



SECOND ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Human resources development

1. This paper summarizes the Office's work to give effect to the Conclusions adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 88th Session (2000) concerning human resources training and development. The second part of the paper introduces other areas of work of the InFocus Programme on Skills, Knowledge and Employability (IFP/SKILLS).

Effect to be given to the Conclusions concerning human resources training and development, adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 88th Session (2000)

2. This item was placed on the agenda of the Committee in November 2000,¹ but was not discussed due to lack of time. Since then, substantial progress has been made in giving effect to the Conclusions.
3. The Governing Body was invited to request the Director-General to consider the Conclusions for the future work of the Office and to take them into account when preparing the Programme and Budget proposals for the biennium 2002-03.
4. According to the Conclusions the "ILO's framework of decent work addresses both the quality and quantity of employment and provides a basis for new education and training policies and strategies. Human resources development, education and training contribute significantly to promoting the interests of individuals, enterprises, economy and society. By making individuals employable and informed citizens, human resources development and training contribute to economic development and to achieving full employment and promoting social inclusion. They also help individuals to gain access to decent work and good jobs, and escape poverty and marginalization. Education and skills formation could lead to less unemployment and to more equity in employment".

¹ GB.279/ESP/6.

5. In order to support member States in their efforts to promote human resources training and development for employment and social inclusion, and for productivity and improved competitiveness in the global economy, the Conclusions call on the ILO to undertake a number of specific activities. These include:
- reviewing the Human Resources Development Recommendation, 1975 (No. 150), along the lines of the terms of reference included in the Conclusions;
 - developing a database on current expenditures on vocational and continuing training, and suggesting a series of benchmarks on investment in training;
 - developing a database on best practices in developing a national qualifications framework (NQF) and conducting a general study on the comparability of different NQFs;
 - promoting capacity-building for social dialogue and partnerships in training;
 - assisting, in collaboration with international development agencies, with training in the new information and communication technologies; and
 - conducting research into the linkage between economic, social and labour market policies and human resources development.
6. Subsequently, the Office has included in the proposed portfolio for the agenda of the 91st Session (2003) of the Conference an item concerning the revision of the Human Resources Development Recommendation, 1975 (No. 150). The proposal has been submitted to the Governing Body at its present session. It gives the rationale for the proposed new instrument, reviews briefly ILO standards and practice in the area of human resources development, provides some examples of law and practice in member States and outlines the possible elements of the new instrument. It also describes succinctly the practical, renewable guide that would supplement the new Recommendation, as called for in the Conclusions.
7. In the current biennium, work plans have been modified and resources allocated in order to undertake preparatory work on the new Recommendation, its accompanying practical guide, and other work that will provide inputs to the Recommendation, in particular on investment in training and on national qualifications frameworks. During the biennium 2002-03 these work items will feature prominently in the work of the IFP/SKILLS. A series of informal expert discussions have been organized and detailed outlines and work plans, based on the Conclusions, have been prepared for a law and practice report on human resources development and training. A web page has been established.² ILO constituents have been invited to provide examples of good practice in various areas of human resources training and development for inclusion on the page.
8. Work on preparations for the database on investment in training has started. An informal expert meeting will be held in 2001 to guide the ILO's work in this area. A conceptual outline for the work has been prepared, studies commissioned and data collection initiated. Inputs have been provided by a tripartite meeting in Bangkok, held in December 2000. The meeting reached a common understanding on the role of governments and employers' and workers' organizations in promoting investment in training. It also discussed issues relating to the measurement of such investment, with a view to the preparation of the

² <http://www.ilo.org/public/English/skills/training/draftrec.htm>

database on investment. In 2001, two tripartite meetings are foreseen to be held in Africa and Europe which will also focus on: (i) training in enterprises, with particular emphasis on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs); and (ii) investment in training: policy and measurement issues.

9. The preparation of Regional Model Competency Standards for the Asia and Pacific region is nearing completion. In collaboration with the ILO's Asia and Pacific Skills Development Programme (ADSDEP), this work is now being extended to the development of a model national qualifications framework that can be emulated by the countries in the region. An informal expert meeting to guide the Office in its work on national qualifications frameworks (NQFs) is planned in 2001. Studies have been commissioned assessing the experience of individual countries in developing NQFs, for example in Mexico, South Africa, and the United Kingdom. These studies will also examine the provisions and mechanisms in place for certifying and recognizing workers' skills, irrespective of where they have been acquired, or by formal or informal training, informally on the job or in informal types of employment.
10. The Conclusions call on the social partners to "strengthen social dialogue on training" (point 19) and on the ILO "to build up capacities for dialogue and partnership in training" (point 20). The ILO has explored the new context of social dialogue in support of training. One ILO study analyses the pressures leading to enterprise restructuring in the increasingly integrated world economy, and their implications for training policies.³ It examines the relationship between institutional frameworks, industrial relations and social dialogue in training, arguing that different systems of industrial relations foster or discourage social dialogue in relation to training and other matters. Another study examines, in selected countries in Latin America: the decentralization of large traditional training institutions; the new roles and functions of the Ministries of Labour and Education in training and human resources development; the more prominent role given to private (relative to traditional public) institutions in training; and the growing diversity of social actors that participate in identifying training needs/demand and in providing training.⁴ These two studies will be published in 2001.
11. Recent sectoral meetings, such as the Tripartite Meeting on Labour Practices in the Footwear, Leather, Textiles and Clothing Industries (October 2000), have debated ILO reports and adopted conclusions, which, among other matters, touch on social dialogue in training. Collective bargaining, training and certification issues were on the agenda of the 29th Session of the Joint Maritime Commission. Advisory services have been provided to strengthen social dialogue for training policy formulation in Mauritius and Morocco. A forthcoming mission to Niger will establish a framework for such dialogue.
12. Within the scope of its activities to strengthen the capacity of workers' organizations to engage in social dialogue on training, the Office has conducted a number of subregional and national seminars in most of the countries covered by the ILO's technical cooperation project for the promotion of social dialogue in French-speaking African countries. In China, India and Pakistan, collective bargaining and training has been on the agenda of national seminars. In China, the seminars focused on collective bargaining and training in export processing zones. In Latin America, capacity-building seminars organized for trade

³ *Global restructuring, training policy and social dialogue* (forthcoming).

⁴ *New institutional arrangements in vocational training in the Southern cone: Promoting social dialogue* (forthcoming).

unions in the MERCOSUR and Andean countries have also examined issues related to distance learning.

- 13.** The Conclusions (point 16) recognize the challenge to the ILO to assist with training in the new information and communication technologies (ICT) in the least developed economies. The ILO's recently published *World Employment Report 2001: Life at work in the information economy* draws a number of lessons for making the information economy a jobs economy, harnessing ICT for economic development and poverty reduction, and promoting education and learning. It contends that quality in education is more important than ever, and that digital literacy is essential, but that there is an order of priorities in which literacy and access to a basic education of high quality are most fundamental. Another policy lesson is that creativity and curiosity are encouraged when teaching is about learning to learn, rather than passive transfer of information. The *World Employment Report 2001* argues that the need for higher skills and changing work organization in the information economy are making lifelong learning a fundamental source of employment security or employability. This requires a new and more flexible skills delivery system that gives individuals access to learning and training opportunities during their entire working life. The training policy implications of the emerging knowledge-based economy will be the topic of a forthcoming national seminar in Malaysia (2001). ICT can also be a highly cost-effective tool to facilitate learning and training. *The World Employment Report 2000* describes the use by an ILO project in Bosnia and Herzegovina on information and communications technology to train young people, women, unemployed workers and former combatants, and assist them in gaining access to wage and self-employment. The ILO will conduct further research into the learning and cost-effectiveness of ICT compared with more traditional approaches.
- 14.** The information set out above provides examples of work that the Conclusions explicitly called upon the ILO to undertake. In addition, the Office has assisted member States and the social partners in implementing many of the recommendations addressed to them in the Conclusions. Some of this work is described below.
- 15.** The Conclusions (point 6) confirm that "education and training of high quality are major instruments to improve overall socio-economic conditions and to prevent and combat social exclusion and discrimination". Access to quality training for people with disabilities is promoted through ILO technical cooperation projects, for example in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia and countries in the Arab region. In the preparation of the draft Code of practice on managing disability in the workplace, the ILO's disability programme has collected information about on-the-job training practices that involve people with disabilities in different parts of the world. This information will be included in the good practice guidelines that will be used in promoting the Code, once the latter has been considered by the Governing Body.
- 16.** The promotion of women's participation on an equal footing with men in economic and social life is an integral element of ILO activities in the fields of research, technical cooperation and advocacy. In collaboration with national and state authorities, and employers' and workers' organizations in Mexico, a National Plan of Action for More and Better Jobs for Women has been formulated. It targets some 4,000 salaried women in the "maquila industry" in Coahuila State. Women workers are assisted to organize themselves and represent and defend their interests and to improve their working conditions. In Guerrero State, women are being given entrepreneurship training and technical and financial assistance in order to enhance the profitability and viability of their micro-enterprises. The aim of the Mexican Government is to extend these model schemes to other states and groups of beneficiaries. In collaboration with GENPROM and IFP/SKILLS, the MDT in Santiago is preparing policy guidelines to strengthen the employability of young women in Latin America. The ILO's Cooperative Branch has also recently published

gender sensitization packages for cooperative leaders and has prepared a cooperative leadership training manual for women in Asia. IFP/SKILLS is preparing a youth career guidance manual for use by educational institutions and employment services in developing countries and transition economies.

17. The Conclusions (point 8) identify some crucial services to support education and training, including career guidance and counselling, and educational, vocational and labour market information. *Achieving transparency in skills markets (2000)*, a study published recently by the ILO, identifies the data requirements of different stakeholders and examines the strengths and weaknesses of available education and training statistics. The study makes suggestions on how to improve data quality and coverage and how to measure the labour market effects of education and training. A second edition of Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM), containing a refined and expanded set of indicators, is scheduled for publication in 2001. KILM is aimed at widening the use of labour market information in labour market policy formulation and evaluation.
18. According to the Conclusions (point 7), “training can be one of the instruments that, together with other measures, address the challenge of the informal sector”. A number of the ILO’s cross-sectoral research and technical cooperation activities attempt to address the vast training and human resources development needs of informal sector workers with a view to improving their productivity and helping them gain access to decent work. In the present biennium, the ILO is building up its knowledge base and reviewing approaches and methodologies and particularly the Community-Based Training (CBT) approach, and technical cooperation activities in training for self-employment and income generation. In the context of a project in the United Republic of Tanzania, an assessment was made of how various informal sector development strategies and programmes address women’s needs. In Zimbabwe, networks and alliances among informal sector producers and workers were studied in major urban areas. A subsequent workshop led to a proposal by the trade unions (ZCTU) to organize leadership training for informal sector operators in Zimbabwe. The employers’ organization (EMCOZ) has requested ILO assistance in developing social protection for informal sector workers. In the next biennium, training methods will be updated, validated and applied in technical cooperation projects. The latter will also exploit new distance and ICT-based learning technologies and methods to reach out to entrepreneurs and workers in the informal sector. Training and the informal sector will also be covered by a General Discussion at the International Labour Conference at its 90th Session, 2002. Work is in progress on the background report for that discussion.
19. The ILO is also giving effect to the Conclusions in the area of lifelong learning. The conclusions of the Joint Meeting on Lifelong Learning in the Twenty-first Century (April 2000) covered many essential issues in this respect, including: policy, organization, financing and employment; roles and responsibilities of educational personnel, workplace learning facilitators and other educators; remuneration and work in education; and participation in educational decision-making and workplace learning. The Office has begun research work, to be followed by regional seminars on improving access to lifelong learning, including the use of distance and open education based on ICT. Lifelong learning will also be the topic for an ILO sectoral meeting in 2002.⁵ An ILO-supported technical cooperation programme in Zambia is assisting the Government to establish lifelong learning as an integral element of training for employability and participation in local community development efforts.

⁵ Mechanical and electrical engineering industries: Lifelong learning in the mechanical and electrical engineering industries, to be held in 2002.

Introducing the InFocus Programme on Skills, Knowledge and Employability

20. The InFocus Programme on Skills, Knowledge and Employability (IFP/SKILLS) was designed to contribute to the second ILO strategic objective, which commits the ILO to create greater opportunities for women and men to secure decent employment and income. In particular, this InFocus programme is charged with the operational objective 2b:

ILO constituents invest more in training and human resources development for enhanced employability.

21. In accordance with the strategic framework of decent work, several international labour standards provide guidance for ILO action in this area. They include:
- the Employment Service Convention, 1948 (No. 88);
 - the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 14);
 - the Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142);
 - the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159); and
 - the Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181).

Programme strategy

22. The International Labour Conference, when adopting the Conclusions on human resources training and development in June 2000, stressed that human resources development and training empower individuals to gain access to decent work and escape poverty and marginalization. There can only be decent employment when people have skills to do the work and gain access to jobs.
23. IFP/SKILLS has a two-pronged approach to promoting human resources development and training. First, policies and programmes are targeted at groups who have traditionally been excluded from decent work, including youth, people with disabilities, displaced workers and older workers. Strategies such as the promotion of lifelong learning for older workers or new approaches to self-employment and small enterprise development are highlighted and special emphasis is placed on promoting training and employment services for informal sector workers, especially women, to transform what are frequently marginal survival activities into decent work.
24. Second, emphasis is placed on reforming and strengthening the major institutions of training and employment services through the identification and dissemination of best practices and through technical cooperation activities to implement new approaches. Activities highlight the linkages between investment in human resources, economic growth and decent employment. They also encourage training systems and training providers to be aware of the needs of enterprise, as well as social needs, while meeting high quality standards, and they encourage enterprises to adopt high-skill and training strategies to improve productivity and provide quality employment. The employability of adult employees is fostered through expanded opportunities for lifelong learning and by improving the portability of the skills they acquire through work experience. Employment and training services need to respond to current labour market trends. They should incorporate modern information and communications technologies, training techniques and

management techniques and they should be developed cooperatively with the social partners. In particular, partnerships between public and private employment services are encouraged.

Major outputs

25. IFP/SKILLS is using the vehicles of advocacy, knowledge development and services to promote these human resource development and training strategies. A central element of its programme consists of its work to give effect to the Conclusions on human resources training and development, and particularly the preparations for reviewing the Human Resources Recommendation, 1975 (No. 150). The major outputs consist of:

Advocacy

- Draft revision of the Human Resources Development Recommendation, 1975 (No. 150), in accordance with the terms of reference set out in the Conclusions adopted by the International Labour Conference in 2000. This work is presented in the first part of this paper.
- Substantive contributions to the Youth Employment Network established by the United Nations, World Bank and ILO. The objectives of the Network are: to formulate a set of recommendations on youth employment to be proposed to policy-makers; disseminate information on good practices and lessons learned from specific youth employment programmes; and identify collaborative youth employment initiatives. A set of recommendations will be presented in September 2001, particularly on generating opportunities for young people through information and communication technologies and on bridging the gap between the informal sector and the knowledge economy.
- Preparation for and, once it has been adopted, implementation of the Code of practice on managing disability in the workplace. A tripartite meeting of experts is scheduled for October 2001 to consider the draft Code.
- Preparation for the general discussion at the 90th Session of the International Labour Conference (2002) on employment and human resource development in the informal economy. This work involves extensive cooperation among several units of the Office.
- Promotion of the recently published guide for *Public employment service in a changing labour market*. It is important to integrate the four main functions of these services, namely: job brokering; labour market information; administration of unemployment benefits; and administration of labour market adjustment programmes. Partnerships are promoted between public employment services and private employment agencies.
- Organizing the ILO's contribution to the Second World Assembly on Ageing, to be held in Madrid in April 2002.

Knowledge development

- Development of a database and benchmarks on investment in training, differentiated by region, enterprise size and sector of industry.

- Development of a database on national and international competency and skill-based qualifications frameworks.
- Preparation of a publication on human resources development and management practices of high performance work organizations which increasingly rely on the knowledge and skills of their workforce to meet their strategic and operational objectives.
- Policy research on the relationship between poverty, gender and skills development in informal employment. This supports the ongoing capacity-building programme on gender, poverty and employment.
- Information base on effective policies and programmes for displaced workers. A guide on how to reduce the impact of retrenchment on workers, communities and enterprises will be published in early 2002.
- Five country studies and an overview report on mental health at the workplace, issued in October 2000.
- Country studies in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and Central America on what works in skills assessment in the informal sector.
- Continued contributions to GLADNET, an information network on disability and work.

Services

- Development tools to promote the innovative use of information and communications technologies in training and employment services, with particular emphasis on excluded groups.
- Development tools, such as information kits, practical guides, case studies and web links, to help policy-makers and social partners promote education, training and employment for young women and men, including those with disabilities.
- Training package for trainers of disabled persons in self-employment and small enterprise development.
- Development tools, including needs assessment techniques, organizing approaches, and innovative programmes, to promote improved training in the informal economy.
- Development tools for the continuous training and employment of older workers.
- Development tools to improve the employment and working conditions of temporary workers.
- Development of appropriate technical cooperation projects to support these strategies, particularly based on Modules for Employable Skills (MES), improved employment services and informal economy services.
- Further development of a system approach to capacity and institution building, and the planning, organization and delivery of skills based on the Community-Based Training (CBT) approach for self-employment.

- Preparation of joint publications with ACT/EMP and ACTRAU on promoting decent employment for young people, both scheduled to be published in 2001.

Geneva, 19 February 2001.