

Committee on the Application of Standards

► Draft outcome of the discussion by the Committee on the Application of Standards of the General Survey: Employment and decent work for peace and resilience

Introduction

1. The Committee welcomed the opportunity to examine the General Survey prepared by the Committee of Experts which is titled Employment and decent work for peace and resilience. The Survey examines the Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205). The Committee observed that Recommendation No. 205 is the only international normative framework specifically focusing on the role of employment and decent work for building peace and resilience and had not yet been the subject of a General Survey.
2. The Committee expressed its appreciation to the Committee of Experts and the Office for the comprehensive and timely Survey. It noted the continued relevance of Recommendation No. 205 in particular in a current context marked by armed conflicts, climate-related disasters, public health emergencies, displacement and other interconnected crisis situations affecting workers, enterprises and societies across all regions.
3. The Committee recalled that Recommendation No. 205 reflects the ILO Constitution including the Declaration of Philadelphia, which recognizes that universal and lasting peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice. The Committee noted the strong commitment expressed by ILO constituents to promoting peace and social justice through employment and decent work. It emphasized the central message of Recommendation No. 205, namely that employment, and decent work are not only outcomes of peace, stability and recovery, but are also essential conditions for achieving and sustaining them.
4. The Committee observed that crisis situations often generate a vicious cycle of unemployment, informality, poverty, inequality and social exclusion, while decent work, social protection, rights at work and social dialogue contribute to a virtuous cycle of social justice, resilience and peace. It emphasized that employment, decent work, and support by sustainable enterprises play a central role in preventing crisis situations, mitigating their impacts, supporting recovery and strengthening resilience.
5. The Committee further highlighted that Recommendation No. 205 provides a comprehensive framework for action throughout the entire crisis management cycle, encompassing prevention, preparedness, response, recovery and resilience-building. It noted the Recommendation's continued relevance in addressing the growing complexity of crisis situations and the increasing

interdependence of humanitarian, development and peacebuilding efforts. In this connection, the Committee recognized the growing importance of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus (also referred to as the HDP or triple nexus), which corresponds to the phased multi-track approach set out in Recommendation No. 205. This approach seeks to strengthen coherence, complementarity and collaboration across humanitarian, development and peace action, and among the actors concerned, in order to meet people's immediate needs while reducing fragilities and addressing the underlying drivers of crisis situations. The Committee emphasized that employment, decent work, and sustainable enterprises are essential elements of this nexus, connecting immediate, rights-based crisis response with longer-term recovery, development and peacebuilding.

The situation and needs of Member States

6. The Committee noted that crisis situations continue to have profound consequences for labour markets, enterprises, workers and communities. The Committee welcomed the measures adopted by many Member States to strengthen employment policies, labour market institutions, social protection systems, education and training systems and social dialogue mechanisms as part of efforts to prevent, prepare for and respond to crisis situations. It noted examples of initiatives aimed at preserving jobs, supporting enterprises, protecting incomes, strengthening skills and promoting labour market recovery.
7. The Committee emphasized the need to develop and implement coherent and comprehensive crisis-management strategies that place employment and decent work at their centre and that integrate short-term emergency responses with longer-term recovery, reconstruction and development efforts. It stressed the importance of adopting a phased multi-track approach encompassing prevention, preparedness, response, recovery and resilience-building taking into account national circumstances.
8. The Committee highlighted the importance of ensuring coherence between humanitarian, development and peacebuilding efforts. It noted that while emergency responses rightly prioritize the delivery of essential goods and services, employment and decent work considerations should be integrated from the outset in order to support sustainable livelihoods, strengthen resilience and address underlying vulnerabilities across the HDP nexus.
9. The Committee noted the central role of frontline and other key workers, including in health and care, transport or agriculture, as well as of public sector workers, in maintaining the continuity of goods and services on which societies depend during crisis situations and recovery, while noting that they may face significant challenges related to working conditions, safety and health, and continuity of employment during crisis situations.
10. The Committee highlighted the continuing challenges faced by many Member States in strengthening labour market institutions, including labour administration systems, labour inspection services, employment services and labour market information systems. It noted that limited institutional capacity of the tripartite constituents, particularly that of representative employers' and workers' organisations, insufficient human and financial resources and weak coordination mechanisms continue to constrain effective crisis prevention, preparedness and response in many countries.
11. The Committee further recalled that crisis situations do not suspend obligations under ratified ILO Conventions and Protocols. It is precisely in times of crisis that these obligations assume their full significance, shielding against retrogressive measures going below the minimum standards that they establish. Any derogations addressing national circumstances and

specificities should be only temporary and exercised within clearly defined limits based on legality, necessity, proportionality and non-discrimination.

12. The Committee highlighted the importance of the creation of decent employment and livelihood opportunities, supported by sustainable enterprises, in strengthening recovery and resilience. It stressed that productive employment and decent work can contribute to reducing vulnerabilities, promoting social cohesion and facilitating both recovery and reconstruction and prevention efforts. The Committee recognized the important role of sustainable enterprises, including micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, in preserving and creating employment, maintaining livelihoods and supporting recovery and resilience. It noted the need for enabling environments that allow enterprises to continue operating, adapt to changing conditions and contribute to sustainable economic recovery. In this regard, the Committee also recalled that, as recognized in the 2007 International Labour Conference Conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises, an enabling environment encourages investment, entrepreneurship, workers' rights and the creation, growth and maintenance of sustainable enterprises. These come with mutually reinforcing conditions that are generally considered to be essential: peace and political stability; good governance; social dialogue; respect for universal human rights and international labour standards; education, training and lifelong learning; social justice and inclusion; adequate social protection; responsible stewardship of the environment; an enabling legal and regulatory environment; the rule of law and secure property rights; fair competition; and access to financial services.
13. The Committee further underlined the role of education, vocational training, skills development and lifelong learning in enabling workers and enterprises to adapt to changing circumstances and contribute to recovery and resilience. It recognized the growing significance of skills policies in supporting labour market protection, transitions, reintegration and reconstruction efforts.
14. The Committee also emphasized the need for just transition measures, developed in consultation with the social partners and guided by the 2015 ILO Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all, taking into account national circumstances and sustainability of enterprises, as part of crisis prevention, response and resilience-building.
15. The Committee stressed the central role of comprehensive and sustainable social protection systems in mitigating the social and economic impacts of crisis situations. It recognized that social protection contributes significantly to income security, poverty prevention, social cohesion and resilience and noted the need to progressively extend effective protection to all workers, particularly those in vulnerable situations. It stressed the need to close coverage gaps, in particular for workers in the informal economy and in categories least able to access crisis-related support, while helping to restore enabling conditions for sustainable enterprises. It further welcomed approaches that align humanitarian responses with national social protection systems from the early stages of interventions, as a means of strengthening existing systems, building durable protection, and supporting the transition from emergency relief to longer-term measures.
16. The Committee also stressed the need to ensure that crisis responses address the specific circumstances and needs of all groups particularly affected by crisis situations including migrants, refugees, returnees, internally displaced persons, persons with disabilities, indigenous and tribal peoples, children and young persons. It particularly highlighted the need for inclusive, gender-responsive approaches to crisis management that take into account the specific needs and challenges faced by women in crisis situations. The Committee further recalled the heightened risk, in crisis and post-crisis contexts, of forced labour, trafficking in

persons, and child labour, and underlined the importance of intensifying measures to prevent and eliminate these practices, to sanction those responsible and to assist victims.

Common understanding

17. The Committee shared the understanding that peace, resilience, social justice and decent work are mutually reinforcing objectives. It recognized that employment and decent work are not only outcomes of peace, stability and recovery, but also essential conditions for achieving and sustaining them. One of the key lessons emerging from recent crises is therefore the importance of placing employment, and decent work at the centre of prevention, preparedness, response, recovery and resilience-building efforts. It further highlighted the importance of risk-identification and assessment, including early warning systems, contingency planning and business continuity planning.
18. The Committee recognized social dialogue as the cornerstone of crisis management. It emphasized that the meaningful participation of representative employers' and workers' organizations contributes to more inclusive, balanced and sustainable policies and strengthens confidence, ownership and social cohesion during periods of crisis and recovery. It recalled that ensuring freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining are enabling conditions for meaningful social dialogue, directly contribute to prevention and must be safeguarded, including in times of crisis.
19. The Committee further recognized that international labour standards provide an essential foundation for crisis management and contribute to protecting workers and enterprises, strengthening institutions and promoting social justice. It emphasized that strong labour market institutions are essential components of resilient societies and that the contribution of labour administration, labour inspection, employment services and labour market information systems is key to effective crisis prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. It underlined the need to strengthen these systems and to provide them with adequate human, technical and financial resources to ensure their effectiveness and resilience, including in crisis-prone countries. The Committee underlined that crisis responses must not be used to circumvent social dialogue or to introduce legislative reforms that are regressive and incompatible with international labour standards.
20. The Committee recognized that social protection systems constitute important tools for strengthening resilience and supporting inclusive recovery. It acknowledged the important role of social protection in protecting incomes and livelihoods, as well as the role of sustainable enterprises as generators of employment and promoters of innovation and decent work, in reducing fragility and supporting social cohesion during and after crisis situations. It shared the understanding that resilient social protection systems are those that are inclusive and move progressively towards universal coverage, providing income security and access to health care and leaving no group without protection. It also recognized that the capacity of such systems to respond rapidly to crisis situations is central to mitigating their social and economic impacts and to supporting a fair and inclusive recovery.
21. The Committee further recognized the importance of investing in human capabilities, including through education, vocational training, skills development and lifelong learning. Such investments contribute to preparedness, and long-term resilience, while facilitating labour market transitions and supporting recovery and reconstruction efforts.
22. The Committee emphasized the importance of ensuring that crisis responses and recovery strategies are inclusive, responsive and context-sensitive to the needs of those most affected by

crisis situations. It recognized that promoting equality of opportunity and treatment and preventing discrimination contribute to more effective and sustainable recovery outcomes.

23. The Committee acknowledged the important role of sustainable enterprises in creating and preserving employment, maintaining livelihoods and supporting recovery and resilience within an enabling environment. It recognized that sustainable enterprises, decent work and social stability are mutually reinforcing objectives. Sustainable enterprises contribute most effectively to recovery and resilience within an enabling environment that takes into account their needs and interests. The Committee emphasized the importance of supporting sustainable enterprises through facilitating access to finance, particularly for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises affected by crises.
24. The Committee shared the understanding that increasingly complex and interconnected crisis situations require integrated and coordinated responses across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, with employment, and decent work as a connecting thread. It emphasized the importance of cooperation among governments, employers' and workers' organizations, international organizations and other relevant actors in order to maximize the effectiveness and sustainability of crisis management efforts.
25. The Committee also emphasized that preparedness and prevention deserve sustained attention alongside response and reconstruction efforts. It recognized the value of strengthening resilience before crises occur, including through forward-looking policies, institutional preparedness, capacity-building, and risk-informed approaches.
26. The Committee further recognized that international cooperation, solidarity and policy coherence remain essential for supporting Member States in preventing crisis situations, responding to their impacts and building resilient societies.

ILO means of action

27. The Committee recalled the ILO's unique mandate, normative framework and technical expertise in promoting peace and resilience through employment, decent work and sustainable enterprises. It emphasized the important role of the Office in supporting constituents in the prevention of crisis situations, the management of crisis situations and the promotion of sustainable recovery and resilience. It stressed the high relevance of this work and encouraged the Office to continue its engagement and efforts in that respect.
28. The Committee further encouraged the Office to strengthen support for the collection and analysis of labour market information – including information on enterprise sustainability – and timely, disaggregated data relevant to inform crisis prevention, preparedness, response and recovery policies, as well as to continue promoting the exchange of knowledge and good practices among Member States and representative employers' and workers' organisations.
29. The Committee also emphasized the importance of strengthening the capacities of governments and employers' and workers' organizations, including their institutional and operational capacities, to participate effectively in crisis prevention, preparedness, response and recovery efforts. It encouraged continued support for social dialogue institutions and processes as key elements of resilience-building and in transitioning from crisis response to building resilient societies.
30. The Committee further highlighted the importance of policy coherence and coordination within the United Nations system and among international partners. It encouraged the Office to continue promoting integrated approaches that leverage and complement the respective mandates and expertise of relevant organizations and contribute to coherent support for

Member States, including in operationalizing the humanitarian-development-peace nexus within the framework of the ILO's mandate.

31. The Committee noted the requests by a number of Member States for technical assistance relating to the uptake and application of Recommendation No. 205 and encouraged the Office to continue ensuring the provision of such support, taking into account national circumstances and needs.
32. The Committee recalled the importance of the constitutional obligation of submission and encouraged all Member States that have not yet done so to submit Recommendation No. 205 to the competent national authorities and to report on any action taken with respect to this instrument.
33. The Committee also called upon the Committee of Experts to continue to support and improve understanding, uptake and effective application of Recommendation No. 205 through its follow-up on the application of Conventions and Protocols in crisis situations.
34. Finally, the Committee requested the Office to take into account the General Survey on Employment and decent work for peace and resilience, the tripartite discussion that followed and the outcome of its discussion when determining the strategic focus of ILO work. It expressed the hope that the General Survey will provide useful information and guidance for the 2028 International Labour Conference's recurrent discussion on the strategic objective of employment.