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Progress report on the technical cooperation programme agreed between the Government of Qatar and the ILO

Purpose of the document

This document provides an annual progress report on the technical cooperation programme agreed between the Government of Qatar and the ILO.

Relevant strategic objective: Promote and realize standards and fundamental principles and rights at work.

Main relevant outcome: Outcome 2: International labour standards and authoritative and effective supervision.

Policy implications: None.

Legal implications: None.

Financial implications: None.

Follow-up action required: None.

Author unit: International Labour Standards Department (NORMES).

Related documents: GB.331/INS/13(Rev.); GB.334/INS/8; GB.337/INS/5.

▶ Background

1. At its 331st Session (October–November 2017), the Governing Body decided to support the agreed technical cooperation programme between the Government of Qatar and the ILO and its implementation modalities. ¹ This technical cooperation programme reflects the joint commitment of both the Government of Qatar and the ILO to cooperate on ensuring compliance with ratified international labour Conventions and gradually achieving fundamental principles and rights at work in Qatar during the period 2018–20.
2. The first and second progress reports were presented at the 334th and 337th Sessions of the Governing Body, respectively. ² This document presents the third and last annual progress report on the further achievements in the implementation of the Qatar-ILO technical cooperation programme as of mid-October 2020.
3. The programme will end by 30 June 2021.

Third-year achievements under the five pillars of the programme

Pillar 1 – Improvement in the payment of wages

4. Law No. 17 of 2020 **introduced a non-discriminatory minimum wage** for the first time in Qatar. The Law will come into force in March 2021, six months after its adoption. In addition to establishing the minimum basic wage, it requires employers to provide decent food and accommodation to workers. It applies to all workers regardless of their nationality and the sector in which they work, including domestic work and other sectors not covered by the Labour Law. The accompanying Ministerial Decision No. 25 of 2020 stipulates a minimum basic wage of 1,000 riyals (US\$275), and minimum allowances for food and accommodation, of 300 riyals (US\$82) and 500 riyals (US\$137), respectively.
5. The new legislation also **established a Minimum Wage Commission** to monitor the impact of the minimum wage, gather information and propose adjustments on an annual basis.
6. A comprehensive awareness-raising campaign on the minimum wage was launched, targeting employers and workers. In addition, the staff of the Labour Inspection Department, including the Wages Protection System Unit, will receive training on the enforcement of the new law.
7. The **wage protection system was strengthened** considerably over the past year, in line with recommendations from the comprehensive assessment that was conducted by the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs (MADLSA) and the ILO in 2019. From 2019 to 2020, coverage of the wage protection system increased from 75 per cent to 96 per cent of eligible workers, and from 78 per cent to 94 per cent of enterprises. The system is now able to detect a broader range of wage-related violations, including payment below the minimum basic wage and non-compliance with the newly introduced thresholds for food and accommodation allowances. Penalties in the form of blocks on government services are now imposed automatically when violations are detected among companies that are deemed high-risk. In January 2020, the Wages

¹ GB.331/PV, para. 387. A summary of the programme is appended.

² GB.334/INS/8; GB.337/INS/5.

Protection System Unit imposed blocks on 588 companies. Later in the year, as the impact of the lockdown and COVID-19 restrictions took hold, more companies were found to be in violation of the wage protection system, and in June, 8,756 companies were blocked. To ensure the timely application of stronger penalties by the police and the Public Prosecution Office, inter-ministerial coordination is being enhanced to allow for improved tracking of serious violations that the Wages Protection System Unit refers to the police. The Labour Law has been amended to increase the penalties for wage-related violations, from a maximum prison sentence of one month to 12 months, and to increase the maximum fine from 6,000 riyals (US\$1,650) to 10,000 riyals (US\$2,750). In addition, the Unit and a large public client are piloting a positive incentive scheme for sustained compliance with the wage protection system. This pilot relies on potential contractors for public tenders including a certificate of a clean record on wage protection within their bids.

8. The Wages Protection System Unit can now track, in real time, key indicators on violations detected and internal action taken, and generate periodic reports. At the strategic level, the analysis of trends and challenges in compliance has guided interventions, including training and information campaigns.
9. In March 2020, the MADLSA and the Qatar Central Bank adopted measures to promote and facilitate domestic workers' access to bank accounts, thereby enhancing their wage protection and financial inclusion. A proposal to extend coverage of the wage protection system to domestic workers is under deliberation by the MADLSA, the Central Bank, the ILO and the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF).
10. An analysis of national and international experience on the issuance of payslips has been prepared by the MADLSA and the ILO. Different models of issuing payslips will be considered so as to provide workers with clarity and transparency on how their wages are calculated.
11. As of August 2020, the **Workers' Support and Insurance Fund** has disbursed 14 million riyals (US\$3.85 million) among 5,500 workers. The Fund has undergone a change in structure, and has been integrated under the MADLSA.

Pillar 2 – Labour inspection and occupational safety and health systems

12. As part of the **implementation of the National Action Plan on Heat Stress** and in line with the Annual Strategy for Labour Inspection Services for 2020, the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Unit led a pilot intervention on heat stress, with support from the Strategic Office of the Labour Inspection Department, in order to monitor compliance with the heat stress legislation. The pilot consisted of a threefold approach on training, tracking and sharing. A total of 25 inspectors and three interpreters were trained on the heat stress legislation and standard operating procedures for the preparation, conduct and follow-up of labour inspection visits. To enable quantifiable evaluation of their impact and efficiency, a new system was put in place to track the outcomes of the inspection visits according to key performance indicators. From 15 June to 31 August 2020, labour inspectors ordered the closure of 263 work sites that were found to be in violation of the legislation on heat stress. In addition, workers received targeted information in their languages on the dangers of heat stress and how to mitigate them.
13. **A national OSH policy** was developed by a joint task force, led by the MADLSA and the Ministry of Public Health, in consultation with employers' and workers' representatives.

The policy, which was adopted in March 2020, sets out the principles, scope and responsibilities of both ministries.

14. One central focus of the OSH policy is the strengthening of the system for registering work injuries and occupational diseases, and improving data collection and analysis. The MADLSA, the Ministry of Public Health, the ILO and a number of key national stakeholders have entered into a collaboration to improve the collection and analysis of data on work-related injuries with a view to informing training strategies, information campaigns, inspection visits and labour inspectors' investigations of occupational accidents. The MADLSA has organized online exchanges with the OSH units in partner countries to share experiences on OSH data collection and analysis.
15. Consultations were organized to discuss the findings of a gap analysis at the national level regarding the **Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155)**.
16. In 2019, the Strategic Office of the **Labour Inspection Department developed a training plan and training modules** for 2019–20 in collaboration with the Institute of Public Administration, which is the training arm of the MADLSA. In the last quarter of 2019, all labour inspectors had undergone training on labour inspection skills and the labour law. After disruptions due to COVID-19, trainings resumed in July 2020. As of November 2020, inspectors had received training on heat stress legislation, the investigation of occupational accidents, and forced labour.
17. The MADLSA strengthened the capacity of the Labour Inspection Department to collect and analyse data. It prepared for publication an annual report for 2019 to enhance transparency and accountability of inspection services. In line with the requirements of the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81), the annual report included the following information: (a) laws and regulations relevant to the work of the inspection service; (b) staff of the labour inspection service; (c) statistics of workplaces liable to inspection and the number of workers employed therein; (d) statistics of inspection visits; (e) statistics of violations and penalties imposed; (f) statistics of industrial accidents; and (g) statistics of occupational diseases.
18. **Awareness-raising and information for workers and employers.** To celebrate the World Day for Safety and Health at Work on 28 April 2020, the MADLSA published a [video animation](#) that highlights the role of government, employers and workers in promoting safe and healthy workplaces. The video is available in ten languages and received a total of 1.2 million views in three months. In addition, the following four videos, which are available in 11 languages, were promoted on social media between August and October: Introducing the Qatar labour inspectorate; Understand your working hours; Understand your employment contract; and Understand your important documents.

Pillar 3 – An employment contractual system replacing the *kafala* system, and improved employment conditions and labour recruitment

19. A new **Ministerial Decision ending the requirement for exit permits for workers** not covered by the Labour Law was issued by the Minister of the Interior on 16 January 2020. Ministerial Decision No. 95 of 2019 extends the coverage of Law No. 13 of 2018, and grants the right to leave the country temporarily or permanently during their contract period to workers of ministries and other government entities, workers in public institutions, domestic workers, workers employed at sea, workers in agriculture, and workers employed in casual work. At the same time, the new Ministerial Decision states that employers may submit for approval to the MADLSA names of workers for whom an exit permit should still be required, with a justification based on the nature of their work.

The number of these workers must not exceed 5 per cent of the workforce of each institution, and exceptions cannot be requested for domestic workers. As of August 2020, a total of 42,171 requests for exit permit exemptions had been approved by the Ministry.

20. The programme provided continuous technical advice on the drafting of this Ministerial Decision and will continue to support legislative and institutional reforms for the full abolishment of exit permits for all workers in Qatar. The programme also focused on raising awareness of the newly adopted Decision and Law No. 13 of 2018, through the development of a video, infographics and frequently asked questions for workers and employers in ten languages.
21. **Legal restrictions on migrant workers' ability to change jobs were eliminated** through two new laws amending Labour Law No. 14 of 2004 and Law No. 21 of 2015 on the entry and exit of expatriates and on their residence, which were signed by the Emir on 30 August 2020 and entered into force on 8 September 2020. Law No. 19 of 2020, complemented by a new Ministerial Decision No. 51 of 2020, removes the requirement to obtain a no-objection certificate to change jobs for all migrant workers, while Law No. 18 of 2020 provides new rules on termination of employment. Workers who are covered by the Labour Law, domestic workers and maritime and agricultural workers are now able to change employer after their probation period, after giving written notice of one or two months, depending on their length of service. If workers wish to change employer during their probation period, they must give one month of notice and the future employer must pay the current employer compensation not exceeding two months of the worker's basic wage.
22. The programme will continue to provide technical advice on the drafting of a Ministerial Decision complementing Law No. 15 of 2017 on domestic workers, which will reflect the provisions of the new standard contract, as well as of amendments to the Civil Service Human Resources Law No. 15 of 2016. The programme launched an awareness-raising campaign of the newly adopted legislation and standard contract. To this end, [a video, infographics and frequently asked questions](#) on labour mobility were developed for workers and employers in ten languages.
23. The programme is supporting the **design and development of a public job-matching platform** in order to facilitate internal labour market mobility. In July 2020, the programme organized a webinar with the European Commission to learn from good practices of the European job mobility portal, EURES.
24. The programme is also supporting a review of occupational classifications currently used in Qatar with a view to harmonizing them with the International Standard Classification of Occupations 2008. A workshop with national stakeholders will be organized in December 2020 to present the recommendations and the road map for the completion of Qatar's national occupational classification.
25. **Implementation of Law No. 15 of 2017 relating to domestic workers was strengthened.** The programme collaborated closely with the IDWF to organize an online celebration of International Domestic Workers' Day in June 2020. For this occasion, an [awareness-raising video on the rights and responsibilities of domestic workers](#) and an [informational booklet for domestic workers](#) were translated into ten languages, in partnership with the non-governmental organization Migrant-Rights. An [informational booklet for employers of domestic workers](#) was also developed in English and Arabic. These tools are being widely disseminated through social media, Government offices and the IDWF.

26. In addition, the programme started a public awareness-raising campaign on decent work for domestic workers, which aims to promote respect of working hours and workers' rights to a weekly rest day and to keep their passport.
27. The programme completed the impact assessment of the **fair recruitment** pilot project between Bangladesh and Qatar in the construction sector. The findings of the assessment will be disseminated among key stakeholders in Qatar and will inform regulatory reforms of labour recruitment procedures. To broaden its work to other sectors, in April 2020 the ILO signed a public-private partnership with Hilton International, which aims to test fair recruitment processes of migrant workers to Qatar and share lessons learned with the hospitality industry. From November 2020, the programme will start an assessment of recruitment policies and procedures of Hilton International and its labour recruiters in two countries of origin. The findings of the assessment will be used to build a tailored capacity-building programme for labour recruiters, which will take place from February to April 2021.
28. In order to continue enhancing the skills of the staff of 14 Qatar Visa Centres,³ the programme is developing a two-day training curriculum focusing on providing effective information on the rights and responsibilities of workers in Qatar, explaining terms and conditions of an employment contract to workers, and documenting cases of collection of recruitment fees and related costs from workers. A training of trainers will be conducted for the MADLSA and the Ministry of the Interior in January 2021, with a view to rolling out the curriculum in all countries of origin that host Qatar Visa Centres as of November 2020.
29. The second session of the quarterly working group on public procurement was held in February 2020, in which it reviewed the results of a pioneering study on how to promote labour rights through public procurement processes in Qatar. The working group has led to the launch of a pilot project with Qatar's Public Works Authority, Ashghal, requiring all bidders to present a certificate of compliance from the national wage protection system in order to be eligible for a tender.
30. **Working and living conditions were improved.** The programme continued to build the capacity of more than 40 hotels in Qatar through the working group for sustainable growth and decent work in the hospitality sector. The multi-stakeholder forum, implemented in coordination with the Institute for Human Rights and Business and the International Tourism Partnership, launched a guidance tool in September 2020 to promote fair recruitment and employment standards in the hospitality sector. The tool was developed in collaboration with hotels, national stakeholders and international employers' and workers' organizations.
31. Building on the lessons learned from this experience, the programme convened a new working group of companies in the private security sector, in collaboration with UNI Global Union and the Institute for Human Rights and Business. This forum aims to develop good practices for due diligence of suppliers and labour recruiters, promote workplace cooperation and develop grievance mechanisms. Two sessions were held in August and October 2020.

³ Qatar Visa Centres are integrated service centres based in countries of origin. Migrant workers wishing to migrate to Qatar need to finalize their immigration procedures through those centres. All services are free of charge for workers and include biometric enrolment, medical examinations and the signing of the electronic employment contract before departure. There are currently 14 Qatar Visa Centres operational in six countries: Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines and Sri Lanka.

32. The programme completed a mapping of Qatar's statutory legislation and related non-statutory standards on working and living conditions, compared to international labour standards. The results will be presented during a webinar in November 2020, and the good practices identified will inform, among others, the drafting of amendments to the ministerial decision on housing and of the regulation of placement agencies.

Pillar 4 – Forced labour

33. A comprehensive three-day **training course on forced labour and trafficking in persons was developed** and delivered by trainers from the Institute for Public Administration to all inspectors. The training was subsequently adapted for the Labour Relations Department and staff of the MADLSA complaints hotline, to assist them in identifying potential situations of forced labour.
34. The National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking and the ILO produced a booklet on forced labour and trafficking in persons, for use by officials and others who may come into contact with victims. The booklet highlights national legislation and strategies and provides information on how these crimes can manifest, identifying victims, the rights of victims and the importance of prosecuting perpetrators.
35. With a view to the ratification of the **Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930**, a gap analysis is under way. Standard operating procedures were developed for the shelters for victims of trafficking and exploitation, known as Humanitarian Care Homes, which were opened in early 2020. As part of a phased opening, a number of cases were referred to the shelters for assistance by embassies of countries of origin. The expansion of the shelters' services was temporarily halted as part of the national response to COVID-19, as the facilities had to be repurposed to provide medical services. Posters and flyers to raise awareness about the shelters have been developed for distribution among members of the National Committee, embassies, government agencies and other bodies providing services to migrants.
36. A **campaign** was launched to raise public awareness on forced labour and trafficking. A series of public service announcements on traditional media and social media called on viewers to take action to eradicate practices that could descend into forced labour. A flyer on passport confiscation was disseminated by labour inspectors and promoted through social media on the occasion of World Day against Trafficking in Persons.

Pillar 5 – Promoting workers' voice

37. The ILO continues to **facilitate the submission of workers' complaints to the MADLSA** in accordance with the agreed protocol. Thus far, the ILO has lodged 91 complaints on behalf of 1,896 workers, resulting in the conclusion of 56 cases (1,745 workers). The remaining cases are either under appeal or in process.
38. In addition to the submission of formal complaints from workers, the ILO liaises directly with the MADLSA on a wide range of workers' issues for faster resolution. Thus far, this collaboration has resulted in assistance being provided to 7,420 workers.
39. Following the joint review conducted by the MADLSA and the ILO of Qatar's disputes resolution mechanism, work has begun on implementing its recommendations. An explanatory guide on Qatar's labour laws for workers has been developed, and complementary materials will be developed regarding changes to the process for initiating complaints and on how to engage with all levels of the disputes resolution process to ensure a more efficient processing of complaints. A workshop with Dispute Settlement Committee legal aids and a workshop on Mediation Skills for the employees

of MADLSA's Labour Relations Department were organized on 8 and 9 October 2019 respectively. Training to develop the capacities of conciliators is being devised and improvements will be made to the conciliation process and measures to ensure that workers appearing before the Disputes Settlement Committees are fully informed before, during and after hearings. The ILO will work with the MADLSA on policies/protocols to handle multi-worker complaints, retaliation, and on how to ensure rapid enforcement of agreements/adjudications through the Workers' Support Fund.

40. A draft ministerial decision governing the **rules and procedures of collective negotiation and joint agreements** was prepared for discussion with the MADLSA.
41. Since the issuance on 21 April 2019 of Decision No. 21 of 2019 regulating the conditions and procedures for the election of workers' representatives to joint committees, the ILO and the MADLSA have supported the **establishment of joint committees with private companies and public bodies**. Between July 2019 and August 2020, 107 workers' representatives were elected to represent almost 17,000 employees in 20 establishments, among them two public bodies (WISA Manpower and Mowasalat (Karwa)). Elections will take place between November 2020 and January 2021 at Qatar Rail and its main contractors, the College of the North Atlantic – Qatar and its main contractors, and the United Development Company and its main contractors.
42. **Social dialogue was strengthened at the sectoral level.** In recognition of the variations in joint committee priorities and discussions across sectors, five working groups were established for joint committees in each of the following sectors: maintenance and construction; hospitality, catering and cleaning; landscaping and agriculture; manufacturing; and transport.
43. In collaboration with the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF), Building and Wood Workers International (BWI) and UNI Global Union, five interactive webinars were delivered every week from the beginning of May to mid-June 2020 to each of the sectoral working groups. The 30 webinars discussed the roles and responsibilities of joint committee members in relation to each area of the joint committees' mandate (the organization of work; production and productivity; health and safety; social services; training programmes; and workplace diversity and inclusion), including in the context of COVID-19. The webinars were steered by the MADLSA/ILO practical guidance on the roles and responsibilities of joint committee members. In addition, the MADLSA and the ILO provided guidance on social dialogue in the context of COVID-19. A second round of webinars was concluded for 20 participants in the retail sector on 5 October.
44. In collaboration with the Embassy of the Netherlands in Qatar and the Social and Economic Council of the Netherlands, a training programme on the exercise of employee participation rights was piloted with four companies in Qatar between 15 August and 30 September. The training has guided the adoption of information-sharing and consultation procedures by each of the four joint committees. The procedures can be adapted for use by other joint committees.
45. **Social dialogue was strengthened in public bodies.** With support from the ILO and the MADLSA, the Central Labour Management Committee for the elected workers' representatives and management representatives of Qatar Foundation's main contractors (Tashawor) has met five times since its establishment in September 2019. A Tashawor subcommittee, comprising seven workers' representatives and seven management representatives, was established to develop guidelines for the assessment of main contractors' social services. Another subcommittee, comprising five workers'

representatives and five management representatives, was established to contribute to the promotion and implementation of the guidelines for a comprehensive workplace conflict prevention and management system. Remote Tashawor meetings were instrumental in responding to main contractors' questions regarding the application of COVID-19-related government guidance.

- 46. Social dialogue was strengthened at the national level.** In collaboration with the International Training Centre of the ILO (Turin Centre), a series of webinars presenting the experiences of national social dialogue platforms in Ireland, the Netherlands, South Africa and Tunisia were organized for the members of the national social dialogue platform, Taawon. Following the webinars, a strategic plan was developed with Taawon members to define the platform's mandate, scope and functions. Taawon members include the MADLSA, representatives from public bodies, and worker and management representatives elected to the central labour management committees of these public bodies. A training in facilitation and negotiation skills for Taawon members is planned for January 2021.
- 47. Workplace dispute prevention and resolution systems were strengthened.** Twenty human resource professionals participated in the Turin Centre's online course "Tools and Strategies for the Prevention of Labour Disputes in the Workplace" (25 May–19 June 2020). The participants represented 14 private companies and three public bodies (Qatar Foundation, Mowasalat and WISA).
- 48.** Subsequent to the training, participatory action research was undertaken in collaboration with the 20 human resource professionals to examine the structure (both formal and informal) of the conflict management systems in companies in Qatar, including: the role of human resources, line managers, welfare officers, accommodation site managers and joint committee representatives in dispute resolutions processes; and the conflict resolution management systems of public bodies in dealing with grievances emerging from their main contractors and subcontractors. The research informed guidelines for the establishment and management of an integrated conflict management system.
- 49. Sustainability of social dialogue was promoted.** The MADLSA and the ILO are exploring the possibility of introducing an electronic gateway on workplace cooperation. The electronic gateway will allow the MADLSA to: (i) manage joint committee requests effectively within the deadlines specified in Law No. 14 of 2004 and corresponding Ministerial Decisions; (ii) support electronic joint committee elections; (iii) host the interactive training platforms for joint committee members; (iv) catalogue and keep records of Tashawor and Taawon meetings; (v) allow the referral of collective disputes to the MADLSA's Labour Relations Department; and (vi) process the registration of joint agreements with the MADLSA.
- 50.** A Workplace Cooperation Unit was established within the Labour Relations Department of the MADLSA covering four core positions: (i) a social dialogue specialist to support the Tashawor and Taawon platforms and enterprise-level joint negotiations; (ii) a collective dispute resolution specialist to promote the guidelines for a comprehensive workplace conflict prevention and management system and to address joint committee requests for mediation from the MADLSA; (iii) a training and outreach specialist to promote and support the establishment of joint committees and to manage the capacity-building programme for joint committee representatives and the MADLSA officials; and (iv) a monitoring/research specialist to manage the online platform and to collect and analyse relevant data on: joint committee representation by sector, gender and public body;

Taawon and Tashawor consultation and decisions; mediation reports; and joint agreements.

51. With support from the Turin Centre, an online interactive training platform is being developed to train current and future officials of the Workplace Cooperation Unit. The structure of the platform is being designed to reflect the structure of the Unit, with learning objectives, content, tools and assessments dedicated to each of the four positions. Content is also being developed for the employees of labour relations departments across Qatar to improve coordination between the MADLSA's central Labour Relations Department and regional departments/focal points.

COVID-19-related support

52. The programme supported the drafting of a number of policies and materials focused on the situation arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, including guidance notes on; (i) the importance of social dialogue and the roles and responsibilities of joint committee members in the context of COVID-19; (ii) temporary teleworking arrangements; and (iii) the provision of food in accommodation sites.
53. The programme supported the development and dissemination of responses to frequently asked questions for workers and employers on health and employment. They were translated into ten languages, and widely distributed on social media as well as traditional media by the authorities and volunteers.
54. The programme supported the development of responses to frequently asked questions from the main contractors of the Central Labour Management Committee of Qatar Foundation regarding government announcements on COVID-19, and responses to questions from the hospitality industry on social and economic measures during the COVID-19 crisis.
55. The programme also supported a text-message campaign targeting the health and rights of domestic workers during COVID-19. A series of 23 messages for domestic workers and their employers were translated into 13 languages. A total of 1.85 million text messages were sent to domestic workers working in Qatar, and 92,620 text messages were sent to employers of domestic workers.
56. To support enterprises' phased return to work, the programme supported the development of Ten Action Points on a Safe and Healthy Return to Work, supplementing the tool developed by ILO headquarters with some Qatar-specific information and messaging. Further, the MADLSA and the ILO briefed 15 foreign business councils and chambers of commerce on the labour reforms and the ongoing response to COVID-19.
57. The programme organized an online workshop chaired by the MADLSA, with the participation of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Ministry of Finance, Qatar Central Bank, Qatar Development Bank, the Workers' Support and Insurance Fund, Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the International Organisation of Employers (IOE) to exchange ideas on short- and longer-term measures to help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and protect employment during the pandemic. Following the workshop, an SME task force was created.

Partnerships

58. The national steering committee of the programme continued to meet regularly to provide guidance and support at the national level.

59. The biannual meetings convened by the MADLSA, the ILO, the ITUC and the global union federations took place in April and October 2020, with the participation of the following workers' organizations: ITUC, BWI, ITF, UNI Global Union and the IDWF. These meetings have been instrumental in ensuring the involvement and support of global union federations in the implementation of the programme.
60. One additional community liaison officer representing the IDWF joined the programme's team in Doha, bringing the total to five, covering the construction, transport, security and services sectors and domestic work. The five community liaison officers representing global union federations support the MADLSA and the programme.
61. In collaboration with Silatech and the Doha Institute, the ILO and the MADLSA organized a training session on 18 August 2020 for 300 participants from across the Arab world in the Forsa (Opportunity) capacity-building programme on the topic of youth entrepreneurship in a post-COVID-19 workplace.
62. In the context of the MADLSA's efforts to promote the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111), the programme and the MADLSA participated in a discussion on the topic of work-family balance during the Seminar on Family Policies and Sustainable Development, organized by the Doha International Family Institute and the Permanent Mission of the State of Qatar to UNESCO on 27 September 2019.
63. The programme and the MADLSA facilitated a training session on the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190), during a BWI training in November 2019 for the members of Bayanihan Construction Women Network, Bayanihan Domestic Workers, the South Asian Workers' Group and the African Workers' Group.
64. Following a series of thematic days on Convention No. 111 in 2018-19, the ILO and the MADLSA are collaborating with the Turin Centre to develop two online self-paced courses on Conventions Nos 111 and 190. The online courses will target human resources and welfare department managers in private and public companies, staff of non-governmental organizations and government officials, including MADLSA officials.
65. The programme supported the MADLSA in organizing a high-level conference on 16 October 2019 to mark the ILO's Centenary, under the patronage of the Prime Minister and the Minister of the Interior. The conference focused on the economic transformations that followed the blockade and examined their implications for the future of work in three sectors: agro-food production, industry and manufacturing, and tourism. It was attended by the ILO's Deputy Director-General for Field Operations, the Deputy General Secretaries of the IOE and ITUC, and the Vice-President of the IOE and Vice-Chairperson of the ILO Governing Body.
66. The programme continues to engage with several governments to facilitate opportunities for knowledge-sharing. In collaboration with the Government of Australia, exchanges were organized with a focus on learning from experiences on: (i) minimum wage setting; (ii) a strategic and intelligence-driven approach to labour inspection; and (iii) combating forced labour and exploitation. In collaboration with the Governments of Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, the programme facilitated and provided support to the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking and the MADLSA for training on combating trafficking in persons and forced labour. In collaboration with the Government of the Netherlands, the programme developed training materials on employee participation rights.

▶ Draft decision

67. The Governing Body took note of the report on ILO activities in Qatar.

▶ Appendix

Summary of the technical cooperation programme agreed between the Government of Qatar and the ILO (2018–20)

The programme's objectives

The technical cooperation programme falls within the scope of the Government of Qatar's efforts to implement numerous reforms related to laws and regulations on employment and to provide additional guarantees that promote and protect workers' rights. It was developed as a result of consultations conducted between the ILO and Qatar.

This technical cooperation programme reflects the joint commitment of both the Government of Qatar and the ILO to cooperate on ensuring compliance with ratified international labour Conventions and on gradually achieving fundamental principles and rights at work in Qatar during the period 2018–20. This will be done through: improvement in the payment of wages; enhanced labour inspection and occupational safety and health (OSH) systems; refinement of the contractual system that replaced the *kafala* system and improvement of labour recruitment procedures; increased prevention of, protection against and prosecution of forced labour; and promotion of the workers' voice. For the duration of the project, the ILO Senior Technical Adviser in charge of the programme will submit an annual progress report to the ILO Governing Body at its October–November session.

Strategic and immediate objectives

Area for action	Immediate objectives to be achieved
1. Wage protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The wage protection system is enhanced and sanctions for non-payment of wages are enforced. • A wage guarantee fund is established. • A non-discriminatory minimum wage is adopted. • The effective coverage of the wage protection system is expanded to cover small and medium-sized enterprises, subcontractors and eventually domestic workers.
2. Labour inspection and OSH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A labour inspection policy is implemented with a clear strategy and a related training plan for labour inspectors. • The enforcement powers of labour inspectors are effective. • Communication with migrant workers is improved through adequate interpretation facilities. • An OSH policy is implemented with a clear strategy, including with respect to heat-related risks, and is supported with an awareness-raising campaign. • A system for registering work injuries and occupational diseases is operational.

Area for action	Immediate objectives to be achieved
3. An employment contractual system replacing the <i>kafala</i> system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law No. 21 and other relevant laws regulating the recruitment and employment terms and conditions of migrant workers is implemented, reviewed and revised in line with the comments of the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations. • Relevant stakeholders are fully trained on the law and its subsequent revision. • The domestic worker law is implemented and reviewed by the ILO. • The recruitment practices are improved through better monitoring and regulation and the implementation of the ILO's <i>General principles and operational guidelines for fair recruitment</i> in three migration corridors. • Restrictions on migrant workers' ability to change employer and exit the country are removed.
4. Forced labour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective policies on human trafficking are developed based on a clear definition and forced labour indicators. • A national action plan on forced labour, which includes measures to address passport confiscation, contract substitution and impediments to accessing justice for victims, is implemented. • Assistance is provided for the development of the national strategy on human trafficking. • In collaboration with the Qatar National Committee on Human Trafficking, support is provided to improve coordination among relevant international bodies on forced labour and human trafficking. • Training plans are developed and implemented to build the capacity of national enforcement authorities (police, public prosecutors, judges and labour inspectors). • Technical assistance is provided for the consideration of the ratification of the 2014 Protocol to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29). • Awareness-raising activities on forced labour and the ILO's <i>General principles and operational guidelines for fair recruitment</i> are carried out in collaboration with the Qatar Chamber of Commerce.
5. Promotion of the workers' voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The national complaint mechanisms are strengthened through the establishment of monitoring systems aimed at improving performance. • ILO support to workers submitting complaints through the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs to the national complaints mechanism improves the performance of the national system in ensuring fair and speedy process and absence of retaliation. • Expatriate workers are aware of their rights and obligations, especially with regard to the submission of complaints, the documents required and various other procedural matters. • Representative joint committees are established. • The functioning and regulation of workers' committees are improved. • A national awareness-raising campaign on rights at work is carried out to support capacity-building for all workers, employers and relevant government officials in Qatar.