues of migrant workers, protection of their rights and the promotion of decent work in Oman.
- In April 2009, within the framework of the subregional project on labour inspection, the ILO assisted the MoM to review the labour inspection questionnaire and develop the software for automating the labour inspection processes with the view to analysing and monitoring its application in accordance with ILS. It also carried out an assessment of the labour inspection system and its training needs.
- A technical research study was finalized on the situation of migrant workers, private employment agencies, recruitment mechanisms and processes, and labour contractual

arrangements experienced by foreign workers in different sectors and working conditions in Oman.

- Technical and financial assistance was provided to launch the first congress of the trade unions organized in February 2010. The ILO also provided the GFOTU with assistance to organize a workshop on methodologies and techniques in May 2010 in Sohar.

Lessons learnt

The strong political commitment from the Government, represented by the MoM, and the sense of ownership of the constituents were key factors in the success witnessed in the social dialogue process. The MoM covered a substantial part of the costs of the training in Singapore. Though ILO support has been instrumental in terms of policy changes and capacity development, there is still a need for a coherent and comprehensive framework in order to ensure links and synergies among targeted results.

4. DWCP priorities and outcomes

The formulation of this comprehensive programme came in response to the Government's and social partners' request to formulate a Decent Work Country Programme in support of the country's national development and its steady move toward improved democracy. The new Minister of Manpower has confirmed strong support of the previous Minister's commitment to work in partnership with the ILO to be the first Gulf State to launch and roll out a DWCP.

The DWCP was designed based on tripartite consultations with the MoM and all its directorates, social partners, the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of National Economy and the Ministry of Civil Service. It reviewed the status of pending key issues within the context of ongoing training centre programmes and projects, and reflected the new priorities of the constituents and other line Ministries' strategic plans.

4.1. Priorities and outcomes 2010-13

DEVELOPMENT GOAL:

To contribute to economic growth through decent work

Priorities and outcomes:

A) Enhance the integration of the national labour force into the economy

- 1) Effective employment policies to support productive work in the private sector
- 2) Strengthened technical and vocational education and training (TVET) sector and employment services for enhancing the employability of Omanis including people with disabilities (PWDs)
- 3) Entrepreneurship culture promoted through the creation of an enabling business environment and the provision of SME support services for youth, men and women

B) Ensure effectiveness of the social dialogue process in compliance with ILS

4) Strengthened Labour Administration to enforce application of Labour Law in compliance with ILS

5) Social dialogue enhanced among social partners to effectively contribute to the development of social and economic policies

C) Enhance social protection

6) Extension of social security coverage and improved national compliance with international health and safety standards

4.2. Overall strategy and articulation of the programme

The DWCP components will be fully integrated into the national strategies and development plans, ensuring centrality of ILS, tripartism, social dialogue and gender within the national agenda. The support and assistance to the Government and its social partners in the priority areas identified, and in the achievement of the outcomes of this DWCP, will be ensured through a coordinated multi-component approach based on current national priorities and ILO comparative advantage. The objective will be to enhance the capacities of the MoM and its directorates, other line Ministries involved in Oman's national development goals, as well as employers' and workers' organizations.

Some of the interventions are an extension to previous initiatives, which will be drawn upon for better results and coherence within the overall integrated framework of the current programme. New initiatives are in direct response to discussions with constituents and priorities identified.

The DWCP will support capacity-building and the institutional development plans of its constituents at the national and local levels. The programme will support the development of tripartite institutions and necessary mechanisms for social dialogue. Gender and HIV/AIDS issues will be mainstreamed across the programme.

As the first DWCP for the country, the programme will have an initial duration of four years. This will ensure a stronger focus for the allocation of resources and greater flexibility in reviewing and assessing the results of the programme, while allowing for corrective measures, where and when needed. This dimension also takes into account the capacity of the constituents in implementing the activities and scaling them up rapidly. The DWCP will be fully integrated at the regional level, specifically with the ILO/GCC plan of activities, the Arab Labour Organization and other related regional bodies and institutions. The ILO will ensure a regional perspective to its activities in order to promote synergies and collaboration between the Gulf States, while allowing for the sharing of lessons learnt and transfer of expertise.

With a view to ensuring the MoM strategy to mainstream gender equality issues at all levels and across the programme (ranging from recruitment, training and promotion to higher

public posts), the ILO will provide technical support to develop the capacities, as needed by the MoM, in collaboration with other line Ministries, such as the Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Trade and Commerce, and others. Training will focus on issues related to promoting decent work among young men and women, and sensitizing the role of women in the development process of the country. The ILO will also assist in the implementation of the women's employment and economic participation components of the National Action Plan for Omani Women. An awareness-raising media campaign will be organized on women workers' rights in the private sector.

A. Enhance the integration of the national labour force into the economy

Outcome 1: Effective employment policies to support productive work in the private sector

The most pressing challenge of the Omani Government will be to generate sufficient employment opportunities for youth, men and women in order to absorb the new Omani entrants to the labour market. The Omanization process is being enforced in the private sector (which generates more than six times the employment of the public sector and contains a large majority of expatriate workers)⁵ by means of a sectoral target-setting strategy. However, the current discrepancy between the public and private sectors calls for improved access to quality labour market services for better employability in the framework of more controlled strategies and policies for job creation and labour market integration.

Programme strategy: Even though the Government has put in place a reliable comprehensive employment policy and established a labour market information system, the development of a comprehensive employment strategy remains a challenge. Such a policy will have to encompass labour policies for nationals and expatriates, draw labour market, social security, labour migration and occupational safety and health institutions into the picture, and consider possibilities for their reform.

The ILO will provide technical assistance to strengthen the MoM's capacity in employment policy development and analysis, and the monitoring of employment and labour market developments. The ILO will provide the MoM with support in implementing policies that ensure that the growth process and five-year development plans lead to manifestly raising the employment-generating capacity of the economy. Particular focus will be made on youth, the female labour force and the less developed regions.

The programme strategy will be based on the consolidation of the structure and ongoing work of the Ministry, in particular the mechanism created to coordinate the Omanization policy more closely with the private sector through the establishment of sectoral committees. The ILO will support the Directorate General of Planning and Development (DGPD) of the MoM in employment policy-making through capacity-building and conducting research on critical employment policy issues. In parallel, the ILO will support the establishment and work of an advisory Task Force on Employment and Growth,

⁵ According to the sixth five-year plan (2001-05), the number of expatriate workers in the private sector in 2000 reached 494,479, compared to 98,421 Omanis. By 2003, there were an estimated 543,000 expatriates working in the private sector.

concentrated in the DGPD, including, as required by the MoM, representatives of other concerned stakeholders and Ministries.

A number of studies will be conducted on the Omani Labour Market with a view to developing appropriate employment policies that complement existing development frameworks and supporting job creation in the private sector. These studies will have a special focus on the governorates and the regions, and will include:

- a) assessment of active labour market policies for Omanization;
- b) a school-to-work transition survey;
- c) assessment of the financial implications of the economic diversification strategy.

In parallel, the initial capacity development activities on employment and labour market policy and strategies will be undertaken directly with the concerned departments of the DGPD, as well as the sectoral committees established to enforce Omanization. Through this capacity development component, the DGPD will be equipped to set an employment policy agenda for the MoM, in close coordination with other relevant line Ministries, notably the Ministry of National Economy, the Ministry of Civil Service, and the social partners.

The ILO will also:

- a) support the development of guidelines to improve workers’ skills and productivity in the private sector;
- b) develop the sectoral committees’ composition as a tripartite structure, providing capacity building to increase their efficiency (labour market analysis, skills and productivity, and for better understanding of the supply and demand of the labour market, etc.).

Key performance indicators	
-Number of new employment and labour-market policies, strategies and action plans which take into consideration the results and the recommendations of the gender-responsive studies and include measures to promote productive employment and decent work.	
Outputs	Partners
1.1 Ministries’ capacities in implementing labour market policies and employment in cooperation with private sector enhanced.	- Ministry of Manpower (Directorate General of Planning and Development) - Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry - General Federation of Oman Trade Unions
1.2 The role of sectoral committees in training and employment of Omanis enhanced.	

Outcome 2: Strengthened technical and vocational education and training (TVET) sector and employment services for enhancing the employability of Omanis including people with disabilities (PWDs)

The Sultanate achieved noticeable progress with respect to broadening the labour market, increasing national labour force participation and harnessing the technical knowledge and qualifications of the Omanis to conform to the rapidly changing international technological conditions and labour market needs. New skills, including flexibility, innovation and adaptation to change are, however, in short supply for the private sector to grow and modernize.

Currently, the technical and vocational training system in Oman faces several challenges to produce this adaptable and flexible labour force. Access to quality labour market services is a key factor along with the better integration of women, youth and people with disabilities (PWDs) into the labour force.

Programme strategy: The ILO will assist the Vocational Training Centres (VTCs), the Tourism Institute, technical colleges and the Directorate for Vocational Training in three areas:

- 1) The ILO will assist in the development of an institutional quality assurance mechanism required of VET providers as a “monitoring measure”. This will compel VET providers to meet a set of fixed minimum standards. To this end, the ILO will assist in training a cadre of senior staff with expertise in quality assurance in addition to the provision of reference material.
- 2) The ILO will also build capacity-development programmes which integrate occupational guidance and counselling in technical colleges, VTCs and employment centres.
- 3) The ILO will further focus on the employability and job placement of PWDs.

This focused strategy will complement any current technical and financial support of other donors (Germany, the United States and Japan) in the field of vocational training. The programme will also develop, as needed, a strategy for improved job guidance and counselling in the four employment centres.

With respect to the integration of under-represented groups in the labour force, technical assistance and institutional capacity-building will be provided to support the implementation of the national strategy for the advancement of Omani women prepared by the Woman and Child Unit in the Ministry of Social Development. The strategy is a document with key issue areas including employment.

Research and study on the status of working women and data collection on gender factors in employment will be conducted taking into consideration other countries’ experience in the field. The studies will focus on the best possible means to increase women’s participation and promote equal opportunities (training, promotions, etc.). The findings will be used for national policy-making.

In support of the national programme led by the Ministry of Social Development, aiming at improving rehabilitation measures and revamping appropriate rehabilitation policies and

strategies for people with disabilities, the ILO will continue to implement the technical cooperation project “Enhancing the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services for People with Disabilities”.

Key performance indicators	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of gender-responsible services developed and operational for job counselling and guidance. - Number of VTCs which integrate quality assurance mechanisms. - Number of services developed and operational for enhanced access to the labour market for disabled people. 	
Outputs	Partners
2.1 Quality assurance mechanisms integrated in the VTCs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry of Manpower - Seeb VTC, technical colleges
2.2 Job counselling and occupational guidance improved in training institutions and employment services offices throughout the country.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry of Manpower
2.3 Public policies and services developed for the rehabilitation and employment of vulnerable groups, with a focus on people with disabilities (PWDs) and women.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry of Social Development - Ministry of Manpower - National NGOs

Outcome 3: Entrepreneurship culture promoted through the creation of an enabling business environment and the provision of SME support services for youth, men and women

Programme strategy: As the small and medium business sector is expected to play a lead role in the Sultanate’s future economic activities, self-employment and entrepreneurship are expected to play a significant role. Since 2007, the ILO has assisted Oman to foster an entrepreneurship culture in the Sultanate through regular follow-up on the KAB curricula which were integrated in the vocational training centres and technical colleges, and the provision of assistance in the area of business development services (BDS) with a specific focus on youth. These activities were built on the recommendations of the report “Assessment of the BDS in the Sultanate of Oman” and the preliminary feasibility study to establish an Entrepreneur’s Centre as a non-financial arm of the Sanad programme. The implementation strategy was translated into a project document for the introduction of SIYB in Oman under the Sanad programme/BDS centre. It was submitted to the Sanad programme in early April 2009. The first refresher/follow-up KAB courses were delivered in April to both the teachers of the Higher College of Technology and those of the vocational training centres.

The ILO will continue to support the Sanad programme and its branches to be capable of providing additional BDS to existing national small enterprises and potential entrepreneurs, through establishing a training and follow-up unit at the self-employment centre of Sanad. The ILO/SIYB programme for SMEs (including women entrepreneurship development) will be

adapted to the Omani context and a training of trainers will be conducted. Also, the KAB modules will be reviewed and finalized in order to be Omani-specific and sustain their integration in the curricula; the impact of the KAB programme within one year of its launch will be evaluated, and a feasibility study will be conducted to extend the KAB programme to other higher educational levels (public and private universities).

Key performance indicators	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Percentage increase in access to business development services among targeted groups. - Number of VTC and technical colleges which have integrated KAB in their curricula. 	
Outputs	Partners
3.1 Sanad self-employment centre and its branches capable of providing additional business development services to existing national small enterprises and potential entrepreneurs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry of Manpower - Sanad programme - Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry
3.2 KAB sustained in all curricula of skills development training institutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry of Manpower - Technical colleges - Vocational training centres

B. Ensure effectiveness of the social dialogue process in compliance with ILS

Outcome 4: Strengthened Labour Administration to enforce application of Labour Law in compliance with ILS

The ability of the MoM and social partners to monitor and apply ILS, the capacity of social partners to undertake effective social dialogue, and their recognition as effective partners in the economic reform process, are key factors for an effective social dialogue process and for the establishment of genuine trade unions. A capacity-building programme will be implemented within that framework, with a view to ratifying and applying additional Conventions.

Programme strategy: The Labour Administration's institutional capacities, represented by the Directorates of inspection, occupational safety and health, labour care, dispute settlement and labourers welfare in the MoM, need to be strengthened and enhanced to enable them to develop policies, monitor working conditions, mediate in labour conflicts and enforce labour legislation.

Reported violations of workers' rights and, in particular, migrant workers' rights, continue to be in effect due to an inadequate and under-resourced labour inspection mechanism.

The assessment conducted by the ILO in 2007 of the dispute settlement system in Oman revealed that most of the disputes were related to non-compliance with labour standards

and the inexistence of preventive measures to promote labour management relations. More than 45 per cent of the cases which are not settled through conciliation are referred to the civil courts. Despite the review of the dispute settlement system, there is concern that there is still a need to review the mechanism in order to establish a labour court within the jurisdiction of the MoM. Training workshops were organized on dispute settlement, conciliation and mediation for the MoM, employers' and workers' organizations representatives, judges and other concerned Ministries on how to deal effectively with the individual and collective disputes through conciliation.

The programme will build on the technical assistance and intensive institutional capacity training programme provided by the ILO to these directorates during the period 2007-09 on ILS issues, labour inspection, forced labour and human trafficking. The number of inspectors trained by the ILO to date is 110. A Royal Decree No. 126/2008 was issued on 23 November 2008 by the Sultan, promulgating the law combating human trafficking.

Following the assessment of the labour inspection unit's needs and the review of the draft Labour Inspection Law and guidance directory, the ILO intervention will further autonomize the Ministry's capacity to upgrade and improve its labour inspection system. It will build on the steps taken recently by the Ministry to increase the number of inspectors by 68, including 12 women, thus amounting to 160 inspectors to date. The ILO will provide additional activities including training workshops for those new inspectors. It will organize two study tours for 12 Omani officials to Portugal and Spain to benefit from their national experience. Officials will be trained on how to adapt, translate and produce training guides on labour inspection, and training packages for labour inspectors on international labour standards in the Arabic language. This will ensure that government officials understand ILO requirements when reviewing and applying the Conventions.

Other activities have been designed within the context of the Declaration and the subregional project on labour inspection. These will include training of trainers, training of the personnel of the dispute settlement department in the MoM on labour disputes, conciliation and mediation, and assistance to prepare the guidebook on dispute settlement in English and Arabic. Training will also be administered on ILS issues, national labour legislation and report writing. Some of these activities will target the judicial system on ILO principles, trafficking and forced labour.

Technical assistance will be provided to ratify the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81), Labour Administration Convention, 1978 (No.150) and the Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142).

A specific emphasis will be placed on ensuring that the working conditions of migrant workers conform to standards prescribed by the national Labour Law and international Conventions. The ILO will technically support substantive and strategic national efforts and interaction with the sending countries who called upon Gulf States to adopt measures to protect migrant workers, particularly women domestic workers. A study to revise the Kafel system and to identify problem areas and measures to address these problems will be carried out with a view to formulating a pilot bilateral agreement with the sending countries

for women migrant domestic workers that could be applied at the subregional level in the GCC States.

The capacity of the MoM and social partners to monitor and apply ILS and ratified Conventions is the cornerstone of the social dialogue process which paved the way for the establishment of genuine trade unions. The capacity of the social partners to effectively engage in social dialogue and be fully recognized as stakeholders in the economic reform process will be the other key issue.

Key performance indicators	
- Proportion of trained labour inspectors who perform their duty according to internationally accepted standards. - Proportion of policy measures to address forced labour agreed by constituents that are implemented.	
Outputs	Partners
4.1 A fully functional and sustainable labour inspectorate.	- Ministry of Manpower
4.2 Strengthened capacity of the MoM in handling labour disputes.	- Ministry of Manpower
4.3 Enhanced capacities of the MoM and social partners on ILS issues, national legislation and reporting obligations.	- Ministry of Manpower - Social partners
4.4 Improved institutional capacity for foreign labour management.	- Ministry of Manpower
4.5 Enhanced institutional capacity to better address issues of forced labour and trafficking.	- Ministry of Manpower - Social partners

Outcome 5: Social dialogue enhanced among social partners to effectively contribute to the development of social and economic policies

Programme strategy: A prerequisite to enhance social dialogue in the country and develop tripartite mechanisms is the establishment of genuine trade unions.

It is important to note that the capacities of the Ministry and its social partners in the monitoring and application of ILS and ratified Conventions is the cornerstone for the social dialogue process, which paved the way for the establishment of a genuine General Federation of Oman Trade Unions. The capacities of the social partners to effectively engage in social dialogue and their recognition as effective partners in the economic reform process are two main elements within this framework.

The ILO provided assistance to the GFOTU in drafting its constitution and legal framework in preparation for the constitutional national conference which was held in February 2010. The ILO will continue to support these unions on the management and administration of trade unions. Training activities will be provided, within the context of the ILO Declaration project, on forced labour and trafficking, dispute prevention and settlement, collective bargaining and negotiation skills, at all levels. Particular attention will be given to maximizing the number of women members, through the establishment of a women's national trade union committee. The trade union leaders (members of national committees, and the workers' committees of main firms and enterprises) will be assisted in developing their capacities in areas including ILS, social dialogue, labour inspection in support of the labour reform, labour disputes, collective agreement, negotiation, communications and media outreach. Study tours will be organized to exchange experience on the role of independent trade unions. Tripartite workshops to train MoM officials on the issues affecting trade unions, including employers' organizations, will also be conducted. With a view to empowering the new GFOTU, the ILO will provide technical assistance in developing an overall strategy for the new trade unions. These activities will be developed in parallel with other separately conducted capacity-building projects supported directly by SOLIDARITY, Norwegian workers' unions and United States Embassy's initiatives.

Specific activities will target employers' organizations in order to enable them to raise awareness among their members on the new labour legislation and their role in the changing Omani economy. The programme will focus on supporting the capacities of the employers' organizations, reorganization of the OCCI and conducting an assessment of its human resources unit, and in strengthening its management with special focus on developing its capacity as a strong and independent social partner and in the following areas: strategic planning, training services, negotiation skills and labour market issues, including ILS, with particular emphasis on those related to SMEs and the private sector. High-level meetings will be organized with the chief executive officers and managing directors of enterprises to promote dialogue and labour-management cooperation. Training programmes will be provided on collective bargaining and negotiation to officials from the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI). Training will also be provided on the development of human resources policies, labour management cooperation and bargaining for selected enterprises with a view to promoting these principles nationwide. Assistance will also be provided to establish a labour unit within the OCCI.

The MoM, with the technical assistance of the ILO, will work on the process of improving the legal and institutional framework of tripartite and bipartite social dialogue mechanisms. The programme will support the establishment of a consultative tripartite labour committee to promote consultation on labour-related issues, collective bargaining, and labour dispute prevention and resolution. It will assist in developing the rules and regulations for the tripartite labour advisory committee. It will also ensure the participation of the social partners in the national socio-economic development process and will facilitate the ratification of the four remaining core Conventions: the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), the Workers' Representatives Convention, 1971 (No. 135), and the Collective Bargaining Convention, 1981 (No. 154). The ILO will

organize, within the context of the establishment of a tripartite committee, two tripartite workshops on the issue of social dialogue.

Key performance indicators	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National consultative tripartite committee established and operational (number and frequency of meetings). - Number of policy discussion meetings that involve workers’ and employers’ organizations. - Number of common decisions emanated from tripartite institutions that are incorporated into policy or legal frameworks, as relevant. - Number of areas of the Decent Work Agenda that workers’ organizations include in their strategic planning. - Number of new or improved services provided by the employers’ organizations (training, information systems, publications, consultancy services). - Number of measures to facilitate collective bargaining included in existing policies. 	
Outputs	Partners
5.1 Independent trade union structures in place and strengthened for better representation and services, including at the enterprise level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workers' organizations - Employers’ organizations - Ministry of Manpower
5.2 Employers’ organizations’ capacities enhanced.	
5.3 A tripartite committee in place and operational.	

C. Enhance social protection

Outcome 6: Extension of social security coverage and improved national compliance with international health and safety standards

Programme strategy: The social insurance system of Oman was established by Royal Decree No. 72/1991 and has been in place since 1992, providing old-age, death and disability pensions to private-sector employees. The Public Authority for Social Insurance (PASI) is a tripartite body representing employees, employers and the Government. It has so far completed five actuarial reviews, assisted by a regional actuarial consultancy firm. The current scheme was expanded to cover related injuries and occupational diseases, and the PASI would like to introduce a scheme for the Omani self-employed. The Government’s strategy is to ensure maintaining transparent financial governance across public institutions. The strategic plan foresees the gradual extension of social insurance coverage to a greater segment of the population over the next five years, starting with the self-employed (mandatory coverage envisaged to be implemented in 2011 for organized groups of the self-employed, such as professionals, and voluntary coverage for other groups starting in 2012), non-Omani workers (feasibility study foreseen for 2012, implementation envisaged starting in 2014), and later possibly short-term benefits such as unemployment insurance and health

insurance. The programme will support the implementation of the PASI strategy. Technical assistance and support will be provided to:

- 1) Implement the recommendations of peer review of the fifth actuarial valuation (2005).
- 2) Carry out a comprehensive assessment of the current social security situation and development of recommendations on future policy directions in line with international labour standards and supporting national development objectives, such as labour market reform (Omanization) and the extension of social security coverage to more categories of the population (such as the self-employed) and additional risks. Based on the results of the assessment, technical support on preparation of feasibility studies on specific reform proposals may be provided.
- 3) Promote capacity development of government officials (including the PASI) and social partners on various aspects of social security, including international social security standards and principles, financing and governance, and the extension of coverage (participation in international training measures and organization of training in Oman).
- 4) Provide technical assistance leading toward ratification of Convention No. 102.

Since the OSH issues are of particular importance to the country in the context of rapid growth, a specific output has been identified for this issue. The revision of the OSH Draft Regulation by the ILO showed that the available relevant OSH legislation, including the Draft Regulations, focuses mainly on OSH issues at the enterprise level. Although the Draft Regulations include modern provisions prescribing the introduction of OSH management systems at the enterprise level, they also suggest considering complementing this legislation with provisions calling for action at the national level. Such provisions could, as specified in Convention No. 155, call for the formulation of a national OSH profile; implementation and periodic review of a coherent national policy on OSH, which should be progressively developed and effectively implemented; establishment of an OSH advisory body and national OSH management system or programme in line with the provisions of Convention No. 187 and its accompanying Recommendation No. 197. The technical assistance mission carried out by ILO experts in Oman during the period 15-21 August 2009 to review the OSH system, with the view to formulating and putting in place a national OSH profile, revealed gaps in existing legal, institutional, administrative and technical infrastructure relating to the sound management of OSH and the need to address this situation.

Technical assistance will be provided to draft the national OSH policy, outline a programme of action which will help strengthen the elements of an OSH system, and develop effective policies tools and management systems. The status of the present tripartite National OSH Committee will be reviewed with a view to upgrading its capacities. Assistance will be provided to ratify Conventions No. 155, No. 161 and No. 187.

Key performance indicators	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Convention No. 155 on OSH ratified. - Number of legal reforms on OSH agreed with workers' and employers' organizations and incorporated in the legal framework. - National OSH profile and policy development, and national OSH programme outlined. - Proportion of OSH policy measures agreed by constituents that are implemented. - Number of programmes addressing OSH priorities agreed with constituents that are implemented. - Social security coverage extended. 	
Outputs	Partners
6.1 Social insurance coverage extended and technical capacities strengthened.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public Authority for Social Insurance (PASI) - Ministry of Civil Service
6.2 National institutional capacity for occupational safety and health (OSH) strengthened and OSH profile in place, in accordance with ILO provisions of Convention No. 187 and ILO 2001 guidelines on management systems, especially for private establishments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry of Manpower - Social partners - OSH experts and institutions

5. Implementation and management

A detailed implementation plan will be developed and will constitute the main monitoring and reporting tool of the DWCP, which will be updated on a regular basis. This plan will define the activities, timelines, resources needed, and will be aligned with the ILO Programme and Budget (P&B) cycle. The programme will be managed by the ILO Regional Office in Beirut with support and close coordination from different technical departments at headquarters and the ILO International Training Centre in Turin.

At the national level, the DWCP will be monitored through the tripartite committee that will be established. The MoM and the social partners will appoint a team with designated focal points to ensure coordination.

ILO seed money will be used for the preparatory work required from the MoM. The Government and the social partners will make available their respective expert staff to coordinate the work to be carried out by international experts. They will also provide the necessary premises and required logistical support. The tripartite constituency confirmed their commitment to undertake the necessary follow-up activities to achieve the expected results.

The main potential causes of failure and their likelihood of occurrence are the institutional changes at the ministerial and at the downstream levels. To mitigate the risks, the ILO will

make sure to implement the activities of the programme through extensive direct involvement of the government officials and social partners' representatives.

6. Performance monitoring and evaluation arrangements

A results-based monitoring system will be established, specifying indicators, baselines, targets and data-collection methodology. The establishment of this monitoring system will be integrated within the capacity-building component of the programme for the constituents on monitoring and evaluation.

Evaluation will be the main tool to assess the programme's progress toward achieving its outcomes, the ILO's performance, gaps and actions to be taken to address the deficit and improve the delivery. The programme will be monitored and evaluated periodically based on six-monthly tripartite consultations, an annual programme review and a comprehensive biennial country programme review (BCPR).

A self-assessment of the achievements and delivery of the programme will be conducted by the ILO Regional Office in Beirut at the end of every year. Lessons learnt during the assessment and evaluation process will be used to make adjustments where needed and for planning and programming of future activities. The regional office missions of the ILO experts and their internal reports will be used as part of the monitoring process. Necessary readjustments to accommodate the changes, to perform better, and to respond to the national priorities, will be done to ensure cohesiveness of the programme.

Annex I

Ongoing ILO projects:

1. Second phase of implementation and enforcing internationally recognized labour rights in Oman and Bahrain, 2008-10

The ILO has completed the first phase of the project funded by USDOL with a total budget of US\$300,000. A second phase was approved by USDOL with a budget of US\$458,000 to assist the Government of Oman, and employers' and workers' organizations, to implement and enforce internationally recognized labour rights, such as:

- a) freedom of association;
- b) the right to organize and bargain collectively;
- c) prohibition on the use of any form of forced or compulsory labour;
- d) labour protection of children and young people, including a minimum age for the employment of children and the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour;
- e) acceptable conditions of work with respect to minimum wages, hours of work, and occupational safety and health; and
- f) suitable conditions that would enable Oman to fully meet its commitments as per the Free Trade Agreements with the United States.

2. Enhancing the vocational rehabilitation and employment services for people with disabilities, co-financed by AGFUND and the Government of Oman, 2008-11

The ILO continues to implement this project funded by AGFUND with a total budget of US\$300,000. The objective of the project is to build the institutional and human resources capacities of vocational rehabilitation programmes for people with disabilities. The project aims to strengthen their access to work opportunities, raise their standard of living, reduce dependence on government programmes of assistance, and hence participate in and contribute to the economic and social development of the country.

3. Enhancing the capacity of the Omani Government and social partners to combat human trafficking, 2009-2010

The ILO is implementing this project with a budget of US\$96,424, funded by the Netherlands Embassy in Oman.