Concept note and program

Employment and decent work for all – the best route out of poverty.
A seminar organized by the Group of Catholic Inspired NGOs on Decent work and the ILO, under the patronage of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace (PCJP).

We are not simply talking about ensuring nourishment or a “dignified sustenance” for all people, but also their “general temporal welfare and prosperity”. This means education, access to health care, and above all employment, for it is through free, creative, participatory and mutually supportive labour that human beings express and enhance the dignity of their lives. A just wage enables them to have adequate access to all the other goods which are destined for our common use.

Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, November 2013

General objectives of the seminar

- Reinforce the collaboration between the Catholic Church and its different entities, the ILO, the Social partners and other relevant partners in the context of Post 2015 discussions.

- Study the Statement on Decent Work from the perspective of the Social Doctrine of the Church and with particular attention to the major themes youth employment, migrant workers and precarious/informal work in the context of Post2015 discussions on poverty eradication. This statement is to be assessed, not only to combat poverty in its most radical forms, but also to contribute to an integrated approach for greater justice and equity that include the three component of economic, environmental and social justice.

- Provide key elements and rationale for a coordinated and joined advocacy effort among the different Catholic Church-inspired stakeholders.

- Identify potential opportunities for synergy and cooperation among Catholics organisations involved in Post 2015 discussions.

Expected outcomes

- Consolidate the common vision on decent work and social justice sustained by the Social doctrine of the Church as expressed in the common statement.

- Formulate recommendations on decent work and poverty eradication for advocacy by Catholic-inspired organisations, especially in respect to the ongoing negotiations of the SDG/MDG agenda post 2015. These recommendation should be based and supported by case studies, best practices or relevant policy examples from members organisations.

- A commitment to continue working together on the route toward the adoption of a new Post 2015 commitment, making every effort especially to develop new forms of south-south and triangular cooperation (between institutions of the south and the north).
Immediate outcome

- Publication of the results of the seminar and diffusion among members of the different organizations in meeting
- A sheet of talking points for immediate dissemination
- Media releases and information for wider circulation.

Rationale and organisation

Essential for the seminar will be the contribution of national member organisations of the Group coming from countries which are key actors in the four continents for the SDG negotiations and beyond and where many of the organisations are present. The outcomes of the meeting should come out of the convergences of different levels of inputs and participations:

- Information on the Post 2015 process from participants
- Experience of Catholic NGOs, at the local level or through advocacy on the three themes in the statement
- Related to the social doctrine of the Church, past and current teaching on labour related issues esp. the post 2015 agenda
- Substantive inputs from academia advocacy officers

The discussion will take the form of a seminar, each participant making a contribution. Projects/good practices should be brought forward to guide the discussion on recommendations.

Schedule:

29th April 2014:

9.00h Registration and Welcome

9.30h Welcome by Cardinal Turkson (President, PCJP) and HL guests.

Welcome by organisers, Introduction of participants, Rationale for the meeting

10:30h Coffee/Tea Break

11.00h Session 1 Post 2015 Process

Being involved in the Post 2015 process – past, present and future

 o The status of the process – present and perspectives
 o Experience of involvement at the Global level
 o Experiences in the field (members of the group)
Panel and plenary Discussion on Decent work, labour issues in this 2015-context statement, where is our chance to go into advocacy? What should we bring forward?

Presenters: Aurelio Parisotto (ILO), NN (CAFOD), NN (ITUC) Dr. Hildegard Hagemann (German Commission for Justice and Peace)

Chair: Joseph C. Donnelly (Caritas internationalis NY Delegation)

12.30h lunch

14.00h Session 2 Decent work and poverty:

Related issues: employment and poverty, minimum wage, enterprise development, wealth distribution and inequalities

Chair and rapporteur: Betina Beate (MMTC), Rodrigo Whitelaw (UNIAPAC)

Technical/advocacy input: Peter Warrian (economist Canada)

Good practices: Charo Castelló (HOAC Spain/MMTC), Sergio Frade (UNIAPAC Brazil), NN (Caritas internationalis), Patrick Kioko (Kolping Kenya)

15.30h Break Coffee/Tea Break

16.00h Session 3 Youth employment

Related issues: role of education, national employment policies, transition from school to work, skills, access to formal employment

Chair and rapporteur: Amélie Peyrard (CIJOC), Ludovicus Mardiyono (JOCI),

Technical/advocacy input: NN (JOCI)

Good practices: Ernesto Morales, (CIJOC Spain) Jemes Denteh, (JOCI Ghana), Robert Vins Chellah, (JOCI India), Alindo de Oliviera, (JOCI Brazil); Judit Hudson (Kolping Hungary), Camila Jara Aparicio (Pax Romana)

17.30h Break

18.00h Session 4 migrant workers

Related topics Labour right and migrants, economic exploitation of migrant work, migration and development nexus, special look at youth

Chair: Michel Roy (Caritas internationalis) ; Organization: R. Vitillo and S. Nobile (Caritas Internationalis)

Technical/advocacy input: NN (ICMC)
Good practices: Jeremy Khoo (Caritas Singapore – Archdiocesan Office for Care of Migrants and itinerant People), Marcelino Vidal de Almeida Brazil (MTC/MMTC), Vivian Ossio Barba de Claver (UNIAPAC Bolivia), NN (JOCI)

19.30h End of the session Dinner

Second Day 30th April

9.00h Session 5 Vulnerable forms of work
Related topics: extractive industries, human trafficking, informal economy.
Chair and rapporteur: Dr. Markus Demele, Dr. Hildegard Hagemann, (Kolping int),
Technical/advocacy input: Mr. Giuseppe Gulia, Respnsabile Servizio Immigrazione del Patronato Acli

Good practices: Augustin Kumar (Kolping India), Monicah W. Mwauru CIJOC Kenya, Fr Bruno Ciceri Apostleship of the Sea

10.30h Coffee/Tea Break

11.00h Session 6 Decent work agenda, post 2015 and Social Doctrine of the Church – General discussion, launched by two inputs:
Chair: NN
- Work, as a key element to ensure human dignity. Dott.ssa Flaminia Giovanelli (Under-Secretary, Pontifical Council Justice and Peace-PCJP)
- Labour and common good: how does ensuring decent work contribute to the betterment of societies? Rodrigo Whitelaw (UNIAPAC)

12.00 Presentation of a first draft of a common strategy, to be discussed further informally during lunch break and amended in the following session. The common strategy is being drafted at the end of the first day and elements from the morning session will be added. (rapporteurs session 2,3,4,5)

12.30h Lunch

14.00h Session 7 – Toward a common strategy – Discussion of the draft strategy presented during the morning.
Chair: Fr Pierre Martinot- Lagarde sj (ILO)
- key recommendations
- good practices
- global and South-South exchanges and cooperation among organisations
Consensus on a common strategy

15.30h refreshments
16.00h -Session 8 Conclusion

Chair: Mons. Robert J. Vitillo (Caritas internationalis Delegation in Geneva)

Input: Cardinal Peter Turkson (PCJP), Claude Akpokavie (ILO)

Presentation of advocacy strategy: Dr. Hildegard Hagemann (Kolping int)

Presentation and discussion of the outcome with key partners and other stake holders (other INGOs if relevant, Ambassadors accredited to the Holy See). Governments preferable from best practice countries

17.30h end of seminar

Reception

Background

Since the beginning of its Pontificate, Pope Francis has insisted forcefully on the importance of labour for human dignity, for the most deprived, for the young adults. His voice came out very strongly on issues such as the protection of the workers in the Garment factory in Bangladesh, the protection of children from the worst forms of child labour, the protection of migrants, especially the undocumented, as well as the victims of trafficking. This calls reiterates some of the most vibrant call from Pope Benedict XVI, on the need to defend full employment while looking carefully at the conditions in which labour is to be exercised.

Meanwhile, both Holy See diplomacy and Catholic NGOs have made significant attempts to echo these calls in the international public arena, especially when the setting of the international development agenda is at stake. A coalition of Catholic NGOs involved in labour issues has been formed (and a statement published) which has enjoyed the active support of many other catholic groups.

Attention to the process of setting new internationally agreed development and poverty eradication goals is especially important. During the Rio+20 conference, it was agreed that Sustainable Development Goals should encompass the three recognized dimensions of economic, social and environmental goals. Since 2012, a concerted effort in the multilateral system took place to propose both an assessment of the existing development millennium goals as well as a way forward toward setting up new goals accompanied by measurable targets. These two efforts are to converge through the work of an Open working group within the framework of the UN general assembly.

In this process, many UN bodies and other entities have set their own target of obtain a specific goal along the lines of their respective mandates: for instance. Since the beginning of the discussions, the ILO has highlighted the significant role of the promotion of decent work and social protection to contribute to poverty eradication.

In this process, the contribution of the Catholic Church is especially meaningful for two reasons:

- Nourished by the understanding from the Social Doctrine of the Church on human dignity, it calls for an integrated approach to all questions of justice (Environment, social and
Attention to labour issues is quite critical: labour issues are cross-cutting issues, touching on economic justice (wealth, equality, income distribution, international justice through supply chains, informal economy), on environmental justice (conditions of work, use of natural resources, extractive industries, “green” jobs), on social justice (health protection, social protection, intergenerational solidarity with the young on employment and with the elderly – retirement funds).

- Through a number of organisations, the Catholic Church is involved in community based projects and in advocacy at the local, national, regional and global levels. Catholic organisations are engaged with the three dimensions of justice covered by the SDGs as set forth in Rio+20.

In this light, decent work appears as an important vector for change and poverty eradication.