Sweden is one of the founding member States of the ILO, and is a key partner in promoting the Decent Work Agenda. Sweden has ratified four Protocols and 94 Conventions, which include the eight Fundamental Conventions, the four prioritized Governance Conventions, and 82 Technical Conventions.

**Swedish Development Cooperation**

Drawing on its broader feminist foreign policy, the stated aim of Sweden’s development cooperation is to create the preconditions for people living under poverty and oppression to better their own lives. For this purpose, Swedish development aid is primarily focused on eight areas, which are:

- Human rights, democracy, and the rule of law.
- Gender equality.
- The environment and climate change, and the sustainable use of natural resources.
- Peace and security.
- Inclusive economic development.
- Migration and development.
- Health equity.
- Education and research.

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) is a government agency working on behalf of the Swedish parliament and government.

Sweden focuses on development cooperation in the following partner countries:

- Asia: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Iraq, Myanmar, Palestine, and Syria.
- Europe: Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo, Moldova, Russia, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine.
- Latin America: Bolivia, Colombia, Guatemala.

Sweden allocated 1.01% of its gross national income to official development assistance in 2017, which amounted to US$ 5.5 billion. In 2016, 28.8% of Sweden’s bilateral support was channelled through voluntary contributions to multilateral organizations, including the ILO.

Sweden’s ILO strategy, decided by the government in October 2017, forms the basis for Sweden’s overall collaboration with the ILO.

* Source: Development Co-operation Report 2018, OECD

**Sweden’s contribution to the ILO**

Sweden strongly supports ILO’s efforts to provide decent work and better living standards for women and men in developing countries. Sweden contributes to the regular budget of the ILO and its development cooperation programmes. Voluntary contributions are mainly channelled through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

The Sida-ILO Partnership Programme 2018-21 provides voluntary funding in the form of un-earmarked contributions and lightly earmarked support for thematic areas (such as youth employment, gender equality, social dialogue and industrial relations). The partnership builds on close alignment between the development cooperation priorities of Sweden and the ILO’s objective of realizing decent work and social justice for all.

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The Sida-ILO Partnership Programme contributes to the achievement of ILO results through a combination of different funding modalities. These include: fully un-earmarked voluntary core contributions (RBSA) and lightly earmarked thematic funding to promote employment; the protection of workers; environmental sustainability; gender equality and workplace compliance with a focus on social dialogue and industrial relations.

Beyond the Partnership, Swedish Embassies around the world engage with ILO offices for specific projects in line with bilateral Swedish and ILO priorities.

A selection of SIDA-supported initiatives

Building human and institutional capacities in Morocco

The ILO supported the formulation of the National Employment Strategy (2015-2025) and contributed to the preparation of its Implementation Plan (2017-2021). At the territorial level, three regional employment plans have been developed and validated. In continuing its efforts, the ILO is currently supporting the implementation of the employment policy at regional level and supporting better coordination and synergies between the national and territorial levels as well as the involvement of different stakeholders.

This ILO action prioritizes strengthening human and institutional at national and regional level, in order to promote and monitor the implementation of the regional action plan which focuses on youth and women.

Promoting Sound Industrial Relations in Global Supply Chains

Sound industrial relations at the workplace benefit productivity by contributing to business performance and reducing conflicts and disputes, while at the same time supporting decent work, improved wages and working conditions, and the creation of a more equitable work environment. With the objective of building the capacity of workers, trade union leaders, managers, employers and their organisations to promote and practice sound industrial relations, the ILO has developed a comprehensive policy and training package covering workplace cooperation, collective bargaining and grievance handling. With support from Sida, the Industrial Relations Toolkit is being tested in a number of selected countries, including Bangladesh, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Ethiopia, creating synergies with Swedish-funded development cooperation projects focused on the promotion of industrial relations and sustainable development in global supply chains.

Protecting indigenous women and men in Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, the ILO has built the capacities of indigenous and tea workers in plantations and in the urban informal economy to defend their rights and act collectively and as well as undertaken research to collect evidence on working conditions that can serve as the basis for advocacy. The ILO has continued to support the Bangladesh Cha Shramik Union (Tea Workers’ Union) and implemented a series of awareness raising and capacity building activities. A series of meetings between the Bangladesh Cha Shramik Union and the Bangladeshiyo Cha Sangsad (Tea Association) culminated in the signature of a preliminary Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) encompassing agreements on 23 demands, including improvements in wages and maternity benefits. This represents a milestone towards ensuring the fundamental rights of tea workers.

Decent Work and ‘Just Transition’ in Ghana

Work in Ghana started with a national dialogue on just transition to environmental sustainability and decent work. Building on the recommendations of that national dialogue, the ILO is focusing on two work streams: 1) supporting the integration of decent work and just transition dimensions in to Ghana’s Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) on climate change in view of its revision by 2020; and 2) the development of a strategy to implement the green job goals of Ghana’s National Employment Policy.

Women at Work Centenary Initiative

In the context of the Women at Work Centenary Initiative, work is ongoing in the areas of pay equity and the care economy. A website with relevant information on the Equal Pay International Coalition has been designed and the report on “Care Work and Care Jobs for the Future of Decent Work” will soon be disseminated in French and Spanish. Consultations with with Ministries of employment, environment, and social partners in Ghana were held to agree on the objectives and expected results for implementation in 2018-19.
Voluntary core funding (RBSA) spotlight: Investing in decentralised road maintenance to improve and sustain rural access in Nepal

A major development challenge in Nepal is the lack of maintenance of rural roads, often leading to economic and social isolation of communities, especially during rainy season. To respond to this challenge, The ILO used RBSA funding to develop a rural road maintenance pilot project using labour intensive approaches in three districts - Kasti, Rupendehi and Palpa. The pilot showed that rural roads could be maintained in a low cost way, while at the same time providing decent jobs and income for the local communities.

The National Rural Transport Program (SNRTP) is a joint initiative of The Government of Nepal and the World Bank, with a total budget of US$ 175.4 million. This programme covers 33 districts for year-round maintenance of rural road access in nearly half of Nepal’s rural localities as well as the creation of decent jobs for thousands of poor women and men who had previously lacked sufficient livelihoods.

The US$ 9.4 million ‘Road to Jobs’ project leverages SIDA’s prior investments in the rural road network around Mazar-e-Sharif and aims to provide better access to markets, employment and income-generating opportunities for farmers, wage labourers, migrant workers and other vulnerable people in the area. Over a period of four years, the R2J project has worked in six sub-sectors: grapes and raisin, cotton, poultry, dairy, almond and sheep and goats. Since its inception, the R2J project has generated more than 52,000 jobs (of which 3,475 for women) and trained more that 10,000 workers (of which nearly 60 per cent women) in various skills. This support has also helped generate nearly US$ 3.5 million in additional income through partnerships with more than 20 private sector companies, government agencies and other development partners.

The project has also helped train over 1,300 women in business and built a cadre of certified entrepreneurship and business management trainers that have supported the growth of women entrepreneurship in Afghanistan.
Sweden and the ILO signed a US$ 4.9 million agreement to support a project on Inclusive Growth through Decent Work in the Great Rift Valley. The agreement was signed with the objective of addressing developmental challenges through decent work and access to rights-based services among the rural population.

The Public-Private Development Partnership (PPDP) brings public, private and community stakeholders together with the aim of improving the living conditions in and around the Narok and Nakuru counties in Kenya. As education and training infrastructure is particularly scarce in the region, the partnership seeks to strengthen capacity and develop skills needed by the private sector in the area. The public sector will be engaged in the project as duty bearers and service providers of rights and services to the local community members, as well as providing contributions to technical and vocational trainings institutions and more.

Through PPDP, SIDA also supports Renewable Energy Skills Training and Women’s Economic Empowerment project in Somalia with a contribution of US$ 5.9 million. This project addresses two interrelated challenges to Somalia’s development: (a) barriers to women’s full economic empowerment; and (b) the lack of access to affordable, renewably-sourced energy. Each of these has been identified as priorities in Somalia’s National Development Plan (NDP). Building the support infrastructure for women entrepreneurs to significantly expand their businesses, including in the renewable energy sector, building sustainable training infrastructure using public-private partnerships to develop the human resources needed to expand and sustain Somalia’s electricity supply, are critical in building wealth, creating jobs, and unleashing the potential for innovation that attracts investment and promotes development in Somalia.

The project MozTrabalha focuses on providing technical and financial assistance to practical intervention models that seek to create decent employment for Mozambicans, particularly women and youth living in rural areas. The objective is to support elements identified by the National Employment Policy, including the coordination mechanisms that will ensure the implementation of the policy through the empowerment of the social dialogue tripartite structure.

The partnership between Sida, H&M and the ILO aims to improve of industrial relations in the textile and garment industry in Cambodia, Myanmar and Ethiopia, and supports the socially responsible production of garments for global markets. Governments, social partners and major industry stakeholders are supported to engage in social dialogue, as well as nurturing sound labour relations and collective bargaining with a view to improve wages and working conditions for textile and garment workers. At country-level, the ILO works with labour administrations, inspectors, trade unions and employers’ organisations to improve conciliation skills, clarify rules and procedures concerning industrial relations, strengthen collective bargaining practices, improve grievance mechanisms, and more. A strong gender focus ensures that the ILO projects help strengthen the capacity of women workers to protect their rights.

Taken together, these efforts contribute to social and labour compliance through improved labour market governance, which allows the industry to expand in a socially sustainable manner and create decent jobs in the global textile and garment sector.