



# PARTNERSHIPS FOR DECENT WORK



International  
Labour  
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# Newsletter

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## The Post-2015 Development Agenda

*“We have an important opportunity to project globally the concerns and the policies of the ILO to set them firmly at the core of the future framework now under design”*

– *Guy Ryder, ILO Director-General*

The ILO is actively involved with the United Nations in support of country processes for defining the so called “post-2015 development framework” that will build on and complement the Millennium Development Goals. These initiatives include the work of the Task Team established by the UN Secretary-General under the leadership of the UN Development Group (UNDG), and the UNDG groups responsible for organizing thematic and national consultations. With UNDP, the ILO convened the first thematic consultation in Tokyo in May 2012, on the subject of “growth and employment”. In its recent discussion of the subject, the ILO Governing Body’s - governments, workers and employers gave a mandate to the ILO Director-General, Guy Ryder, to develop a strategy and provide support for ILO constituents to be fully involved in the agenda-setting processes.

### Governing Body decision on decent work in the post-2015 development agenda

The GB decision gives the ILO a clear mandate, calling on the Office to:

- (a) *develop and implement a strategy for the adoption of full and productive employment and decent work as an explicit goal of the global development agenda beyond 2015, including a reference to the need for social protection floors*
- (b) *prepare concept papers as a support for constituents in their national engagement in the debate on the post-2015 global development agenda and briefing notes for them on the progress of the deliberations*
- (c) *strengthen ILO support to constituents to assist countries that are still lagging behind in meeting the relevant MDGs.*

### Jobs and livelihoods at the heart of the post-2015 agenda

The Director-General’s concept note was issued on 19 November, and recalls the Organization’s objectives in the post-2015 process and provides a rationale to support it. The note emphasizes that simple and concrete goals make it easier to mobilize public support. It would therefore appear realistic to upgrade the objective of **full and productive employment and decent work** as a central goal of the post-2015 agenda. This goal should be supported through the implementation of social protection floors for poverty reduction and resilience. Progress in this area requires a process of regular dialogue and negotiation, and notably the inclusion of all stakeholders, governments, the private sector, trade unions, parliamentarians and local authorities, civil society and academia.

Three essential arguments, supported by experience and anchored in the ILO core values, provide directions. First, inclusive and **sustainable development** can only be achieved when people are provided opportunities **to earn their living in conditions of equity and dignity**. “The route toward inclusive, equitable and sustainable development must be anchored in jobs”. The challenges are numerous. Economic growth alone is not sufficient. Even though productive employment and decent work for all were one of the targets included under the Millennium Development Goal of eradicating extreme hunger and poverty, the convergence of crises – financial, food, fuel and environmental, has had a negative impact for many countries. In addition, some 45 to 50 million new jobs are still needed each year to keep up with the

growth of the working age population. Climate change mitigation and adaptation will entail a process of structural change in which there will inevitably be losers and winners. An inclusive sustainable development agenda hence needs to be protective of employment and livelihoods.

Second, a **job-centred development agenda is key to success**. Experience from Asia or Latin America shows the positive contribution of job creation to poverty alleviation. It includes a policy mix relying on social protection, economic diversification, inclusive access to finance, and employment-friendly macroeconomic policies fostering investment and consumption. Similar policies have been successful in addressing the economic and financial crisis. In addition, countries need to rely on stable government institutions committed to the rule of law. Labour market policies and institutions were also essential.

Third, it is now necessary to integrate these objectives into a **new global framework** so as to help mobilize international development assistance. Low income countries need support for investments in infrastructure that create jobs in the short term, and in skills and innovation that can raise workers' productivity and incomes in the medium term. Knowledge assistance is as important as hard financial support. It can focus on the mobilization of domestic resources for development, but also on the promotion of systems of governance that ensure fairness and equal opportunity, and which safeguard human and workers' right.

### The post-2015 discussion framework

In preparation for the UN General Assembly discussion to be conducted in September 2013, two processes have been set up. The Intergovernmental Open Working Group (OWG) is being organized as agreed at the Rio+20 summit. It aims at designing the sustainable development goals (SDGs) envisaged by the Rio Conference. In addition, the Secretary General will submit a report to the General Assembly for discussion. This report will be informed by discussions in the Secretary-General's High Level Panel of Eminent Persons (HLP) and supported by the thematic and national consultations mentioned above. Overall coordination of this exercise is assured by UN Task Team established by the Secretary-General and consisting of senior staff from UN organizations – including the ILO – and Bretton Woods institutions. It is co-chaired by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). In June 2012, the Task Team delivered the report *Realizing the Future We Want for All*.

The High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons was nominated in July 2012 and comprises 26 representatives of governments, NGOs, the private sector and academia. It is co-chaired by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, and Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom. The HLP first met in London from 31 October for 2 November 2012. The focus of the meeting has been on individual and household poverty – including human development, jobs and livelihoods and how to reach the marginalized and excluded. The next two meetings will take place in Monrovia, Liberia, focusing on national development, and the third in Bali, Indonesia, on the topic of global partnerships.

In support of this process, eleven **global thematic consultations** will be convened between May 2012 and June 2013, each co-led by two UN agencies. The topics include growth and employment, inequalities, education, environmental sustainability, food security and nutrition, governance, conflict and fragility, population dynamics, health, energy, and water and sanitation. The ILO is involved in several of these processes. The first ILO-UNDP led meeting entitled *Growth, Structural Change and Employment* was hosted by the Government of Japan in May 2012. It focused on employment as a key element for achieving sustainable development. **ILO constituents and partners are encouraged to join the many online e-discussions foreseen for each thematic consultation at [www.worldwewant2015.org](http://www.worldwewant2015.org).**

In addition, **national consultations** are currently foreseen in at least 57 countries, The ILO will be involved in this process through its regional and national offices. Additional consultations may be organized subject to available resources. A document entitled "[Guidelines for Country Consultations](#)" has been released by UNDG with the aim of assisting, streamlining and maximizing their impact. The scope of each consultation may vary. For instance, in Indonesia, four rounds of conversations have been organized and the ILO Office, along with the social partners, was able to participate.

In addition, major efforts are being made by the UNDG to obtain the views of civil society and the general public through an Outreach Group and a new online website called "My World" (available in early December) where everyone can vote for and nominate subjects for the new post-2015 goals. **ILO constituents and partners are encouraged to join MyWorld when it comes on line.** In some instances, the United Nations NGO Liaison Service (NGLS) is coordinating the participation of civil society.

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