



FOURTEENTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

## Report of the Committee on Technical Cooperation

1. The Committee on Technical Cooperation met on 21 and 22 March 2006, chaired by Mr. Yimer Aboye (Government, Ethiopia). The Employer and Worker Vice-Chairpersons were Mr. Jeetun and Ms. Yacob, respectively.
2. The Committee had the following agenda items:
  - I. Decent work country programmes and the role of technical cooperation.
  - II. Thematic evaluation: HIV/AIDS and the world of work.
  - III. Discussion on thematic evaluation and the overall evaluation strategy.
  - IV. Operational aspects of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC).
  - V. Special technical cooperation programme for Colombia.
  - VI. Other questions.

### I. Decent work country programmes and the role of technical cooperation

3. A representative of the Director-General, Ms. Ducci, presented the agenda item. She recalled that the Committee had consistently attached priority to giving effect to the Decent Work Agenda at the country level, through decent work country programmes (DWCPs) as the main vehicle for delivering ILO services to national constituents. Technical cooperation played a crucial role in the unfolding process of DWCP implementation.
4. The discussion was taking place at a time when the overall approach to international development cooperation was being debated intensely, particularly among donors, against the background of United Nations reform.
5. At the current session, the Governing Body would address the implications for the ILO of United Nations reform and the search for system-wide coherence from three main angles: policy, management and operations. The overall thrust of the reform, as reflected in the 2005 World Summit Outcome, and its implications for the ILO were to be debated in the

Working Party on the Social Dimension of Globalization (WP/SDG); the PFA would look at the management dimension; the Committee on Technical Cooperation would deal with the operational aspects of the reform, which constituted the main driver of the evolving architecture of the United Nations system to deliver coherent, effective and coordinated development cooperation in member countries. The Committee's recommendations would be a crucial input to the Governing Body's discussion on developments in the United Nations system.

6. The successful implementation of DWCPs and the increasing importance of technical cooperation to leverage their impact and relevance to national development and poverty reduction strategies should build on the opportunities that this rapidly changing scenario offered to promote decent work.
7. The international community had now recognized at the highest political level that full and productive employment and decent work for all were a central objective of national and international development policies and poverty reduction strategies, as part of the efforts to achieve the MDGs. That consensus provided a solid basis for mobilizing support and resources for technical cooperation.
8. DWCPs were a promising platform for seizing such opportunities and boosting the influence of ILO's values, principles and constituency upon the broader development cooperation paradigm. Their main objective was to promote decent work as a key component of national development policies. In this regard, they were central to international development cooperation in frameworks such as the United Nations development assistance frameworks (UNDAFs), Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), Common Country Assessments (CCAs), Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), etc.
9. DWCPs were also a results-based programming and management tool, reflecting the ILO's contribution to national objectives in accordance with mutually agreed priorities of its constituents. Joint ownership through tripartism and social dialogue was essential to the process.
10. Finally, DWCPs constituted the appropriate framework to articulate ILO action in member countries and to mobilize and integrate regular budget and extra-budgetary resources, as well as pooling resources from various sources and donors.
11. The representative of the Director-General went on to inform the meeting that technical cooperation trends would be reported in detail in November 2006. Some positive developments could already be mentioned, however, for example an increase in new approvals, delivery and delivery rate in 2005. In addition, Africa's share of technical cooperation had increased and the downward trend in the employment sector had been reversed.
12. Generally, there were good prospects for maintaining and increasing donor support and for improving delivery and quality Office-wide. By the beginning of 2006, new donor contributions had materialized or were expected from Austria, Brazil, the Czech Republic, Greece and the OPEC Fund for International Development.
13. The pace and intensity of reform across the United Nations system were accelerating. At country level, a reformed United Nations system was moving towards the vision of "one programme, one team, one leader". That implied a unified results matrix represented in UNDAF, allowing the United Nations system to mobilize and combine resources, experiences and capabilities of all agencies in achieving a limited number of major outcomes; the Resident Coordinator's enhanced authority, responsibility and leadership

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across the system; and the United Nations country team (UNCT) and its thematic groups and task forces, gathering the relevant agencies in support of joint action.

14. The ILO had been deeply associated with UNDAF in most countries and was actively involved in UNCTs wherever it had a presence in country. The experience had been positive and allowed the ILO to bring its agenda forward into the broader multilateral and United Nations development framework; to work with its constituents in advocating the central importance of the world of work and in fostering workers' rights and international labour standards beyond its traditional sphere of influence; and to instil the value of tripartism and the involvement of workers and employers to anchor true ownership.
15. A number of challenges still needed to be addressed, such as the constraints for agencies that, like the ILO, were not present everywhere. However, a knowledgeable resident coordinator, empowered and accountable to interact with ILO constituents and to represent ILO concerns, would certainly expand the ILO's capacity and amplify its voice where the ILO does not have a presence.
16. This might be supported by stronger system-wide coordination and coherence at regional and subregional levels, where, unlike at the country level, all agencies were represented. Regional structures might take an increasingly important role in working across the United Nations system, to focus on country priorities in an inclusive manner while at the same time looking for common interests and responses across countries, including for technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC).
17. Similarly, joint resource mobilization for country programmes would rationalize and reduce the energy and efforts that agencies were obliged to put into raising donor funding, competing against each other for a rather modest total amount of official development assistance (ODA). In the past, a significant amount of resources was channelled through UNDP to the specialized agencies, including the ILO. The changing role of UNDP since the early 1990s forced agencies to operate increasingly "on their own" and compete against each other, including the UNDP itself, for donor funding. The ILO was encouraged by the renewed thinking that Kemal Derviş had brought with him to UNDP in addressing these issues. This would offer good prospects for the ILO.
18. Many donors had endorsed the importance of decent work as critical in their cooperation policies across the multilateral system. The ILO thus had the opportunity not only to rationalize the mobilization of resources, but also to enlarge its frontiers.
19. The DWCP methodology was well aligned and tuned with the UNDAF and CCA processes, but cycles still differed. Donor funding cycles were even more diverse. Joint programming, monitoring, reporting and evaluation were critical phases needing synchronization. Capacity building and resource mobilization were equally important areas for strengthening the coordination and impact of United Nations operations worldwide.
20. The Secretary-General had established a High-Level Panel on UN system-wide coherence in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment. The Panel was expected to deliver by summer 2006 a wide-ranging package of recommendations with a particular focus on operational activities. The Secretary-General would submit such recommendations to the General Assembly in September 2006. It was important that the High-Level Panel benefit from ILO views, knowledge and experience and take into consideration its mandate, values and distinct tripartite governance structure when looking at United Nations reform.

21. The decent work approach was the ILO's trump card, and the Committee was presented with an overview of the way in which the Office, based on the Committee's guidance and support, was proceeding to operationalize DWCPs in the current international context.
22. The Employer Vice-Chairperson, Mr. Jeetun, expressing his group's concern that the document under discussion<sup>1</sup> was submitted for information, underlined the importance of having points for decision to enable the Office to follow up on discussions of the Committee.
23. DWCPs were to design and deliver coherent ILO programmes at the country level and also take into account the international development agendas. He considered that the DWCP was an ambitious exercise attempting to link national development efforts to multilateral frameworks, in particular at a time when the United Nations was being reformed. The DWCP would become a key component of national development strategies and would make decent work a national policy objective of governments and social partners, as well as of other local actors.
24. The importance of Office-wide efforts or close cooperation between headquarters and field offices in the preparation and implementation of the DWCP was highlighted, as the latter would be the main programming and delivery mechanisms for ILO services. Capacity building of the Office and that of social partners were equally important, bearing in mind the need to address capacity constraints of social partners.
25. It was imperative, in preparation of the DWCP, not only to involve employers but also to take their priorities into account. In that respect, it was a matter of concern that no employers' organization had participated in the exercise. He requested clarification as to which national stakeholders exactly, other than employers and workers, were expected to give concurrence to DWCPs.
26. The Employer Vice-Chairperson felt that the methodology and process were lengthy and, being aware that the headquarters departments had their own work programmes, asked how the Office would ensure that limited resources would be used efficiently to undertake the DWCP exercise. Referring to the pertinent role of the Committee on Technical Cooperation in monitoring progress in the DWCP exercise, Mr. Jeetun wished to be kept informed on outcomes, successes and lessons learned. While influencing the development framework of the United Nations system and ensuring policy coherence at the country level would be of critical importance, it was a matter of concern that the ILO was not present in all the countries; there would thus be limitations on the country offices taking the lead role in the exercise. In fact, the speaker was not sure how the ILO, through DWCPs, could support UNCTs for their work on UNDAF as well as the PRSP process.
27. The Worker Vice-Chairperson, Ms. Yacob, welcomed the fact that employment and decent work had now been accepted as crucial means to reduce poverty. The fragmentation of the labour market and the fact that many of the jobs created did not provide a decent living showed some of the challenges DWCPs would have to take up.
28. Commenting on the Office paper, she observed that the definition of DWCP was more limited than the one set out in the Director-General's circular on DWCP. Furthermore, she pointed out that, while the text had mentioned at one stage that a DWCP was an integrated programme, it implied elsewhere that all the strategic objectives were not reflected in a country programme. Being of the opinion that this went against the very nature of the Decent Work Agenda and the value added that it sought to provide in all four areas, she

<sup>1</sup> GB.295/TC/1.

requested confirmation that all the four strategic objectives would be considered in a DWCP. She recalled the role of social dialogue in promoting the integration of these objectives. She also stressed the importance of linking DWCPs to the Global Employment Agenda recommendations and to all the relevant ILO Conventions and conclusions of the International Labour Conference.

- 29.** Speaking on the methodology for carrying out the DWCPs, she highlighted the fact that the process would be successful only if tripartism and social dialogue were recognized as fundamental tools. Hence, a special focus was required on strengthening the capacity of the social partners to ensure their full participation in the identification of priorities and the design, implementation and monitoring of the DWCPs. The capacity of field offices should also be strengthened, and all ILO staff should receive the information needed for efficient operationalization of decent work. The question of the effectiveness of IRIS in the process was also raised.
- 30.** Referring to the critical role of technical cooperation as a tool to implement DWCPs, the speaker addressed the need for mobilizing resources. Being aware that regular budget funds would not be sufficient, she underscored the need for a comprehensive resource mobilization strategy within the Office that should involve ILO tripartite constituents.
- 31.** Ms. Yacob concluded by requesting regular reporting on the progress made in the implementation of the DWCPs and the role of technical cooperation in such programmes. To that end, she proposed a point for decision that was subsequently debated upon and accepted. The approved point for decision appears in paragraph 47 of this report.
- 32.** The representative of the Government of the Philippines, speaking on behalf of the Asia and Pacific group, noted with pleasure the Office's acknowledgement that the Asia-Pacific region had been a leader in developing national plans for decent work, which had contributed to the development of DWCPs. Recognizing that these programmes had become a widely used tool, she suggested that the guidebook referred to in the paper be updated, and that the Office make the information publicly available. The speaker expressed support for the efforts to ensure that DWCPs contributed to increased United Nations system-wide coherence, and to the achievement of the Decent Work Agenda. She concluded by requesting that the discussion at the current session of the Committee be taken into account at the deliberations at the coming session of the International Labour Conference and the Asian Regional Meeting.
- 33.** Speaking on behalf of the Africa group, the representative of the Government of Malawi noted with pleasure the Office's continued commitment to making DWCPs the main programming and delivery mechanism in ILO member States. He called for the development of country programmes with measurable outputs, indicators of progress and well-established time frames. While the Africa group shared the ILO vision of promoting decent work as a key component of national development agendas, it was a matter of concern that employment creation as a tool for poverty reduction had not featured as high as other key development priorities in past development plans.
- 34.** The representative of the Government of Italy, speaking on behalf of the IMEC group, stated that DWCPs were important planning and delivery tools that would help identify country priorities, contribute to UNDAF and poverty reduction strategy processes, and facilitate in-country coordination between the ILO and other United Nations agencies. Requesting more information about the implementation of DWCPs in practice, she suggested that the Office present a first prototype, as well as targets and indicators, with a view to the discussion on technical cooperation at the International Labour Conference in June 2006.

35. With regard to resource mobilization, the representative requested additional information on how ILO participation in United Nations' frameworks at the country level would affect the resource mobilization strategy of the Organization. Inquiring about Office plans to hold an informal consultation on the ILO's technical cooperation programme with donors, she asked the Office to clarify whether it would be allowing donors the opportunity to pool funds in support of country programmes, and how it could amend current programming and budgeting procedures accordingly.
36. The IMEC group favoured the focus on a manageable number of country programme priorities in DWCPs and called for information about the use of management tools to develop and monitor partnerships. The group supported independent evaluations of country programmes. Commending the Office for its preliminary work, the speaker suggested that the Office undertake a sufficient number of evaluations and use the lessons learned in the process of reviewing and improving DWCPs.
37. The representative of the Government of Japan appreciated that the methodology for the development of DWCPs was based on the concept of results-based management. The Office was called upon to encourage participation of constituents on a tripartite basis with a view to strengthening the sustainability and country-level ownership of DWCPs.
38. The representative of the Government of Argentina indicated that DWCPs were an effective mechanism for translating the ILO mandate into clear programmes and for framing the social policies related to employers' and workers' organizations. Regarding the methodology, he suggested that the role of labour ministers should be enhanced in the overall process. He emphasized the need to clearly integrate state perspectives into DWCPs. It was important to select the most pressing social issues of the ILO and its constituents, such as child labour, employment and economic growth and the informal economy. He expressed concerns about the potential lack of resources for the process and called for a stronger effort from donor countries.
39. The representative of the Government of France expressed interest in the DWCP methodology and process. She emphasized the need for getting on with the exercise, team work with the United Nations system and the World Bank, more visibility and a stronger role for the ILO and for social policies which involved the tripartite constituents. She indicated that the delivery figures presented by the Office were encouraging and noted with satisfaction the increase of both delivery and resources in the African region.
40. The representative of the Government of China felt that DWCPs would be an opportunity to enhance the coherence, effectiveness and coordination of the United Nations system activities at the country level. He emphasized that, in order to make DWCPs work, the programmes needed to be tailored to national priorities and contexts and handled by the field units with decentralized means. The process described in the report appeared to be related to a sound methodology and should be improved and developed. He welcomed the increase of technical cooperation resources in the regions and in the employment sector.
41. The representative of the Government of Nigeria noted that advocacy on the Decent Work Agenda was an opportunity to concretely contribute to poverty reduction and achieve the MDGs. She indicated that the President of Nigeria had made a strong pronouncement on jobs being at the core of the overall economic and social policy of the Government and called for strong partnerships and technical cooperation resources that would support selected priorities in the DWCP process that her Government had embarked upon.
42. A representative of the Director-General, Ms. Ducci, responding to the debate, indicated that launching the DWCP approach had been an ambitious undertaking that constituted a learning process towards delivering better services to ILO constituents. The continuous

dialogue with, and feedback from, the Committee would permit improvements of the approach in the future.

43. The Decent Work Agenda had received wide support from constituents and partners in all regions and had been recognized as a key element in national development strategies by the 2005 World Summit.
44. Implementing DWCPs across all countries with a focus simultaneously on all of the strategic objectives would certainly put the ILO's capacity to the test, and it was clear that the approach and the speed of implementation would vary from country to country. While in some countries decent work had already been adopted as a clear national priority, in others the ILO would need to focus first on advocacy and capacity building to ensure that the contribution of decent work to national development was recognized. Opportunities and entry points for pursuing the strategic objectives would also vary, while commitments to ongoing programmes needed to be honoured. Progressively, DWCPs should advance the whole integrated Decent Work Agenda.
45. The ILO had developed new tools, such as the Strategic Management Module (SMM) to ensure enhanced complementarity between headquarters-based programmes and the needs and priorities emerging at the country level; there would also be greater convergence of the objectives of programmes funded through the regular budget with those funded with extra-budgetary resources. The current situation presented the ILO with both new demands and new opportunities; however, that necessitated introducing tighter management to ensure that the ILO had an integrated programme and activities to achieve major results.
46. Ms. Ducci concluded by informing the meeting that in order for ILO staff to meet the challenge of implementing DWCPs so as to ensure their integration into UNDAFs, PRSPs or other relevant national development frameworks, and to build partnerships and mobilize resources for the Decent Work Agenda, the Office had just provided all members of staff with an important policy guidance note on DWCPs in the context of UNDAFs and United Nations reform.
47. *The Committee recommends that the Governing Body request the Director-General to provide the Committee on Technical Cooperation at all its November sessions with a progress report on the implementation of decent work country programmes and the role and impact of technical cooperation in such programmes. This could be a part of the annual report on technical cooperation submitted to this Committee.*

## II. Thematic evaluation: HIV/AIDS and the world of work

48. A representative of the Director-General, Mr. Diop, introduced the item. He thanked the donor countries and social partners for their commitment and support to the ILO Programme on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work (ILO/AIDS) activities. He noted that ILO/AIDS had been established in 2000, and that the technical cooperation activities had been initiated in 2003. The paper<sup>2</sup> summarized the mid-term evaluations of seven projects funded by the United States Department of Labor (USDOL) and the final evaluation of a multi-country project in sub-Saharan Africa funded by the Swedish International

<sup>2</sup> GB.295/TC/2.

Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). The SIDA project had addressed the informal economy which was now a priority for innovative efforts.

- 49.** The objective of all the projects was HIV prevention through implementation of the ILO code of practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work. The strategy comprised three approaches: consultations with national stakeholders to establish the policy framework; advisory services and the training of social partners; and collaboration with enterprise management and labour representatives to design workplace policies. Together, these initiatives had now reached 400,000 workers in 300 enterprises in 30 countries. The evaluations had concluded that objectives had been achieved on the whole, and the evaluators had noted the involvement of tripartite constituents through programme advisory boards, consultations and advocacy. The use of national expertise was considered fundamental to achieve results and encourage sustainability. Other lessons learned included the value of workplace education in reducing discrimination, the role of baseline data in measuring change, the integration of HIV/AIDS into existing structures for sustainability, and the value added of knowledge-sharing and networking. The report noted the constraints and challenges which would allow ILO/AIDS to improve the design and implementation of future interventions.
- 50.** Mr. Diop emphasized the strong support of the Director-General, who, as Chair of the Committee of Cosponsoring Organizations (CCO) of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) for 2005-06, had increased global understanding of HIV/AIDS as a workplace issue and enhanced the ILO's capacity to respond accordingly.
- 51.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson, Mr. Jeetun, welcomed the overview provided by the paper on the successes and shortcomings of the projects, which had enabled the necessary adjustments. He drew attention to the need for further analysis on outcomes. He noted the tripartite procedures involved in design and implementation, and the continuous support from the Director-General. He also noted with appreciation the paper's emphasis on the contribution of technical cooperation in helping ILO constituents to respond to HIV/AIDS and emphasized the important role of the tripartite response to the epidemic in the workplace, citing as an example the progress achieved in India manifested in the statement of commitment signed by all seven major employers' organizations to commit business to addressing HIV/AIDS in the workplace. At the same time, he noted the need for more information on how the ILO complements the work of the UNAIDS co-sponsors at national level, an update on the strategy to increase donor funding, and clarification of selection criteria for programme advisory boards that could be important for sustainability. The Employer Vice-Chairperson emphasized that good examples of collaboration between employers and actors in the informal economy could be replicated in the delivery of HIV/AIDS services. He stressed the importance of the lessons drawn from the project, notably the full participation of tripartite constituents in project implementation. He signalled the need for support from ILO/AIDS to implement the International Organisation of Employers (IOE)-International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) joint statement on HIV/AIDS and suggested building a coalition of workplace actors to respond to HIV/AIDS.
- 52.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson, Ms. Yacob, welcomed the thematic evaluation as well as the achievements of the projects. She also welcomed the focus on the implementation of the ILO code of practice, noting nevertheless a lack of information on the use of industrial relations and collective bargaining to promote its implementation. She noted the shortcomings of the SIDA-funded project and welcomed clarification on subsequent adjustments. She also noted the coordination problems reported in some projects and emphasized the important role of consultation with stakeholders and social partners in advance of the project in order to establish administrative arrangements and coordination mechanisms. The Workers' group noted the tools developed for management and

monitoring and looked forward to reports on their effectiveness. The group offered the following recommendations:

- (a) to assess the impact of technical cooperation activities at grass-roots level and the extent to which the ILO code of practice on HIV/AIDS is implemented in the workplace;
- (b) to collect good practices of workplace policies and programmes and replicate them in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), multinationals and the informal economy;
- (c) to develop quantitatively and qualitatively the methodologies to evaluate the use of ILO/AIDS tools and their impact on policies, programmes and behaviour change; and
- (d) to strengthen trade union capacity to contribute to the response to HIV/AIDS in the workplace through the application of the ILO code of practice.

**53.** Ms. Yacob concluded with a proposal for a point for decision which was debated by the Committee at a subsequent stage. The adopted point for decision is provided in paragraph 59.

**54.** The representative of the Government of Italy, speaking on behalf of the IMEC group, recalled that, since the Director-General was Chair of the CCO of UNAIDS, the ILO gave impetus to its mandate to address HIV/AIDS in the world of work. She underscored the useful role of the ILO code of practice in defining workplace action, noting in that regard that more information would be welcome on certain aspects, notably counselling and testing, and confidentiality. The IMEC group emphasized the need for quantitative indicators to measure progress accomplished and acknowledged the importance of participation for successful interventions. The group suggested that the exchange of experience should be pursued among the projects of different donors.

**55.** The representative of the Government of Malawi, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, thanked ILO/AIDS for the continuous advocacy and assistance provided to African countries, noting that most had started workplace programmes on HIV/AIDS. The Africa group agreed with the Office that HIV/AIDS remained a challenge, since it had no cure. The group endorsed further activities and the mobilization of additional resources.

**56.** The representative of the Government of Brazil welcomed the Committee's choice of HIV/AIDS for the evaluation. He shared Brazil's experience in increasing the involvement of the private sector through the establishment of HIV/AIDS prevention committees in the workplace, and increasing enterprise initiatives to provide information and prevention to workers and their families.

**57.** The representative of the Government of Nigeria acknowledged the support provided by ILO/AIDS to Nigeria's development of a national workplace HIV/AIDS policy based on the ILO code of practice, which had been approved and adopted in both the public and private sectors, with the support of the social partners. She noted that more needed to be done to fight stigmatization and discrimination in the workplace and to develop programmes for the informal economy. She requested technical cooperation assistance for the Government of Nigeria to meet these challenges.

**58.** Mr. Diop thanked all the delegates for their useful contributions. He thanked the Employers' group for their determination in developing workplace programmes and noted the increased involvement of employers. He stressed the youth of the programme and its role in increasing workplace participation in HIV/AIDS response and developing stronger

awareness among workers. The evaluation showed that the lessons learned had served to adjust the ILO's action. He indicated that future analyses would evaluate behaviour change. He recalled the importance of addressing needs in the informal economy and indicated that efforts had been initiated through cooperatives and microfinance schemes. He noted the concerns and requests raised by the Workers' group and ensured that progress made by HIV/AIDS activities would be increasingly better evaluated. He noted that enterprises often had both occupational safety and health committees and HIV/AIDS workplace activities, which facilitated assessments of the impact of HIV/AIDS action. He supported the Africa group's request to mobilize more resources, notably for informal economy action, and commended Brazil's nationwide experience in the struggle against HIV/AIDS. He recognized Nigeria's efforts to develop an effective response and supported the continuation of ILO assistance. He recalled the important guidance provided to the ILO by the IOE-ICFTU joint statement on fighting HIV/AIDS. Mr. Diop drew attention to the continuing need for resource mobilization, noting that a recent contribution had been made by the OPEC Fund for International Development. He welcomed the point for decision.

**59. *The Committee on Technical Cooperation, taking note of the thematic evaluation on HIV/AIDS and the world of work, recommends that the Governing Body request the Director-General to:***

- (a) continue to support the ILO Programme on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work;*
- (b) recognize the important contribution that the social partners can make to combating the pandemic in the workplace; and*
- (c) report regularly to the Committee on the progress made in the implementation of the ILO Programme on HIV/AIDS and the World of Work and the effectiveness of the programme for constituents.*

### **III. Discussion on thematic evaluation and the overall evaluation strategy**

**60.** The Chairperson, Mr. Yimer Aboye, introduced the agenda item. He informed the meeting that the Committee usually reviewed thematic evaluation of technical cooperation projects during its March sessions. He recalled that, during its November 2005 session, the Committee had started a discussion on whether, given new developments related to evaluation in the ILO, the practice should continue. The Committee had not had adequate time to discuss the matter at length and it had been decided at that meeting that the broader question of thematic evaluation in the overall evaluation strategy would be considered by the Committee in March 2006. The Chairperson suggested that the Committee take up the matter from where it had left off in November and opened the debate.

**61.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson, Mr. Jeetun, maintained that the Committee on Technical Cooperation was supposed to review the ILO's technical cooperation activities, and that thematic evaluations were useful in that regard. Such reports informed the Committee on what had worked, what had not worked and lessons learned. In fact, based on such thematic evaluations, the Committee had been providing policy guidance for technical cooperation activities. He recalled that the Committee had also been promoting the active participation of employers' and workers' organizations in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of technical cooperation programmes and projects.

62. Mr. Jeetun referred to earlier meetings of the Committee that had considered the issue and come to the conclusion about the importance of thematic evaluations, and maintained that his group would like the Committee to continue receiving thematic evaluation reports.
63. The Worker Vice-Chairperson, Ms. Yacob, reiterated the position of the Workers' group: the thematic evaluation of technical cooperation should remain within the jurisdiction and domain of the Committee on Technical Cooperation. She requested that the submission of thematic evaluation reports to the March sessions of the Committee on Technical Cooperation of the Governing Body be continued.
64. The representative of the Government of Italy, speaking on behalf of the IMEC group, stated that technical cooperation played a key role in translating the policies of the Office into action which provided the main means for achieving the four strategic objectives. Referring to the discussion in March 2005 on the functioning of the Committee, she reiterated the IMEC group's view that the Committee should receive more information on concrete results and outcomes of projects. The thematic evaluation, which normally took place in March, was a good step in that direction.
65. Being of the view that the thematic evaluations provided useful information for the work of the Committee on Technical Cooperation, the representative concluded that thematic evaluation reports of technical cooperation programmes and projects should continue to be presented to the Committee.
66. *The Committee recommends that the Governing Body request the Director-General to ensure that the submission of thematic evaluation reports to the Committee on Technical Cooperation be continued at the March sessions of the Governing Body.*

#### **IV. Operational aspects of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)**

67. A representative of the Director-General, Mr. Thijs, presented information on the progress made by IPEC over the last biennium contained in the implementation report, 2004-05. IPEC had been the subject of substantial scrutiny during the biennium through a global independent evaluation, various project evaluations and project audits to ensure the highest possible level of efficiency and quality. Progress on performance indicators had been good. Data for the biennium showed that IPEC had exceeded the target of beneficiaries. During the biennium, close to 2 million children had been reached, out of which about 400,000 were direct beneficiaries. As to ratifications: 157 countries had ratified the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), and 142 had ratified the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138): an additional 20 ratifications for the biennium, although this was still below the target set for Convention No. 138 of 151 ratifications. Programme delivery in 2005 was projected at US\$60 million but had reached US\$70 million, compared to US\$57 million in the previous year. The delivery rate had risen to 68 per cent in 2005, up from 63 per cent in 2004. Annual new approvals remained around US\$60 million per year. Twenty of the participating countries were in the process of implementing time-bound programmes (TBPs), while another 30 countries had undertaken two or more time-bound programme approach-related interventions. A great deal of time and resources had also been devoted to strengthening programmatic approaches, guidelines and tools. During the biennium, at least 50 countries had used methodologies, guidelines, research results and good practices developed by IPEC. Many of these tools had been

developed through improved cooperation and synergies with other ILO programmes with a view to contributing to the Decent Work Agenda.

- 68.** The speaker subsequently briefed the Committee on the outcome of the IPEC International Steering Committee (ISC) meeting on 8 November 2005 which had reviewed, in detail, the achievements and challenges of the programme. A request had been made for information on the participation of social partners in IPEC activities and these figures were available as a separate document for the present Committee. Members had also asked questions about the future strategic direction of the programme and were informed that the Global Report on child labour in May 2006 would include a detailed draft action plan that would lead to a discussion at the 2006 session of the Conference. The Steering Committee members had also discussed conceptual challenges to the programme, including the link to the Education For All (EFA) initiative in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the natural linkage of IPEC's work with ILO efforts to promote youth employment and the challenges the international community faced in measuring child labour in a manner that would produce globally comparable data. Concerning the functioning of the Steering Committee, it had been suggested that a full day meeting instead of half a day would be technically possible, to be reviewed in light of other scheduled meetings during the November Governing Body meeting in 2006.
- 69.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson congratulated IPEC on an excellent, innovative report and the impressive results contained within. He requested a financial breakdown of the allocations given to implementation agencies. The ILO should continue to provide technical support for child labour legislation and the training of labour inspectors. He called upon donors to set aside resources for capacity building among employers and noted that child labour inhibited the achievement of the MDGs.
- 70.** Mr. Anand (Employer member) complimented IPEC on a forward-looking report, referring, in particular, to the link made between youth employment and training.
- 71.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson welcomed the report and requested a full list of implementing agencies and a breakdown of funds. Her group was concerned that trade unions still received only a small part of IPEC's allocations, compared to NGOs, for example. She welcomed IPEC's efforts in the field of education and stressed the importance of using the term "free basic education", which was consistent with ILO Convention No. 138. She suggested that there was perhaps too much emphasis on vocational training only for the poor. She also invited the Steering Committee to address strategies to tackle the problem of low-level IPEC core funding and the insecure staff resource base. She welcomed the systematic integration of gender concerns and said that, when addressing youth employment, IPEC should focus on 15-17 year olds. As regards the development of a statistical definition of child labour, she stressed that it was important to have tripartite input into this process. She invited IPEC to continue its campaign for the universal ratification of Conventions Nos. 138 and 182. She also sought clarifications on the possibilities of modifying the schedule of the Steering Committee.
- 72.** The representative of the Government of Italy, speaking on behalf of the IMEC group, stressed the importance of the education task force (UNESCO-UNICEF-World Bank-ILO) launched in Beijing during the EFA meeting the previous year. She suggested that IPEC should continue to focus on education with a particular emphasis on girls. She wished to know whether the Office envisaged increasing allocations from the regular budget to IPEC, a flagship programme of the ILO, in order to reduce dependency on extra-budgetary resources. While noting with appreciation that IPEC had consolidated its partnerships with NGOs, IMEC requested more information on the involvement of employers' and workers' organizations as partners in IPEC projects.

73. The representative of the Government of Malawi, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, welcomed the improved mainstreaming of IPEC's work in the overall ILO agenda. He called upon IPEC urgently to address the question of child-headed households in Africa and to increase programmes mainstreaming the HIV/AIDS dimension of child labour.
74. The representative of the Government of Brazil drew attention to the donation of funds by the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) to an IPEC project on the elimination of the worst forms of child labour in Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa. This constituted an important example of South-South cooperation.
75. A representative of the Workers (Mr. Steyne) reiterated the points made by the Worker Vice-Chairperson, in particular in respect of education. He said that private education was not the answer to ensuring universal basic education and ran the risk of governments shirking their responsibilities. He stressed the importance of a polytechnical education as the key to lifelong employability. He also noted the importance of organizing workers in the informal economy as a weapon in combating child labour.
76. Mr. Ahmed (Worker member) welcomed IPEC's post-earthquake interventions and the time-bound programme now starting in Pakistan.
77. The representative of the Director-General, Mr. Thijs, referred to the requests for a financial breakdown of the allocations made to implementing agencies and said that this would be provided in IPEC's next report. He pointed out that drastic changes in the short term were not always possible given existing programme and project obligations. He agreed with the Workers that the ILO's aim should be to promote universal education up to the minimum age. He said that girls' education was now fully integrated in IPEC's work, and that much progress was being made on the linkage between HIV/AIDS and child labour, regarding which specific projects on the issue in the field would generate good practices for replication throughout IPEC projects. He informed the Committee that tripartite consultation was envisaged as a part of IPEC's work towards the development of a statistical definition of child labour. He also confirmed that IPEC would continue to provide technical support, in cooperation with NORMES, to countries to assist them in ratifying the Conventions.

## V. Special technical cooperation programme for Colombia

78. A representative of the Director-General, Mr. Martínez, stated that the present progress report<sup>3</sup> provided an update of the previous progress report submitted to the Committee in March 2005.
79. Official figures indicated a drop in the number of attacks against trade unions, although those figures were challenged by the organized workers. In spite of the continuing decline in direct attacks against trade unions and workers' rights, there was, however, a continued lack of progress in fighting impunity. A special investigating unit had been set up by the Attorney-General – a direct result of collaboration between the ILO and the office of the Attorney-General.
80. The trade unions in Colombia continued to report various obstacles to freedom of association, collective bargaining and other infringements of workers' rights, with the employers maintaining that, while such incidents did occur, they were not systematic. The

<sup>3</sup> GB.295/TC/5.

Government admitted that it continued to face problems regarding the effective application of international labour standards.

- 81.** The Office noted that some progress had been achieved in social dialogue over the previous years and encouraged the Government, together with the social partners, to fully engage, through the established mechanisms in order to intensify efforts to combat impunity, improve labour relations and ensure respect for fundamental rights at work, particularly as regards collective bargaining and freedom of association.
- 82.** The Office considered it important to consolidate, sustain and build on the progress that had been achieved under the first phase of the programme and had, to this end, submitted a set of project proposals for the continuation of these activities to donor countries. It hoped that the initial positive reactions received from some of these donors would materialize into firm commitments.
- 83.** The Employer Vice-Chairperson, Mr. Jeetun, reminded the Governing Body of the support provided by the Employers' group the previous year concerning the continuation of the Special technical cooperation programme for Colombia. The Employers' group considered it to be a good sign that many activities were being carried out to promote human rights and the right to life, promotion of the fundamental principles and rights at work, promotion of social dialogue, the positive spirit and the involvement of all the actors. However, apart from expressions of interest by potential donors, there had not, so far, been firm commitments as regards funding. The Employer Vice-Chairperson concluded by pointing out the significant level of support received from the Colombian Government and employers' and workers' organizations.
- 84.** A representative of the Employers (Mr. Echavarría) highlighted the improvement of the situation in Colombia and the activities in which Colombian employers had directly participated. He referred to the high-level visit in Autumn 2005, and the need to continue to cooperate with Colombia. There was a need to strengthen social and political dialogue, as stated in the tripartite agreement of December 2005. The representative concluded by urging continued cooperation and participation on the part of the donor countries in the second phase of the programme.
- 85.** The Worker Vice-Chairperson, Ms. Yacob, welcomed the extension of the technical cooperation activities for a further six months and requested information about potential donors and proposed projects for the next phase. She expressed concern about the severe problems encountered by Colombian workers, as 70 trade unionists had been assassinated the previous year and trade union rights were continuously being violated. She also expressed concern at the level of impunity concerning the assassination of union leaders. The issue of human rights continued to be important and, in this regard, Ms. Yacob requested detailed information as to the measures adopted by the Government against impunity and she insisted that the killings of trade unionists must stop once and for all.
- 86.** The struggle against anti-union practices in the public and private sectors continued and violations of the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98), the Labour Relations (Public Service) Convention, 1978 (No. 151), and the Collective Bargaining Convention, 1981 (No. 154) persisted. The speaker further mentioned that the Colombian trade union organizations had observed with great concern the system of "associated work cooperatives" promoted by the Government. The tripartite agreement signed by the Consultation Committee stated that "associated work cooperatives" were not intended for labour intermediation. The trade unions in Colombia had also expressed their misgivings about the Government's failure fully to comply with the tripartite agreement with regard to freedom of association and collective bargaining.

87. The speaker conveyed the satisfaction that the trade unions in Colombia had expressed regarding the high-level mission in October 2005 and added that the recommendations should be put into practice as soon as possible. In this regard, she reiterated the demand for a permanent ILO office in Colombia. She also urged the Office to continue the special technical cooperation programme for Colombia.
88. The representative of the Government of Colombia stated that, in October 2005, a high-level meeting of the ILO and tripartite constituents of Colombia had taken place. At that meeting the need had been expressed to reinforce tripartite activities to promote social dialogue in the country.
89. The representative highlighted the findings of the Standing Commission on Wage and Labour Policies and informed the Committee that violence affecting workers was decreasing. The Protection Programme established by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Justice had contributed to this. The Government had significantly increased its contribution to this programme.
90. The representative announced that the national Government, through its National Political, Economic and Social Council (CONPES), had approved a policy to address problems of impunity in cases of violation of human rights. Those policies, with the participation of the State and the advisory services of the Human Rights Commission, were supported by the Netherlands Embassy in Colombia. She hoped that the Special technical cooperation programme for Colombia would continue.
91. A representative of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean countries (GRULAC) noted that steps taken by the Government of Colombia had led to a decrease in the number of cases of aggression against trade unionists. On behalf of GRULAC, she expressed support for the continuation of the Special technical cooperation programme for Colombia.
92. Mr. Gómez Esguerra (Worker member) affirmed the Colombian workers' support for the Special technical cooperation programme for Colombia and for a permanent ILO presence in the country. He expressed concern with regard to the establishment of associated workers' cooperatives and called upon the ILO to continue its work to reduce violence against trade unionists and to help establish effective systems for collective bargaining and freedom of association.
93. A representative of the Workers (Mr. Steyne) referred to the work of the Trades Union Congress of the United Kingdom in supporting trade unions in Colombia, and offered US\$6,500 in support of the Special technical cooperation programme for Colombia. Referring to the 70 murders of trade unionists in 2005, he expressed the fear that, if the current situation were not addressed, the country would end up a "trade union-free zone".
94. A representative of the Government of the Netherlands supported the Special technical cooperation programme for Colombia as it contributed to the implementation of the recommendations of UNHCR, promoted law enforcement and human rights and addressed the political polarization of the country.
95. The Director of the ILO Regional Office for the Americas, Mr. Martínez, provided information about the four project proposals presented to a group of donors, adding that Spain and other donors had expressed an interest, but that there had been no formal commitments made. He highlighted how the ILO would continue its work in Colombia based on available regular budget resources and mobilized resources.

## VI. Other questions

96. The Chairperson drew attention to a paper on guidelines for consultations with the Bureaux for Employers' and Workers' Activities which had been made available to the Committee for information.<sup>4</sup> The Chairperson recalled that the Governing Body had requested that clear protocols be developed for consultations between all departments and the Bureaux for Employers' and Workers' Activities. To keep the Committee informed on the activities undertaken as a follow-up to the Committee's decisions, the note had been circulated for information.
97. There being no other issue under this agenda item, the Chairperson closed the meeting, informing the Committee that, in accordance with the standard procedures, the report of the meeting would be approved on its behalf by the Officers of the Committee. They would also agree on the agenda for the next meeting.

Geneva, 27 March 2006.

*Points for decision:* Paragraph 47;  
Paragraph 59;  
Paragraph 66.

<sup>4</sup> GB.295/TC/6/1.