

2. Egypt

After the revolution of January 2011, Egypt more than ever before needs assistance in many areas related to decent work. The lack of decent work, especially for young people, was in fact one of the driving forces behind the revolution. This need will continue to exist given the difficult economic situation, independent of who will be governing the country. Being highly aware of these needs, the ILO Director-General, accompanied by high-level ILO officials, conducted a mission to Egypt immediately after the revolution to identify needs and determine ILO assistance. As a follow-up to this mission as well as to two visits by the Minister of Manpower and Migration to the ILO (Governing Body and International Labour Conference in 2011) a Roadmap for Recovery and Decent Work in Egypt was developed in close collaboration with the Ministry of Manpower and Migration (MoMM) and the Ministry of Finance. This roadmap is constantly under review and is adjusted according to upcoming and urgent needs. In terms of support, it was agreed that additional funding could be used for two possibilities: (1) upscale ongoing activities; and (2) establish new areas of intervention and cooperation in the areas of need identified.

Believing in an integrated approach, the ILO ensured that several missions met with ministries and partners beyond the traditional ILO constituents who all showed interest in ILO's crisis response support.

The areas of intervention and cooperation include:

1. Strengthening freedom of association, social dialogue and collective bargaining

Underpinning the Government's decision support the respect of freedom of association, assistance will be provided to translate legislative amendments into practice in order to end the single union monopoly situation and assist in the creation of laws and institutions that guarantee the right to freely organize and bargain collectively. In this regard, special support will be given to newly established independent trade unions.

2. Creating opportunities for young people and other vulnerable groups (especially women, people with disabilities, university graduates and informal sector workers)

The lack of decent jobs for young people was seen as one driving force behind the revolution. It is a common societal understanding not only that young people have a right to such an opportunity, but also that decent jobs are the basis for democratic transition in the country. Unfortunately, the situation has further deteriorated in recent months. There is an urgent need to assist the Government through an integrated approach, working both on the supply and the demand side of labour, as well as matching the two at the national and the local levels.

3. Increased awareness and implementation of labour standards

In the current context of change there is renewed interest in international labour standards as a means to ensure decent work for all. It is necessary to help translate this into concrete implementation processes.

4. Enhancing social protection

With the increasing lack of decent employment opportunities for most Egyptians, the need for social protection is twofold: protection is needed for those who have suffered as a result of recent events, while at the same time existing social protection systems need to be strengthened and improved in size and scope. This includes issues such as minimum wages and conditions of work.

Possible areas of technical cooperation

- Employment creation through employment-intensive public works programmes, MSMEs and sectoral approaches (specifically in agriculture, tourism and textiles), with a specific focus on green jobs and social economy approaches (cooperatives, etc.)
- Skills development (especially vocational skills, TC skills, language skills and entrepreneurial skills)
- Improvement of job intermediation processes
- Supporting the Government in setting up a proper minimum wage and ensuring the restructuring of the existing wage setting system
- Promoting fundamental principles and rights and assisting their implementation
- Enforcing social dialogue
- Support in capacity building for independent trade unions and enhancing women's and young people's participation in the trade union movement
- Economic empowerment of women, especially those in rural areas and among the highly qualified who have left the labour market for various reasons
- Restructuring and strengthening the MoMM and Labour Administration (including labour inspection).
- Managing migration (including return migration as well as inward and outward migration).
- Elimination of child labour through modern apprenticeship schemes, skills development programmes, and assistance to parents of working children.
- Widening the knowledge base through improvements in labour market information and analysis.

Key ongoing initiatives

1. Active ILO projects in Egypt

Title	Budget	Donor
Effective Schools to Work Transition through Career Information and Guidance for Youth	US\$850,385	Italy
Project on career guidance for youth and job creation (second phase of the career guidance project)	US\$1,000,000	Italian Debt Swap
The Dahshur world heritage site mobilization for cultural heritage for community development (joint MDGF project)	US\$408,618	Spain
Pro-Poor Horticulture Value Chains in Upper Egypt	US\$1,005,800	Spain
Promoting Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and Social Dialogue	US\$2,026,082	United States
Decent jobs for Egypt's young people	US\$10,454,080	Canada
Combating Worst forms of Child Labour by Reinforcing Policy Response and Promoting Sustainable Livelihoods and Educational Opportunities in Egypt (CWCLP)	US\$2,562,115	United States (partners: UNCIF WFP)
Creating a Conducive Environment for the Effective Recognition and Implementation of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work in	US\$615,159	US State Department

2. Pipeline projects under discussion

- Project on creating decent work for young people by tackling the challenge of young people in agriculture, with a focus on working conditions for women (using same methodology as CIDA funded project in one governorate)
Donor: AusAID
Foreseen budget: US\$3,000,000; **Status:** Close to finalization
- Project on creating decent work for young people by tackling the challenge of young people in two rural Governorates (using same methodology as CIDA funded project)
Donor: Denmark; **Status:** Commitment confirmed by Denmark, project proposal under preparation
- Project on improving working conditions in exporting factories through social dialogue and collective bargaining
Donor: US State Department
Foreseen budget: US\$10,000,000
- Joint UN project on strengthening economic security in risk-prone communities in Upper-Egypt
Donor: United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security
Foreseen budget: US\$553,190 (ILO component); **Status:** Project proposal was accepted, work on project document has started
- Project on the way forward after the revolution – decent work for women in Egypt and Tunisia
Donor: Finland Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Foreseen budget: US\$3,350,000; **Status:** Close to finalization
- Regional project on improving governance of labour migration and protection of migrant workers' rights (Egypt, Morocco, Libya and Tunisia)
Donor: Swiss Development Cooperation
Foreseen budget: US\$2,200,000; **Status:** Project proposal has been submitted and was well received, project document under preparation

3. Main ILO activities

- Guiding the process of developing a National Action Plan for Youth Employment (NAP) which will soon be updated to integrate needs expressed during and after the revolution. The CIDA-funded NAP implementation project will ensure the implementation of the plan in three governorates as well as at the national level.
- Contributing to the widening of the knowledge base on labour markets in Egypt through several studies and surveys (e.g. several studies on the impact of the financial crisis on labour markets in Egypt, a study on discouraged workers in the textile sector, a nationwide child labour survey, a study on green jobs, a study on the informal economy, a study on gender issues in labour markets, a study on the situation of the labour market after the revolution, etc.)
- Providing continuous, intensive advisory services on international labour standards, with a focus on fundamental rights and including specific areas such as migrant workers, gender equity in remuneration, etc.
- Through several projects supporting the creation of MSMEs with a special focus on vulnerable groups and working with a community-based and social economy approach.

- Through the ILO tool *Know About Business* the ILO contributed to the creation of an enterprise culture by promoting awareness among young people of the opportunities and challenges of entrepreneurship and self-employment, and of the role in shaping their future and country's economic and social development.
- Ensuring an effective school to work transition, through working with employment services to help young people find jobs (including the organisation of job fairs).
- To contribute to the elimination of exploitative child labour in Egypt, the ILO facilitates the rehabilitation and integration of child labourers into formal and non-formal education. Also a nationwide Child Labour Survey was conducted. The preliminary results thereof were disseminated in July 2011 attesting that there are 1.594 million working children.
- In light of the Egyptian government's attempts to set a minimum wage as part of a national package for social justice, the ILO fielded a three-day mission from April 11-13, 2011 to provide consultation and technical assistance to the government on minimum wage setting. A wage clinic workshop named "A Framework for Effective Minimum Wage Policies: Lessons from Across the World" was shared by ILO experts with senior officials from the ministries of Finance, MoMM, Planning, Inter-national Cooperation and Social Solidarity, representatives of the Federations of Egyptian Industries, trade unions and a number of experts. The Arabic version of the Global Wage Report 2010/2011 was launched in Cairo on February 28th, 2012
- The ILO/Cairo Office provided technical assistance for national consultations on the newly created Training and Employment Fund in July 2011, which was followed up with six sectoral meetings in tourism, textiles and ready made garments, construction, ICT, petrochemicals, pharmaceuticals and medical services. However, the government decided not to move forward with this initiative
- The ILO is supporting the modernization of the national system for occupational safety and health and the establishment of a national programme for better safety and health at work. This includes working towards the full activation of the Higher Consultative Council for Occupational Safety and Health (HCCOSH) as the cornerstone of the Egyptian system. The ILO will work with the HCCOSH on prevention, holding of a high level participatory critical analysis of the functioning of the current national system for preventing work-related accidents and diseases, and supporting the process of updating the list of occupational diseases recognised by the Government of Egypt. Also, the ILO is mobilizing academics and policy makers on enhancing access to quality OSH training and education, notably through vocational training institutions and is pioneering the workplace safety and health management system approach with the private sector.

4. Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP)

A DWCP (2010-2013) was drafted prior to the 25 January revolution. Its priorities are youth employment (tackled through labour market policies, employment creation through MSMEs, skills enhancement and sectoral work in tourism and textiles), social protection (with a special focus on wages) and social dialogue (with an emphasis on the institutional setting and capacity building, and priority attached to freedom of association and collective bargaining). Despite recent developments, these priorities remain, with some changes in the emphasis on different elements and some new elements to be included in the months to come. A stronger focus on gender issues is needed.