



International
Labour
Organization

ILO Decent work Team South Asia and India's response to COVID-19

15 March – 15 May, 2020

► Covid – 19 and impact on world of work

The world of work is being profoundly affected by the global virus pandemic. In addition to the threat to public health, the economic and social disruption threatens the long-term livelihoods and wellbeing of millions.

The predominant labour force in informal sector, fragile Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), and services sector, which contributes approximately 50% to India's GDP, are most impacted.

The ILO and its constituents – Governments, workers and employers – are playing a crucial role in combating the outbreak, ensuring the safety of individuals and the sustainability of businesses and jobs

The national and the state governments are devising measures to counter the impending socio-economic impacts of COVID-19. The Employers' and Workers' organizations are providing inputs to the policy and extending direct support on ground in their capacity.

ILO DWT South Asia and India with its technical expertise has been able to act as a guiding force in COVID-19 response planning and implementation.



► Highlights



Short-term Policy Responses

The note suggests possible actions for State governments in planning COVID-19 crisis response with focus on informal sector workers.



OSH Video and checklist

It provides a quick guide from ILO's occupational safety and health experts for employers at small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs).



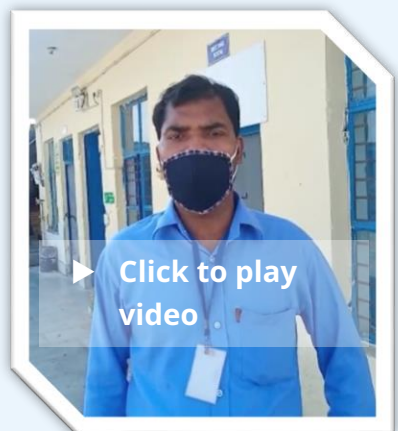
Enterprises task force guideline

The document informs and encourages the formation of COVID-19 Task Forces at an enterprise-level



Labour Market Measures

Its compilation of key advisories, orders and support extended by Central and State Governments in response to the Covid-19 pandemic



► **We are able to work securely practicing social distancing and safety measures.**

- Anil Kumar, worker benefitted through ILO's BCP trainings for MSMEs



ILO Monitors

Updated assessment of the global impact of COVID-19 on economies and labour markets, together with policy recommendations



Country policy responses

Compilation of governments, employers' and workers' organizations responses from 188 countries and territories



Dedicated portal on COVID-19 - <https://ilo.org/covid19>

All relevant COVID-19 and world of work information including policy recommendation, practical advice, sectoral analysis at one click.



► Four pillars of ILO's response



1 Stimulating the economy and employment

- A brief **note on Short-term Policy Response** to COVID-19 shared with State government of Odisha and Uttar Pradesh providing guidance on supporting informal economy workers.
- **Guidelines to support migrant women and girls** during COVID-19 were drafted by ILO as inputs to the advisory planned by National Commission for Women (NCW). It has been issued to all the concerned Ministries and to the State-Governments.
- ILO developed **repository of COVID-19 responses** from constituents – Government, Employers' and Workers' organization.

2 Supporting enterprises, jobs and incomes

- ILO facilitated **interaction of UN agencies with employers' and workers' organizations** on economic and employment impact of COVID-19 on 7 April

2020. The interaction provided insights into vulnerability of enterprises and workers, especially the ones engaged in informal economy. It has brought forward policy recommendations to support to employers and workers affected by the pandemic.

- **Business continuity planning support** being delivered to 25 MSMEs in the supply chain of garment and e-commerce companies through existing worker-manager cooperation teams within enterprises.
- A series of **virtual practical coaching sessions on 'Improving OSH** (Occupational Safety and Health) at workplace for prevention of COVID-19, organized through Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE) training programme in partnership with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) for employers and workers.
- **E- Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)** curriculum and content shared with select sectors and skill councils to support sustained access to skill education

3 Protecting workers in the workplace

- Prioritizing safe return to work, an **Action Checklist for Prevention and Mitigation of COVID-19 at work** was adapted in **Hindi, Bangla and Tamil** and a video on **'COVID-19: Three tips to protect SME Workers'** was developed in English and Hindi. The tools have been disseminated in the field through workers and employers organisations.
- To prevent exploitation and discrimination at workplace among migrants, women and children, **key messages were developed and shared with ILO's implementing partners** in the Indian states. They will guide the awareness generation activities among recruiters, employers and workers on protection of fundamental rights.

4 Relying on social dialogue for solutions

- ILO and UNIDO, organized a **bipartite consultation on**

'Recovery and revitalisation of MSME sector in the wake of COVID-19 lockdown' on 22 April

2020. The consultation paved way for recognizing concrete actions and policy recommendations for the sector.

- **Meeting of Central Trade Unions on 'COVID-19 and World of Work: Sharing Experience and Way forward'** was facilitated by the office on 27 April 2020. The Unions shared their concerns, while ILO shared guidance on possible actions for trade unions to be considered for COVID-19 response.
- ILO facilitated a meeting between Industry, European Union (EU) and Government of India on 29 April 2020 to discuss **long-term migration and mobility issues raised due to COVID-19**. The key take-away from meeting will contribute towards future discussions on EU-India migration policy.
- **Enterprise-level COVID-19 task force guidelines** developed and shared with the workers' and employers' organisations to facilitate safe return to work post- lockdown phase.

▶ ILO experts @ seminars

- ▶ **FICCI -KAS Virtual Dialogue on the Future of Work**, 20 April 2020, Expert: Dagmar Walter, Director, ILO India
- ▶ **'Safety and Health at Workplaces: Occupational Safety and Health with focus on Gender'** jointly hosted by VV Giri National Labour Institute, PRIA and Martha Farrell Foundation, 24, April 2020, Expert: Aya Matsuura, ILO Gender Specialist
- ▶ **Impact of the pandemic on the workforce in the export apparel & textiles industry in India** organized by NIFT, 23 April 2020, Expert: Bharti Birla, ILO Project Manager
- ▶ **'Covid-19 and Migrant Workers in India- An event challenging the appalling apathy towards migrant workers'** organized by HRDI on 1 May 2020, Expert: Bharti Birla, Project Manager
- ▶ **The Labour 3.0: Decoding the code and beyond, organized by ASSOCHAM**, 7 May, 2020, Expert: Ravi Peiris, ILO Employer's Specialist
- ▶ **COVID19: Defining Time for Labour**, organized by Department of Labour Studies TISS, 16 May 2020, Expert: Sultan Ahmmed, ILO Worker's Specialist

▶ Plans ahead

- ▶ **Situation analysis of impact on economic units and workers** in organised and unorganised sector in select states will be undertaken. It will guide ILO and its constituents in designing and implementing evidence-based policy measures for
 - *revival and revitalisation of MSMEs,*
 - *assess need for re-skilling and upskilling workers and*
 - *propose measures to ensure livelihood continuity for them*
- ▶ **Rapid study of vulnerabilities to violations of fundamental principles and rights at work** in context of the COVID-19 crisis in India is planned.
- ▶ **Entrepreneurship trainings using Start Your Own Business (SIYB) Tool** to be provided in select states in partnership with private sector, State governments and UN agencies. It will facilitate livelihood

recovery and continuity for affected workers, youths and women.

- ▶ **Working policy paper on internal labour migration in India** in being developed. It would serve as an input to policy makers and stakeholders in developing appropriate response for migrants affected by the COVID-19 crisis.
- ▶ **Skills need assessment for lockdown affected workers**, especially returnee migrants in select states in partnership with State governments and employers' organisations to be initiated.
- ▶ **Knowledge sharing meeting proposed with constituents on social health insurance** and on lowering the vulnerability of informal sector workers from COVID 19 like situations in future.

▶ ILO in the headlines



Safeguarding the vulnerable among us.

Op-Ed by ILO-DG, Guy Ryder, 27.03.20



New normal? Better normal!

Labour Day Op-Ed by ILO-DG, Guy Ryder, 01.05.20

Step up for human-centred future of work: What labour could look like post COVID-19

Column, by Director ILO India, Dagmar Walter, 28.04.20



Advisable to support migrants in staying where they are during lockdown period

Interview, Director ILO India, Dagmar Walter, 02.04.20



A Policy Framework for India's Covid-19 Migration

Column, Shabari Nair, Regional Migration Specialist and Divya Verma, Programme Officer, 19.05.20



Labour law changes in India should adhere to global standards, says ILO

Press statement, 14.05.20

Other mentions

