



## FOR INFORMATION

### FOURTEENTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

## Report of the Director-General

### Second Supplementary Report: Stocktaking of implementation of the ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2008–09

#### Introduction

1. As requested by the Governing Body,<sup>1</sup> this paper takes stock of implementation during 2008 of the ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2008–09 (the Action Plan). The Action Plan operationalizes the Director-General's 1999 *Gender equality and mainstreaming in the ILO* policy document and is aligned with the Programme and Budget for 2008–09. The Action Plan, comprising indicators and targets, involves all ILO staff at all levels. Tripartite constituents are the ultimate beneficiaries.
2. The Action Plan focuses on three dimensions that together support the larger goal of decent work for all women and men. These are:
  - enabling institutional mechanisms for gender equality in the Organization;
  - gender equality results in ILO strategic objectives; and
  - the joint immediate outcome on advancing gender equality in the world of work.
3. Arrangements are being made in 2009 for a thematic evaluation of performance and progress in gender mainstreaming. The evaluation will be undertaken by the Bureau for Gender Equality with support of the Evaluation Unit.
4. This paper highlights some initiatives undertaken in 2008 on the basis of responses received to the Bureau for Gender Equality's request for information. The paper also takes into account the adoption in June 2008 of the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, which stresses that "gender equality and non-discrimination must be considered to be cross-cutting issues in the [four] strategic objectives".

<sup>1</sup> See GB.300/PV, para. 155.

5. The Action Plan, which outlines roles and responsibilities, as well as accountability monitoring mechanisms, is already widely regarded as good practice and is referred to as such in the Report of the United Nations Secretary-General, *Improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system*, presented to the 63rd Session of the General Assembly.<sup>2</sup>

## **Enabling institutional mechanisms for gender equality in the Organization**

### **Staffing**

6. The results on staffing in the Action Plan are “progress toward parity by 2010 of Professional staff across all units and offices” and “equality of opportunity and treatment of all ILO staff”.
7. Concerning the four relevant action steps, the Human Resources Department and the Bureau for Gender Equality identified strategies and began implementing activities aimed at ensuring greater parity between women and men in senior posts, expanding opportunities for General Service staff development, promoting a family-friendly working environment, and improving staff competency in gender mainstreaming. General Service staff participated in two gender mainstreaming training workshops. The Capacity Building Initiative learning modules for ILO staff, which are under development, will also mainstream gender. The Staff Union is committed to work with the Office to advance gender equality and promote work–life balance and a family-friendly working environment. Among joint initiatives undertaken were a work–life balance staff survey and an adoption policy, which was approved by the Governing Body at its 303rd Session. The Staff Union also supported, along with the Office mediator, several information-sharing initiatives for staff on harassment.

### **Substance**

8. The Action Plan’s result on substance requires that “commitment to gender equality is internalized throughout the ILO and reflected in all technical work, operational activities and support services including knowledge management, as stated in the ILO’s gender equality policy”.
9. Activities to achieve “increased competence of ILO staff in conducting gender analysis and planning related to employment and decent work” included two training workshops on knowledge sharing for gender equality. The workshops involved over 40 ILO staff members and technical cooperation project coordinators from the field and headquarters, of whom eight were men.
10. Concerning action on “attitudes and working habits are supporting gender mainstreaming”, the Social Protection Sector held a one-day retreat on gender issues for its managers at headquarters. The retreat resulted in ten points for action. In the field, the Bureau for Gender Equality, in cooperation with the ILO offices concerned, organized a capacity–building workshop in Mozambique for gender audit facilitators drawn from the tripartite constituents. This resulted in the conduct of two gender audits. Workshops were also held for staff of the UN Country Team. In Kyrgyzstan two gender audit facilitator

<sup>2</sup> See A/63/364, para. 46.

workshops were held, which resulted in a gender audit of the Economic and Social Division of the President's Administration. Facilitator training also took place in Indonesia, Nigeria and Zambia, as well as a workshop for South Asia-based representatives of employers' organizations. At headquarters, a facilitator training activity was carried out and a gender audit conducted for the International Labour Standards Department.

11. Action on "improved level of knowledge and methodologies for addressing gender dimensions in technical work" included the development of a strategy for gender mainstreaming within the Employment Sector linked to the Action Plan. The strategy outlines how gender dimensions will be systematically addressed across the sector's work and by all its staff. In addition, a document, "Gender and employment policies: Guidelines for policy formulation for ILO staff and constituents" uses the Global Employment Agenda to address various employment issues. It also contains policy briefs that can be utilized by staff members as well as by constituents. A provisional training plan for building capacity on gender issues for sector staff was developed and will be rolled out in early 2009.
12. Other initiatives include those taken by the Department of Partnerships and Development Cooperation in consultation with the Bureau for Gender Equality to increase the extent to which donor agreements make specific provisions to support gender mainstreaming and technical cooperation projects and programmes mainstream gender. Although there were no new major donor agreements signed in 2008, the Department of Partnerships and Development Cooperation invited the Bureau for Gender Equality to the annual review meetings with Denmark, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom, and to a donor briefing in September 2008. Within IRIS, the categories for reporting on gender equality in technical cooperation projects were refined, making reporting on gender mainstreaming in the projects mandatory, more precise and quantitatively verifiable. Self-check boxes in the project outline template and the "gender checklist" in the technical cooperation manual were also introduced, while a system is now in place for the appraisal of all new projects to help ensure gender is incorporated at the project design stage.

## **Institutional arrangements**

13. The result for institutional arrangements aims at "strengthened institutional arrangements for effective gender mainstreaming Office-wide".
14. Action steps envisage a "well-staffed and resourced Bureau for Gender Equality and gender specialists in the field supporting gender mainstreaming across the Organization", as well as an "effective gender focal point system in place". In order to increase the coverage and diversity of gender focal points for headquarters and field offices, the Bureau for Gender Equality mapped the ILO Gender Network in June 2008. It subsequently requested managers and directors of the six headquarters units and 11 field offices without focal points to appoint a person or team, taking into account the need for more male gender focal points and a mix of both junior and senior, and Professional and General Service staff. By the end of 2008 the network had grown from 95 to 106 persons, of whom 30 (28 per cent) were men, while the number of middle-management focal points remained stable. One headquarters unit contacted had still not appointed a focal point, as was the case for three field offices.
15. In the area of gender-sensitive language and the elimination of gender-biased terms or phrases in ILO rules, regulations and directives, the Office of the Legal Adviser prepared amendments to the Standing Orders of the International Labour Conference and to the Rules for Regional Meetings in English, French and Spanish. The amendments differ

somewhat between the three versions. At its 97th Session (June 2008), the Conference adopted the amendments to the Conference Standing Orders and confirmed the amendments to the Rules for Regional Meetings, which had been approved earlier by the Governing Body at its 301st Session (March 2008).

### **Gender equality result areas of the ILO strategic objectives**

16. During 2008, activities in the area of fundamental principles and rights at work and international labour standards included: a pilot programme in Morocco to promote workplace equality and publication of a good practice guide; a study on occupational segregation and gender pay equity in Jordan; gender sensitization on women's employment concerns and related international labour standards for senior government officials in Pakistan; and gender-sensitive tools used in the HIV/AIDS-induced child labour project in Uganda. Headquarters-based initiatives included the Global Project on Combating Inequalities and Discrimination in the World of Work, and preparatory work for standard setting on domestic workers.
17. For the strategic objective on employment, activities included: the Gambia priority employment programme for youth and women; action research on microfinance for decent work in 21 countries; the film "Jobs for Young Women and Men in Kyrgyzstan" produced for the "Gender Equality at the Heart of Decent Work" global awareness campaign; the Employment for Peace – Promoting Gender Equity Project in Somalia; Creating an Enabling Environment for Women Entrepreneurship Development in Kyrgyzstan; Arab States expert meeting on informal employment from a gender perspective; and non-traditional skills training of women in Pakistan's garment industry. Headquarters-based initiatives include the publication of *Women, Gender and the Informal Economy: An Assessment of ILO Research and Suggested Ways Forward*; *Gender Awareness and Advocacy Volume*; and *Amélioration de l'apprentissage dans l'économie informelle: le cas du Mali*.
18. In the area of social protection, activities included: publication of *Globalization, Flexibilization and Working Conditions in Asia and the Pacific*; meetings and policy briefs on an assessment in Jordan of social care needs and provisions from a gender perspective; a project with UNFPA, "Men as Partners in Reproductive Health through the Organized Workforce" in Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu; a film, "Physical Mobility – The Missing Links" produced for the Women Employment Concerns and Working Conditions in Pakistan Project; and the joint UN project on Violence Against Women in Bangladesh. Initiatives among headquarters units included: the Workplace Partnerships for Childcare Solutions Project; a tripartite discussion forum on work and family; research article highlighting the situation of women domestic workers entitled, "Nueva política migratoria de España y el enfoque multilateral de la OIT"; and publication of *Globalization, Flexibilization and Working Conditions in Asia and the Pacific*.
19. In the area of social dialogue, activities included: Building Trade Union Capacity at Enterprise Level to Negotiate Issues of Women Workers' Concern in Viet Nam Project; Reconciling Work and Family: Issues and Policies in Trinidad and Tobago; a project in MERCOSUR countries and Chile on Employment Policies for Gender, Racial and Ethnic Equality; "Gender Action Plan" of the Poverty Reduction through Decent Work Employment Creation Project in Liberia; women entrepreneurs trained in Cameroon on exporting; young women's entrepreneurship component of the Youth Employment and Social Dialogue Programme in Indonesia; the project Promoting Decent Work and Gender Equality in Yemen; and developing companies' equal employment opportunity policies in

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Pakistan. Headquarters initiatives included an “Equality and Diversity Training Package” for employers; a *Trade Union Guide on Organizing Informal Workers* with a focus on women (with the Ghana Trade Union Congress); a translation into Russian of *Gender Equality and Decent Work: Good Practices at the Workplace*; and African labour courts and tribunals training on better legal compliance to prevent HIV/AIDS and highlighting gender issues (with the Turin Centre).

### **Joint immediate outcome on advancing gender equality in the world of work**

20. The Action Plan includes the text of this joint immediate outcome of the Programme and Budget for 2008–09, which is coordinated by the Bureau for Gender Equality. The outcome aims to increase capacity of constituents to develop integrated policies and programmes to advance gender equality in the world of work.
21. To promote joint implementation of the outcome, in January 2008 the Bureau for Gender Equality briefed staff of 35 headquarters units on the programming requirements and reporting. This information was also shared with other units and field offices, with which the Bureau for Gender Equality coordinated resource linking for the outcome in IRIS. During the year, the Bureau for Gender Equality tracked this process.
22. Concerning the outcome strategy of including gender in the design and implementation of Decent Work Country Programmes, the Bureau for Gender Equality reviewed all draft programmes as part of the Quality Assurance Mechanism. Concerning the outcome strategy on gender audits, these were conducted by the Bureau for Gender Equality, as described above, for constituents, ILO offices and some UN entities. Gender audits were also promoted among UN Country Teams as an accountability mechanism for gender equality.

Geneva, 9 February 2009.

*Submitted for information.*