

COMMUNIQUE

South-South Cooperation and Decent Work in Africa – A Framework for Action

Tripartite Validation Workshop

We, the participants at the tripartite validation workshop on “South-South Cooperation for Decent Work in Africa – A Framework for Action”,

- recalling the Addis Ababa Declaration on “Transforming Africa through Decent Work for Sustainable Development: New frameworks for inclusive and sustainable development” adopted at the 13th African Regional Meeting of the ILO in December 2015; and
- bearing in mind that cooperation between developing countries has been part of global development cooperation since the 1970s and has recently gained greater visibility;
- hereby agree to build consensus on the key priorities, common implementation principles and resource requirements to advance the Decent Work Agenda in Africa’s South-South and triangular cooperation (SSTC), and to commit to its implementation through concrete action.

We affirm that SSTC can help accelerate the structural transformation agenda in accordance with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which contain many references to the ILO’s decent work agenda. In addition, we take note of the African Union Agenda 2063 which envisions a prosperous Africa, based on inclusive growth and sustainable development realised through decent work.

During the tripartite validation workshop held in Casablanca, Morocco, on 11 and 12 May 2017, we have examined a wide range of topics, including:

1. South-South Cooperation and sustainable development
2. South-South Cooperation in the Africa region – An ILO framework
3. Modalities of South-South Cooperation
4. Social protection floors: A South-South perspective
5. Climate change and job creation: South-South and triangular cooperation
6. Capacity building through South-South Cooperation

The growing importance and relevance of SSTC has been reaffirmed by several major United Nations conferences. The UN General Assembly in 2004 established the High-Level Committee on South-South Cooperation under whose guidance the United Nations system has prioritized South-South and triangular cooperation as a key modality for promoting collaborative initiatives at the national, regional and interregional levels.

Based on our deliberations, we concur that to achieve the overarching goal of making Decent Work a reality in Africa, the SSTC strategy should pursue three objectives:

1. The Africa Region has increased institutional awareness and capacity to identify and implement South-South and triangular cooperation with a view to establishing and implementing an initiative for Africa based on the promotion of Decent Work.

2. The challenges of the future of work are addressed through SSTC with the engagement of an increasing number of governments, social partners, UN agencies and non-state actors.
3. The establishment of an African South-South Cooperation coordination Facility within the ILO Regional Office for Africa as the region's operational arm of ILO's global SSTC programme.

In this regard, we urge national governments, social partners, regional economic communities, and the international community to contribute to ensuring that this strategy is realized through joint, as well as individual concrete endeavours geared towards promoting job-rich inclusive growth, sustainable enterprises, greater social justice, full respect for the fundamental principles and rights at work, the extension of social protection for all, and vibrant and effective social dialogue, as well as the efficient governance of democratic labour market institutions and the formalization of the informal economy. Moreover, we call upon our governments to continue to make Decent Work a central goal of national development plans and strategies.

We note with concern that the amount of Official Development Aid (ODA) available to Africa is likely to shrink over time, and call upon the Office to mobilize alternative sources of funding, including domestic resources and funding from the private sector. We are convinced of the benefits of South-South and triangular cooperation and declare our willingness to actively cooperate with other countries from the Global South on development cooperation efforts.

We are committed to working together to demonstrate that through national commitment and international solidarity we can build a better future and enhance the prospects for shared prosperity and welfare in Africa through the principles of solidarity and ownership, as enshrined in the G77 Ministers of Foreign Affairs Declaration in Nairobi in 2009 on SSTC (endorsed by the General Assembly in 2010).

We call on the ILO to identify partnerships with partners of the Global South and prepare individual strategies for concluding SSTC arrangements with linkages to the ILO's regular budget. We also call on the ILO to establish partnerships with social partners, regional and sub-regional organizations, as well as non-state actors, including academia, universities and parliamentarians will also be enhanced and supported, as per the recommendation in ILO Governing Body paper "South-South Cooperation: the Way Forward" (March, 2012).

Building on existing agreements and Memoranda of Understanding on Decent Work between the ILO and partner countries, the ILO will make special efforts to promote South-South and Triangular Cooperation. Furthermore, several countries of the Global North have begun supporting "triangular cooperation" (South-South-North) in the ILO, and such efforts and participation should be augmented.

Adopted in Casablanca on 12 May 2017