



International
Labour
Office

A large, stylized map of Latin America and the Caribbean, composed of numerous small yellow triangles pointing in various directions, set against a blue background.

THE ILO IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

ADVANCES 2010-2011
and **PERSPECTIVES** 2012-2013

Report by the ILO Regional Office for
Latin America and the Caribbean



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INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the advances in the world of work in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2010-2011, to which the ILO has contributed in a variety of ways. It also includes a discussion about perspectives for 2012-2013 and the challenges the organisation must tackle to continue promoting its decent work agenda in this part of the world. Its purpose is to provide information on trends and processes in the countries of the region and to analyse the ILO's contribution. The information is not exhaustive but illustrates an evolving reality, with many encouraging aspects and some that need constant attention.

The text supplements the Office's 2010-2011 Implementation Report.¹ This global report shows that 25 percent of the outcomes reported were achieved in Latin America and the Caribbean (371 of a total of 1,472). The figure is consistent with a geographical criterion since the 33 countries in the region make up just under a quarter of all the ILO member states, leaving aside the industrialised nations, for which results are not reported. From another perspective, it is interesting to see that of all technical cooperation resources invested by the ILO in 2010-2011 world-wide, only 14.3 percent were used directly in Latin America and the Caribbean. This shows that from the point of view of efficiency or "productivity", the region's performance has been better than what could have been expected.²

This report is structured to have a first chapter on the region's labour, economic and socio-political context. It goes on to present a synthesis of significant results achieved in the region and the main challenges for the current biennium. At the end of Chapter 2, there is a sketch of the road map prepared by the ILO Regional Office to move ahead in 2012-2013. Chapter 3 concludes the report with a brief description of the management strategies which form the basis for the ILO's responses and proposals in the region.

1 The 2010 – 2011 Implementation Report and the supplementary tables with specific information about the results per country are available on <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/program/ir/2010-11.htm>.

2 Expenditure on technical cooperation programmes in the region depends on allocation criteria set by the ILO and on priorities established by donors who make contributions additional to the regular budget. In general, based on past experience, Latin America and the Caribbean are expected to spend 15 percent of the total. In 2010-2011, technical cooperation programme expenses in the region totalled nearly US\$66 million, some 14.3 percent of the world total, against 27.3 percent in Africa, 27 percent in Asia and the Pacific, 21.8 percent in global programmes, 4.5 percent in Europe, 4 percent in the Arab States and 1 percent in inter-regional projects. See Annex V of the Director General's Report to the 2012 International Labour Conference on the implementation of the ILO programme (http://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/IOL1stSession/reports/reports-submitted/WCMS_180571/lang-en/index.htm).



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LABOUR, SOCIO-POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CONTEXT

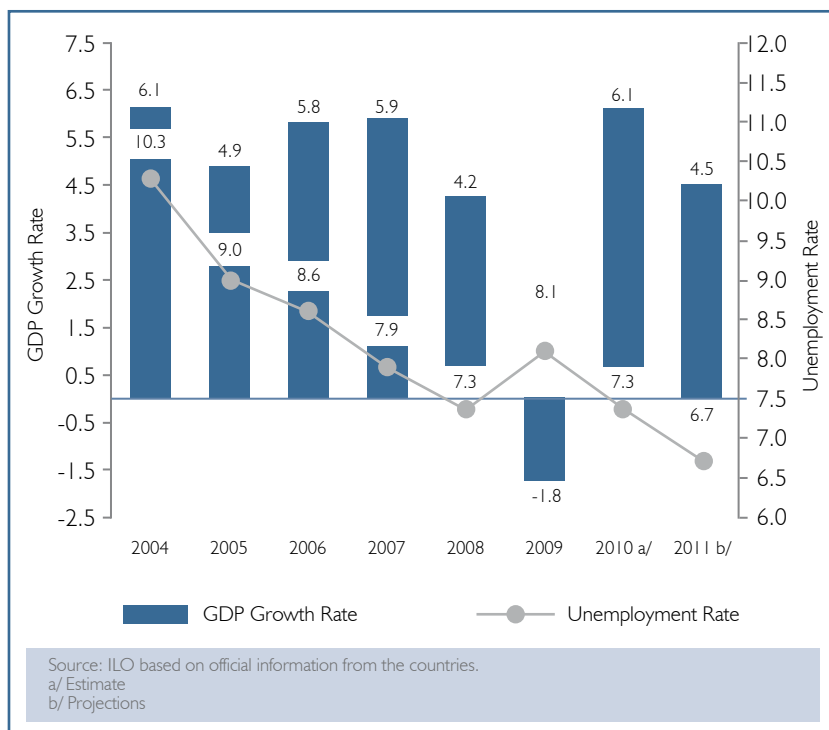
The whole region overcame the negative effects of the crisis and continued on the path of growth and employment in 2010 and 2011, with democratic stability. Over these years poverty and the informal sector have been reduced, as has unequal income distribution, which has produced higher levels of social cohesion. However, given the foreseeable worsening of the crisis in some industrialized countries, especially in the Euro zone, perspectives for 2012-2013 demand that governments, workers and employers in the region pay greater attention and continue to give priority to quality jobs and social protection, in a context of dialogue and respect for labour principles and fundamental rights. Youth must be a priority for attention.

1.1 The 2010-2011 Biennium: recovery with jobs

The Latin America and the Caribbean region on average managed to parry the worst effects of the 2008-2009 crisis on their economies and avoid serious impact on employment and work conditions. Following the foreseeable deterioration of the indicators in 2009, when GDP fell by 1.9 percent and unemployment rates rose, in 2010 growth was at 6 percent and the average unemployment rate for the region returned to its 2008 level. In 2011, despite the slowdown in growth, unemployment continued to fall to its lowest level for a decade (graph 1).



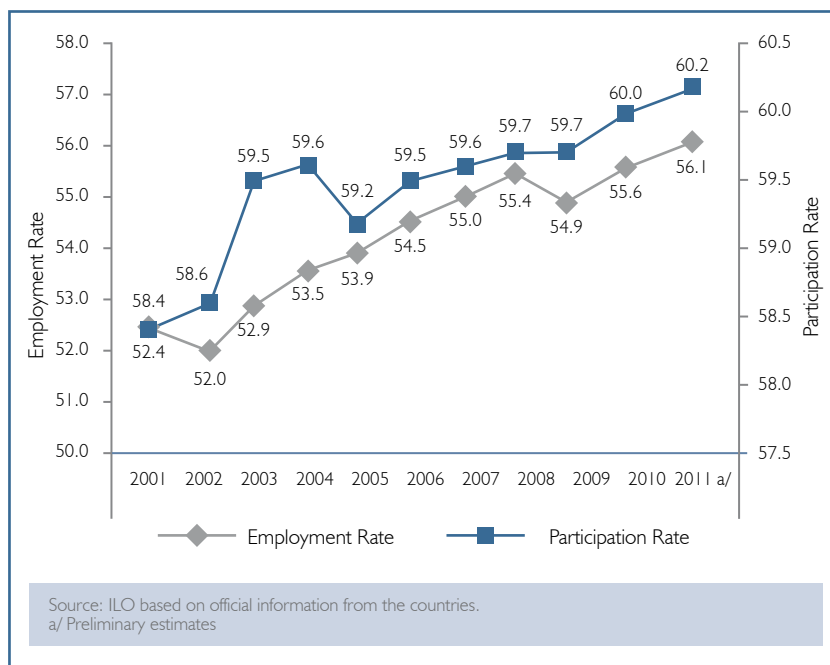
**Graph 1. Latin America and the Caribbean:
GDP Growth and Unemployment Rate, 2004 – 2011**



A distinctive feature of the economic recovery in most countries in Latin America and the Caribbean is that it occurred **with** jobs, unlike other regions. As Graph 2 shows, the rate of participation did not shrink in 2009 while the rate of employment hardly changed. In 2010 and 2011, both indicators started to grow again, reaching their highest levels.



**Graph 2. Latin America and the Caribbean:
urban employment and participation rates, 2001 – 2011.**



It is important to highlight that the countries of the region, while sharing some characteristics, are also quite heterogeneous. In the favourable 2010-2011 scenario, South America had better results in terms of employment, while Central America, Mexico and the Caribbean had a slower recovery. The difference is caused by external factors, linked to commercial partnerships and flows of investment, and internal factors related to the different size of the domestic markets.

The social and fiscal policies developed in many nations in the region have led to economic growth being translated into a fall in poverty rates and even in the inequality of income distribution. This has had a positive effect on the democratic governance and cohesion of Latin American and Caribbean societies. Despite some especially remarkable incidents lamented by the international community, democracy has been consolidated in



the region, a situation which is markedly different from a number of periods in the recent past.

Social protection policies and stronger systems for tax levying and management have played a central role in offsetting the effects of the crisis and for promoting the subsequent recovery. Coverage data show that the percentage of workers who contribute to social security continues to grow in most of the region's countries, although the proportion that does not do so remains high, especially in countries in the Andean and Central American areas.³

With regard to the application of international labour regulations, it is noticeable that in the early years of the last decade, the region's countries began to implement a series of reforms in labour legislation, individually, geared chiefly to triangular labour relations (outsourcing, subcontracting, labour sector companies etc.) and to the modernization of labour justice processes (oral processes, simplification).

In all the institutional and political processes described in this section, the role played by workers' and employers' organisations is fundamental. Social dialogue – during and after the crisis – has been an increasingly effective tool for policy making and conflict resolution. The efforts made by governments, employers and workers must be redoubled however for social dialogue to be effective and common across all areas – from policy definition to collective bargaining – starting with the absolute and unconditional respect for fundamental principles and rights at work.

1.2 The 2012-2013 biennium: uncertainty, institutions and youth

Although economic perspectives for Latin America and the Caribbean are still positive, troubling signs in other parts of the world increase levels of uncertainty for the region. Many countries have already been affected by the fall in the price of some raw material that has led to capital flight, and the fluctuating value of their currencies. In 2012 and 2013 a slowdown in growth may be expected, with the risk of a steeper fall if the crisis in Europe worsens, if there is a recession in the United States or if China continues to slow down. It is vital to think about the margin of action in these possible scenarios, in order

³ See the information provided in the electronic newsletter by SIALC: "Profiles of Employment and Decent Work in Latin America and the Caribbean" (September, 2011), available at <http://white.oit.org.pe/estad/ladispub/documentos/documentos/ebol/PERFILES.pdf>.



to safeguard the progress made in labour and maintain the efforts begun to overcome some of the endemic features in the region's labour markets, such as informality and discrimination on grounds of sex, ethnic background and race.

In this context the ILO is especially concerned for youth.⁴ Latin America and the Caribbean have a total of 104 million young people, many of whom have not benefited from the recent economic growth. This is reflected in youth unemployment – which is double or even triple that among adults – and in the large number of young people who are neither studying nor working (20 percent of the total). As a result, young people question the value of education and the labour market as vehicles for social and personal advancement.⁵ In addition, many young people, especially the very poor and those in dysfunctional families, have to take decisions about their education, work or families without proper information or guidance, with no point of reference or in places where socialization does not help identify successful pathways towards decent work. This has an economic and social cost, hampering companies' capacity to innovate and develop competitive edges and unions' capacity to strengthen collective action, thus reinforcing perverse relations of exclusion and social fragmentation.

From a political perspective, the greatest challenge to the region is the consolidation of stable institutions, so that State policies geared towards development with social inclusion, productive employment and decent work can be designed and implemented. In all cases, it is essential that these policies be designed and implemented with the active participation of employers and workers, who can also monitor them and participate in evaluating their results. All the citizens of the region must have access to a basic social protection floor. The sustainability of companies must be promoted, with incentives to generate more and better jobs – including life-long training, looking at the sectors that can develop virtuous circles of growth with employment and social inclusion. The role of international labour standards is fundamental for ensuring respect for fundamental principles and rights, especially that of freedom of association and collective bargaining... All this will decisively help build a region with less poverty and more equality.

4 The ILO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean has recently launched a platform for debate, information and knowledge about youth employment and decent work for youth (<http://www.oit.org.pe/jovenes/>).

5 ILO (2010): Decent work and youth in Latin America 2010. Lima: ILO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean. Available at http://prejal.oit.org.pe/prejal/docs/TDJ_AL_2010FINAL.pdf.



2

ADVANCES AND CHALLENGES IN THE DECENT WORK AGENDA

In the framework of the mandate established by the constituents in the 2006 and 2010 regional meetings and in the International Labour Conference, the ILO has continued supporting policy formulation and institutional strengthening for decent work in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. This cooperation brought about significant advances and achievements in a variety of areas. These should be attributed first to the political will of governments, unions and employers. Although today the region is far better than it was two years ago, it still faces many challenges, and hence the ILO Office for Latin America and the Caribbean has developed road maps to continue with its cooperation in priority themes for 2012-2013: the promotion of sustainable enterprises, freedom of association and collective bargaining, strengthening of labour administration, youth employment, extended social protection, health and safety at work and the fight against discrimination, poverty and inequality, with a gender focus.

In 2010-2011 the International Labour Office continued providing support to its constituents in Latin America and the Caribbean, following the strategic guidelines established in the 2006-2015 Hemispheric Agenda and in the 2010-2015 Strategic Policy Framework. Specifically, the Office geared its actions to supporting the priorities defined in a tripartite manner in eleven Decent Work Country Programmes, in Argentina, the Bahamas, Belize, Chile, El Salvador, Honduras, Panama, Paraguay, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States.⁶ The ILO also contributed to the formulation of decent work programmes in the Brazilian states of Bahia and Matto Grosso. In countries which do not have this planning tool the Office has carried out specific interventions based on government, union and employer requests, in accordance with the general results-based management strategy adopted by the organisation and in the framework of the general technical cooperation programme for the region.

⁶ The Sub-Regional Programme for Decent Work signed in the framework of the *Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States* (OECS) includes specific tripartite labour plans in seven countries and territories: Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Granada, Monserrat, Santa Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The ILO Office for the Caribbean has also carried out a programming exercise with Barbados, in this framework.



In December 2010, the XVII American Regional Meeting of the ILO held in Santiago, Chile, called for further efforts to continue moving forward on the path of decent work in the continent.⁷ In particular, delegates highlighted the need to move ahead with an in-depth study, through a more effective social dialogue, of the following themes:

- The creation of new opportunities for decent and productive work through sustainable enterprise promotion and development;
- Respect for freedom of association and collective bargaining;
- Strengthening labour market institutions;
- Promotion of social protection in accordance with the guidelines laid down by ILO Convention 102 on social security and strengthening a basic protection floor;
- Fostering a competitive economy with social cohesion, preserving and respecting fundamental rights at work.

These guidelines have helped to confirm some areas of the work carried out in 2010-2011 and to focus 2012-2013 regional priorities that are presented at the end of this chapter. The following sections of this report – organized in accordance with the ILO's four strategic objectives – present some of the outstanding advances of the last biennium, the major current challenges and the ILO's main contributions in these areas.

2.1 Employment

As stated in Chapter 1, the region's occupation and unemployment levels are encouraging, practically the best in recent decades, which shows that recovery from the crisis was achieved – in general – with policies that have placed employment at their centre. The evidence also suggests that the crisis did not produce a general “informalisation” of the economy, although progress towards formalisation has been slow and uneven between countries.⁸

In their responses to the crisis, governments extended the existing employment programmes and strategies to mitigate its negative effects, including public investment in infrastructure or for the protection of the environment and support for small and medium enterprises to facilitate credit or subsidies and tax benefits. They also implemented mea-

⁷ The report and conclusions of the American Regional Meeting can be found at: http://www.ilo.org/global/meetings-and-events/regional-meetings/americas/WCMS_144636/lang--en/index.htm

⁸ ILO (2011): 2011 Labour Overview. Lima: ILO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean. Available at http://oit.org.pe/WCMS/bib/publ/panorama/labour_overview_11.pdf.



asures to reduce the working day, foster part-time employment and strengthen training. Finally, they increased unemployment benefits, improved the capacity of employment services and adopted extra social measures for especially vulnerable groups.

The ILO accompanied the countries of the region in developing these measures through offering specific technical assistance or working within the framework of larger projects. It is important to highlight the pilot of the 2009 Global Jobs Pact in two of the region's countries, Argentina and El Salvador.

Below are a number of examples of outstanding results which received ILO support in different areas concerned with employment promotion.

- For **employment-intensive investment**, El Salvador passed a Government Procurement Act, with special reference to road maintenance. Paraguay also incorporated this strategy in its routine road maintenance strategy. In Haiti, post-earthquake reconstruction work was labour intensive, providing over 7000 people with jobs. The ILO also gave considerable support to Chile for reconstruction with employment after the earthquake and tsunami in early 2010. In all these cases, the ILO provided support to governments through direct assistance and specific projects –some in partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank – in the framework of its Employment-intensive Investment Programme.⁹
- The region in general is using **salary policies** (especially the minimum wage) to promote economic recovery around consumption that does not affect workers' quality of life, which has entailed real wage increases in 2009, 2010 and 2011 (2011 Labour Overview figures). This was a strategy adopted by most of the region's countries through tripartite dialogue and has produced important agreements –methodological and political – in countries including Costa Rica, Honduras, Argentina and Brazil. The ILO has accompanied the dialogue by providing information and assistance on issues such as the wage and productivity link, and the influence of the informal sector, the productive structure and skills development in establishing salary policies.¹⁰
- Many countries in the region have implemented specific plans and policies for promoting **youth employment** (including Argentina, Honduras, Costa Rica, Peru, Ecua-

⁹ More information at: <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/recon/eiip/>

¹⁰ For an example, see the chapter "Best Practices for Minimum Wage Policies in Central America and the Dominican Republic", in *Labour Overview 2011* (op. cit).



dor, Paraguay and Brazil, which approved its decent work for youth agenda in May 2011). In general these advances have been accompanied by specific social dialogue events with the active participation of young union, business and government leaders. The ILO provided assistance, especially cooperation projects funded by the MDG Fund, considering the various combinations of policies and measures needed to address a complex issue for meeting the needs of such a heterogeneous group. It gave countries advice for example in formulating and implementing measures for attending the initial stages of unemployment, addressing the problem of discouragement, with designs that take into account the labour market and the need to provide specific information corresponding to age. It worked to link up measures geared to labour demand (tax incentives, business initiative) and supply (training, career guidance and job search assistance). Private sector participation has been encouraged in all cases as a fundamental element for the success of youth employment programmes. To further the analysis of this issue, the ILO organized an international forum in December 2011 that facilitated debate and discussion of experience (Box 1).

- **Professional training** was a core element of the active employment policies. The ILO has continued to promote models for updating training based on the competencies needed for the region's labour markets. The Inter-American Center for



BOX 1

The International Forum "Employment, Youth and Democratic Governance" was an opportunity for discussion and dialogue about the main elements of a possible strategy for tackling the challenge of decent work for the youth of the region. The specialists who participated all emphasized the pressing need for measures geared

to 15 to 24 year-olds, whose entry into the labour market is marked by high rates of unemployment and work in the informal sector, which makes them frustrated, discouraged and even have political doubts which could affect democratic governance. At the meeting, the ILO pledged to create an information platform for discussing ideas related to youth employment policies. The meeting was attended by high-level representatives of international organizations, academics, ministers, government delegates and members of employers' and workers' organizations of Latin America and the Caribbean.



Knowledge Development in Professional Training (ILO/Cinterfor), with its knowledge management platform, provided the opportunity for a discussion of successful experiences and ongoing materials, in the region and with other countries. One example is the progress in the standardization of occupational profiles in the construction sector in Argentina, Brazil and Peru. In Peru, the labour reconversion programme (Vamos Perú), whose design and evaluation is ILO-sponsored, won an award from the United Nations as an example of best public management practice worldwide.

- The employment policies were accompanied by **enterprise promotion** policies, stressing their sustainability. Using ILO methodologies like SIYB, WEDGE and SIMAPRO, many countries (including Honduras, Nicaragua, Mexico and Colombia) have strengthened their entrepreneurial fabric, especially among micro, small and medium businesses. Bolivia has supported the cooperatives sector (with new legislation soon to be passed). In particular, SIMAPRO has shown itself to be a useful model for promoting different aspects of decent work (productivity, wages, social dialogue, health and safety, collective bargaining) in specific sectors (including sugar mills, fruit sector, tourism and car manufacturing) in various of the region's countries (México, Chile, Cuba, Dominican Republic and El Salvador).
- These policies increasingly use **up to date labour market information**. The ILO in the region, through the Labour Information System for Latin America and the Caribbean (SIALC) co-funded by the ILO's ordinary budget and a special contribution from the government of Panama, provides support for standardising concepts and integrating decent work indicators in surveys. Major progress has been made, in Brazil for example (with the IBGE), Peru (with the INEI) and the Dominican Republic (with the Central Bank). Throughout the region, 18 countries provide the ILO with their micro data for building indicators and statistics, which are reflected in publications such as the Labour Overview, the employment profile (an electronic publication) and newsletters on current topics published together with ECLAC.

The ILO will continue to address these areas of work in the region as there are still major challenges for the creation of more and better jobs for men and women. Two of them – youth employment and sustainable enterprises – have been the object of a wider debate in the region and will be considered a specific priority for 2012-2013 (see Section 2.5).



2.2 Social protection

Despite recent progress in coverage and contributions, Latin America and the Caribbean is still one of the most varied and unequal regions with regard to social protection. This particularly affects the more vulnerable groups in the population, which are subjected to multiple forms of discrimination. The ILO must also particularly consider the coverage of self-employed workers with regard to protection policies, together with working conditions, health and safety.

Social protection policies were one of the tools employed by countries throughout the world to tackle the negative effects of the 2008-2009 crisis. In the region, besides salary policies as stated above, conditions for access to contributions and maintaining them has been flexibilized (Uruguay and Brazil), non-contributory programmes have been expanded (Chile) and conditioned transfer initiatives were strengthened (in almost all the region's countries). The points below present some of the distinctive elements of the social protection measures adopted in 2010-2011 and the support provided by the ILO.



- **A basic social protection floor** is being consolidated in the region, while health and pension social security systems continue to be strengthened, aiming to expand coverage and improve management (in Bolivia for example a single health system is being discussed along the lines of an ILO study; in Peru the ILO provided support for the Pensión 65 initiative; in Honduras it supported a national social security strategy which includes increased contributions and hence revenue). Uruguay launched the second stage of the national dialogue about social security. It is important to highlight the principles, reasoning and the practical recommendations for applying this policy reflected in the 2011 “Bachelet Report”, which was presented towards the end of that year in Chile and Brazil.¹¹
- A core element of the ILO’s strategy against discrimination in the 2010-2011 biennium was focused on drafting for approval and then subsequently ratifying **Convention 189** on decent work for domestic workers. Progress here has led to the world’s first ratification in 2012 in one of the region’s countries, Uruguay. Other nations like Paraguay, the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica have made significant progress towards ratification of this new Convention.
- The area of **health and occupational safety** has also seen progress. This must be consolidated, and hence this issue will be one of the ILO’s priorities in the region during the current biennium. There has been major progress in the Caribbean, where many member states have moved ahead with drafting profiles and particular programmes in specific sectors. This is also the case in Chile, which ratified Convention 187 after the mine accident in San José, El Salvador (enacting the Work Risks Law 2010) and in Mexico.
- The ILO has supported the progress in the question of **migrant workers** particularly in the Andean region and in Central America. In the Andean countries, the Ministries of Labour have established labour migration management structures. They have also implemented inter-agency coordination mechanisms for designing comprehensive policies for migration.

It is clear that progress still needs to be made in all these areas. The ILO has given priority as fundamental regional lines of action – as described in Section 2.5 – to assistance in social protection, support for the fight against discrimination – especially for reasons of

11 ILO (2011): Basic Social Protection for a fair and inclusive globalization. Report by the consultative group chaired by Michelle Bachelet, held by the ILO in collaboration with WHO. Geneva.



sex and race - as a strategy for the fight against poverty and inequality and the promotion of health and safety at work.

2.3 Tripartism and social dialogue

The ILO has achieved and reported a marked number of outcomes in the region regarding **strengthening national employers' and workers' organisations** – especially for providing services to its members and increasing their capacity for dialogue and advocacy. The ILO has continued to support regional union and business organisations (TUCA and OIE), which has entailed some concrete results such as the bipartite declaration on youth employment made in the framework of the 2011 Interamerican Labour Ministries Conference in El Salvador. It is important to point out the continuity and depth of the ILO's training schemes in the region for these organizations, such as the Latin American Institute of Organizational Management (ILGO), aimed at employers' organizations in Latin America, and its equivalent in the Caribbean (Caribbean Academy of the Management of Employers Organisations, CAMEO). With the unions, the ILO has continued training on social protection, occupational health and safety and union self-reform.

For **strengthening labour administration**, besides the continuous training activities (especially of inspectors), the 2010-2011 biennium has been a rich experience in creating, modernising and reinforcing labour ministries, the most notable cases being Colombia and Paraguay. Employment services have also been markedly strengthened. In Argentina, a federal country, the ILO worked closely with provincial labour administrations and employment services. In the Caribbean, there has been progress in the labour information system of St Vincent and the Grenadines, as a pilot project to be expanded subsequently to other members of the OECS.

These organizations are in a better position to take part in formal and informal **social dialogue** forums. The Office has been supporting a number of large-scale processes for the tripartite definition of decent work policies, most especially in Brazil (2010 National Employment and Decent Work Agenda; National Conference on Employment and Decent Work, convened in November 2010 and which will conclude in August 2012), but also in other countries like Uruguay (National Dialogue for Employment) and Peru (national conflict resolution policy and the reinstalled Labour Council). In Brazil in this biennium the state-level agendas have also been consolidated (Bahía and Matto Grosso), an example also adopted in Argentina (Santa Fe province). In the Caribbean, the discussion



of Decent Work Country Programmes promoted by the Office led to official channels being created for stable tripartite dialogue which hold regular meetings.

Social dialogue and strengthening workers' and employers' organizations will go on being a cross-priority cutting theme for the ILO in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2012-2013. Strengthening labour administration – whose strategy is described in Section 2.5 - will be one of the specific Office's regional priorities, as requested in the 2010 RRA conclusions.

2.4 Promoting principles and fundamental rights at work

In the last biennium, eight countries in the Americas have announced fifteen ratifications of ILO Conventions (Box 2). The adoption of these conventions is not due to the Office but to the governments, unions and employers. The Regional Office provided technical support to its constituents for greater understanding of the scope and content of the conventions and carried out specific tripartite activities to facilitate dialogue and in some case approval (Nicaragua's approval of Convention 189 and the Maritime Labour Convention in the Caribbean).

The Office has given constant support to the ministerial departments responsible for reporting on the conventions in order to improve their quality (an example being the Fundamental Rights Departments in Peru and Colombia). It has also trained officials working in the judiciary, unions and representatives of employers' organizations in international conventions and the rulings of the ILO's control bodies.



Box 2: Ratification of ILO Conventions in 2010-2011 by countries of the region

C188, Work in Fishing Convention, 2007	Argentina (15/9/2011)
C187, Convention on Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health at work, 2006	Chile (27/4/2011) Canada (13/6/2011)
MLC – Maritime Labour Convention, 2006	Antigua and Barbuda (11/8/2011) Canada (15/6/2010) Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (9/11/2010)
C185, Seafarers Identity Documents Convention (revised), 2003	Brazil (21/1/2010)
C169, Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989	Nicaragua (25/8/2010)
C151, Labour Relations) Public Service Convention, 1978	Brazil (15/6/2010)
C144, Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards Convention), 1976	Canada (13/06/2011) San Vicente y las Granadinas (9/11/2010)
C129, Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (9/11/2010)
C122, Employment Policy Convention, 1964	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (9/11/2010)
C102, Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952	Uruguay (14/10/2010)
C29, Forced Labour Convention, 1930	Canada (13/06/2011)

The ILO has given continuous support for **freedom of association and collective bargaining** in Latin America and the Caribbean as these are the main principles for ILO action in the region, in terms of standards and in its technical assistance strategy. In this field, ACTRAV and the Regional Office have helped increase and improve the ILO's sources of information through developing tools and data bases of grievances over breaches of freedom of association (QVILIS) and monitoring the International Labour Standards (CORENIT), which have up-to-date information for the region to June, 2011. The Regional Office funded several TUCA initiatives in the region, including women's participation in debates over the question of domestic work, with a view to the conven-



tion that was to be approved at the 2010 International Labour Conference. That same year it also contributed to numerous meeting in the union world, including the ITUC Congress in June 2010 and the seminar on migration and unionism, held en Vancouver, the “Latin American Meeting for discussion experiences in education: towards a union training school network” (Costa Rica), the seminar on union policy in view of the crisis (Santiago, Chile) and especially the seminar “Freedom of association and an end to anti-union practices” held in Brazil in November, 2010. In the 2010-2011 biennium, the total contributions of the Regional Office to activities linked to workers’ organizations was approximately US\$1 million, contributing directly or indirectly to the regional campaign for freedom of association.

Additionally, the ILO/Cinterfor has supported seminars on professional training and important publications for helping to raise awareness about this issue in Argentina – a country which standardised a large number of collective bargaining agreements in 2010 and 2011; Brazil, where it has helped to include the issue in the discussions of the federal and state-level agendas on decent work; Chile – with campaigns on Conventions 87 and 98 and support for collective bargaining in the public sector, and in the Andean countries – where it made a map of freedom of association and gender equality and a manual on the interpretation of decent work statistics.

In Venezuela, the ILO has helped lay the foundations for strengthening the institutions of its more representative business organization, FEDECAMARAS, through the complete review of its strategic plan, which includes a series of plans of action and training in several issues, including freedom of association. In Central America it supported the participatory formulation of union plans for the dissemination of labour rights in Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic and El Salvador. In the framework of these plans, the ILO provided direct technical assistance to the union organisations, stressing freedom of association and collective bargaining. In this region, together with employers’ organizations, it also drafted the document “International Labour Standards on Freedom of association and Collective Bargaining – a Study Guide for the Business Sector” (2010) and held training workshops in Honduras, Costa Rica, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua.

In Trinidad and Tobago, the Office supported a seminar on collective bargaining in the banking and insurance sector to disseminate international labour standards on freedom of association and collective bargaining. Together with the National Union of Domestic Workers (NUDE) of Trinidad and Tobago and UN-WOMEN, the Office held a workshop (July, 2011) on collective bargaining, with a special focus on low-income factory women



workers. In Jamaica, with the Union Confederation (JCTU), it held six workshops on promoting workers' rights for union delegates, in order to facilitate the application of the decent work focus and the provisions of Conventions 87 and 98 in their daily work.

The ILO has also continued to contribute to national efforts for eliminating **forced labour** (Peru and Paraguay - Plan against Forced Labour, actions in Brazil's forestry sector) and **child labour** (in Central America several countries have adopted a road map for eliminating child labour. In Chile the ILO supported a new national survey on child labour and the installation of a module for attending to children and adolescents).

With regard to **gender equality** (non-discrimination) the ILO has continued with the effort begun in 2009 for promoting work and family reconciliation policies in many countries in the region and social dialogue on equal opportunities and conditions at work for men and women. It has promoted tripartite commissions on the subject throughout the region. In Chile, the ILO was on the Presidential Advisory Commission which formulated a proposal which was the basis for a law that extends protection to maternity and creates paternity leave, on the basis of Conventions 156 and 183. El Salvador passed the Equality and the Elimination of Discrimination against Women Act in 2011. It also carried out a gender audit for the Ministry of Labour, as part of a joint programme with the Organization of American States.

Regarding indigenous peoples, the Office has continued promoting **Convention 169**. In Peru and Guatemala it has supported efforts for the regulation of prior consultation. Should this be successful, it could be a catalyst for similar processes in other countries of the region.

The regional priorities for 2012-2013 presented below concern the ILO's strategy for helping to reduce inequality and poverty in the region.

2.5 ILO regional priorities for 2012-2013

The ILO strategy in Latin America and the Caribbean is built on the demands and priorities of its constituents and the ILO's global policy framework. The constituents' priorities are reflected – in the region – in the conclusions of the ILO's American meetings (Brasilia, 2006; Santiago, 2010). The meeting in Brasilia produced the 2006-2015 Decent Work Hemispheric Agenda, and the one in Santiago produced conclusions which gave clear priority to the issues of freedom of association and collective bargaining, the creation of



employment through sustainable enterprises and strengthening labour administration. At national level, the constituents' priorities are reflected in the Decent Work Country Programmes, where these exist, or directly through contacts with the ILO offices in charge.

The ILO Strategic Policy Framework for 2010-2015 and the 2012-2013 Programme and Budget define 19 global outcomes that guide the Office's work, both in headquarters and in the regions. These outcomes, defined and approved by the International Labour Conference, are a guide for operating the region's programmes and for defining country objectives. The 2008 Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalisation and the 2009 Global Jobs Pact also define priorities that affect programming in the region.

Within these frameworks, the ILO Regional Director's Team for Latin America and the Caribbean defined a number of priority lines of action for the region, which will facilitate compliance with national objectives without interfering with the countries' own planning processes. On the contrary, the regional priorities were conceived as points of contact between strategies and work plans that could enrich, improve and potentiate the impact of the ILO's actions at the national level. These priority lines of action, which will in all cases be carried out through tripartite social dialogue, with the active participation of workers' and employers' organizations and through promoting international labour standards, are as follows:

1. **Freedom of association and collective bargaining**, in line with the conclusions of the American meeting 2010, the Hemispheric Agenda, the Global Jobs Pact and the ILO Strategic Policy Framework (Outcome 14).
2. **Sustainable enterprises**, in line with the conclusions of the American meeting 2010, the Hemispheric Agenda, the Global Jobs Pact and the ILO Strategic Policy Framework (Outcome 3).
3. **Labour administration and labour legislation**, in line with the conclusions of the American meeting 2010, the Hemispheric Agenda, the Global Jobs Pact and the ILO Strategic Policy Framework (Outcome 11).
4. **Jobs and decent work for youth**, in line with the Hemispheric Agenda, the Global Jobs Pact and the Strategic Policy Framework (Outcome 1 and Outcome 2, Indicator 2.5).



5. **Social protection**, in line with the Hemispheric Agenda, the Global Jobs Pact and the ILO Strategic Policy Framework (Outcome 4).
6. **Health and safety at work**, in line with the Hemispheric Agenda, the Global Job Pact and the ILO Strategic Policy Framework (Outcome 6).
7. **Poverty, inequality and gender**, addressing the more serious and persistent problems in the region on the basis of the ILO's comparative advantages, in line with the Hemispheric Agenda's priorities and the Millennium Development Goals. This is a cross-cutting priority and the activities planned impact above all on Outcomes 5 (working conditions), 7 (HIV/AIDS at work), 15 (forced labour), 16 (child labour) and 17 (elimination of discrimination).

The specialists of the ILO's Decent Work teams in the region, with colleagues from the technical departments in the headquarters, set up several working groups early in 2012 to develop road maps and define specific results and products (summarised in Box 3). The Regional Office will monitor the strategy, focusing on achieving the products and their use in the priority countries, and will report systematically to its constituents on progress, obstacles and achievements.





Box 3. Regional results and products 2012-2013 in the road maps for priority issues		
Priority	Strategic results	Regional products
Freedom of association and collective bargaining	Generation of sustainable capacities and mechanisms of promotion, guarantee and application of freedom of association and collective bargaining, with a gender focus, echoing the comments of the ILO supervisory mechanisms.	• Awareness-raising campaign for preventing anti-union practices and the exclusion of unions and employers organisations from social dialogue, especially for the transport, mining and construction sectors. • Systematic inclusion of these themes in training programmes for judges, prosecutors, procurators, academics and members of Parliament, held by the ILO. • Information services and specific advisory services for workers' and employers' organisations. • Tools to strengthen labour administration and inspection for preventing breaches of these rights and for conflict resolution. • The incorporation of statistics on the situation of freedom of association and collective bargaining in the Latin American and Caribbean Labour Information System (SIALC). • Bipartite and tripartite sector agreements adopted and implemented in selected countries, focusing on construction, mining and transport.



Box 3. Regional results and products 2012-2013 in the road maps for priority issues

Priority	Strategic results	Regional products
Sustainable enterprises	Creation of productive and decent jobs by sustainable enterprises in Latin America and the Caribbean	• Three country studies to analyse the context for developing sustainable enterprises and the publication of a report with the lessons learned from the studies. • Regional academy on sustainable enterprises for strengthening institutional capacity in the region co-organised with the ILO International Training Centre in Turin. • Inclusion of issue in regional academy on social economy. • Regional study on cooperatives in Latin America and the Caribbean. • Report on lessons learned from policies and programmes in formalisation, disseminated at a regional forum. • Technical preparation and organisation of a regional forum on the tripartite declaration on Latin American multi-national companies (multi-Latin). • Organisation of a regional union forum on the tripartite declaration on multinational enterprises. • Made available on the web: ILO/Cinterfor: training materials for businesses, formulated by the ILO and by the network of training entities that form the Centre. • Report on sustainable enterprises in Latin America.



Box 3. Regional results and products 2012-2013 in the road maps for priority issues		
Priority	Strategic results	Regional products
Labour administration and labour legislation	Substantial strengthening and modernisation of : a) Labour Ministries for applying the recommendations of the ILO supervisory bodies; b) Labour inspection for conflict prevention and resolution; and c) labour justice for improving compliance with international standards and national labour law	- Regional base of information about labour administration developed and made available to constituents. - The 2012 Regional Labour Inspection Academy held. - Tools for recommending the modernisation of administrative and information systems. - Best practice study on modernisation and strengthening of labour justice in Latin America in the past decade. - Training for judges in oral court processes (including an internship programme and preparation of specific materials) - Collection of sentences that use international labour standards.
Jobs and decent work for youth	Promoting policies, plans and youth employment and decent work programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean, on the basis of a solid comparison of practical knowledge	- Systematisation of outcomes of international forums on youth employment held in the region in preparation for the world meeting prior to the 2012 International Labour Conference. - Up-to-date information about the transition from school to work based on five national surveys held in selected countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. - ILO-ECLAC newsletter on the youth employment situation and trends in Latin America and the Caribbean in Latin America and the Caribbean. - Regional platform on best practices and successful experiences. - Inter-American programme proposal for promoting youth employment, prepared with the Organization of American States. - Third report on Youth and Decent Work in Latin America and the Caribbean, focusing on an analysis of national youth employment policies.



Box 3. Regional results and products 2012-2013 in the road maps for priority issues

Priority	Strategic results	Regional products
Social protection	Regional and national specialised agencies and networks incorporate the two-dimensional strategy for the extension of a social protection through the social protection floor and encouraging the ratification of Convention 102 in the region	• Training programme held with participation of constituents. • Communication strategy and socialisation of ILO's two-dimensional strategy (Social Protection Floor and Convention 102). • Integration of issue in specialist networks, including UN agencies, the Organization of American States, UNASUR, the Inter-American Social Protection Network, the Ibero-American Social Security Organization and the Inter-American Conference on Social Security. • Regional stock taking regarding the two-dimensional approach for the extension of social security coverage, with a gender perspective. • A platform for sharing information and best practices (GESS). • A regional strategy for the social protection floor applied in at least two countries per sub-region, with a gender perspective. • Best practices and lessons learned about the extension of social security coverage for domestic workers (report, circulated).



Box 3. Regional results and products 2012-2013 in the road maps for priority issues

Priority	Strategic results	Regional products
Health and safety at work	Substantial improvement in health and safety conditions at work in the region through: a) drafting laws, profiles, policies and national and/or sector programmes (giving priority to mining, construction and agriculture); b) specific measures adopted by workers' and employers' organisations; and c) strengthening inspection systems.	• Training materials on "Development of National Programmes for Health and Safety at Work" drafted by the Turin International Training Centre translated into Spanish and Portuguese and validated at a regional event or at sub-regional meetings. • Circulating and training with existing manuals and guides with a sectoral focus, including for workers' and employers' organisations. • A regional panel on social dialogue in health and safety at work in a regional social dialogue seminar. • A regional workshop on health and safety at work from a gender perspective. • Inclusion of the subject in the 2012 Regional Labour Inspection Academy.



Box 3. Regional results and products 2012-2013 in the road maps for priority issues

Priority	Strategic results	Regional products
Poverty, inequality and gender	Adoption and application in the region's countries of: a) policies or strategies for improving work conditions, particularly for the most vulnerable workers; and b) legislation, policies, programmes or specific activities for improving the application of conventions and principles concerning non-discrimination.	• Regional decent work strategy in domestic work, considering: a) the eradication of child labour; b) the protection of young men and women; and c) improved working conditions for adults. • Systematization of best practices for the prevention and eradication of child labour from the perspective of contributing to poverty relief and the reduction of inequality. • Strategy of non-discrimination because of HIV/AIDS in the world of work with emphasis on gender equality. • Drafting and circulating the regional report on decent work and gender equality: policies for improving access to and quality of jobs for women in Latin America and the Caribbean (together with UN-WOMEN, ECLAC, UNDP and FAO). • Identifying and discussing with constituents the conditions for generating growth, creating jobs, improving work conditions and reducing inequality in the region.



3 MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR ACTION

To achieve the results described in Chapter 2, the Office is using a series of management strategies which – by establishing realistic and measurable goals – allow for integrated, coherent and efficient action. These strategies are geared towards generating relevant information about policies and institutions that can be made available to constituents timely, collaboration with other multilateral organizations for promoting decent work and the integration of resources from different sources for achieving the established objectives. In particular, the Office acts on all fronts promoting social dialogue and taking advantage of the ILO's most important added value, its tripartite nature.

The International Labour Office actions have helped to achieve concrete results in terms of more effective policies and stronger institutions for promoting the decent work agenda in several of the region's countries. Some of these results were mentioned in the preceding chapter.

This chapter describes the management strategies applied systematically in the region by the Regional Office, the Country Offices and the Decent Work Teams. Some of the general principles that have made possible an integrated and efficient management of resources for reaching significant results are summarised below.

3.1 Generating and sharing information

The ILO bases its support for its constituents on knowledge acquired throughout many decades of experience. If the ILO is to respond in real time to the demands it receives, it is paramount that available data be transformed fast into practical information that can be presented to governments, workers' organisations and employers' organisations. The required information is generally about policies applied, their results and the reasons why they succeeded or failed.



The region follows the Office's general knowledge management strategy, which essentially involves developing and making available information about statistics, legislation and policies in specific areas linked to the decent work agenda, per country and sub-region. During the crisis and in the post-crisis, this has been reflected in the drafting of a series of information products. Some of the more outstanding are presented below.¹²

- The ILO's flagship report in Latin America and the Caribbean is the "Labour Overview" report, published annually in December, to address the year's main trends in the labour market and make an in-depth analysis of specific current and interesting subjects.
- In response to the crisis, in 2009 the region began to draft the "ILO Notes" (11 published in 2009, 12 in 2010 and 2 in 2011), which describe national policies – and on occasions compares them – in countries of the region, presenting the measures taken, their results and an analysis of their application.
- Together with the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the ILO publishes a newsletter on current topics, which include an analysis of decent work indicators and their development.
- In the area of statistical information the ILO's Labour Information System for Latin America and the Caribbean has designed a tool called "Quipustat", for easy access to recent data and historical series for a good number of the countries of the region.
- The "Youth Employment Portal" for finding news, information and documents on this subject in a simple form.
- ILO/Cinterfor, a network of skills training institutions in the region, has an interactive platform for sharing information, explanatory material, documents and contacts. These resources, made available by the network members, facilitate horizontal cooperation and an exchange of experiences in this field of knowledge.
- The ILO's country offices in the region make a significant contribution to the efforts to generate and share information, through specific products, related publications for the sub-regional and national level and regular newsletters.

¹² All information products are available on the ILO Regional Office's website: <http://www.oit.org.pe/>



The ILO has begun to streamline the information available to offer it in a more orderly manner. This will facilitate access to information and technical assistance provided to constituents.

3.2 Collaboration with other organisations and promoting new opportunities for the decent work agenda

The Office is continuing to promote strategic alliances with agencies, funds, programmes, United Nations System Commissions, ECOSOC, Bretton Woods Institutions and other regional entities, with the aim of integrating decent work into their agendas and carry out joint initiatives for greater impact.

The priority interlocutors for this work in the region are the United Nations Development Group for Latin America and the Caribbean, the members of which are the regional agency directors (UNDG LAC) and their Inter-agency Working Groups, as well as the United Nations country teams. The Office plays an active part in programming national activities, and elements of the decent work agenda have been integrated into all the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF) developed in the last few years.

In 2010-2011, the ILO's participation in joint programmes with several agencies of the system funded by the Spain-UNDP Millennium Development Goals Fund has multiplied. In this period, the Fund was the major donor in the region considering the number of projects and the third largest considering financial extra budgetary resources. These projects have facilitated the integration of work agendas, information sharing and the mobilisation of resources for issues directly related to the decent work agenda. While cooperation for programmes of this kind continues, the ILO will go on taking an active part because they have great potential in terms of funds and also to multiply the effects of the interventions.

En general, the Office plays a very active part in the United Nations inter-agency coordination mechanisms, especially the UNDG-LAC and the Country Teams. As a result a number of elements of the decent work agenda are considered throughout the UNDAF developed in recent years and the ILO has been very active in the only pilot scheme of "United in Action" in the region (Uruguay). In February 2012 a specialist in this issue



joined the Regional Office in Lima, which has facilitated the ILO's coordination and active participation in these groups.

In this field the ILO is concerned to get more workers' and employers' organisations to participate in the United Nations system planning and actions. In Panama, in August 2011, the organisation held a meeting attended by the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas, unions in the region, high-ranking officials of the UN system and international financial institutions, to debate modes of consultation and participation of workers' organisations in the United Nations programmes and other multilateral organisations.

Regarding cooperation with international and regional organisations:

- The relationship with the **Organization of American States** (OAS) is very positive, above all because of its political advantages and the chance of coordinating action with labour authorities and social stakeholders in the framework of the Inter-American Conferences of Ministers of Labor. This cooperation has for example promoted gender audits using ILO methodology in labour ministries and, in the immediate future, it will be geared to promoting the social protection floor.
- The assessment and perspectives of the cooperation with the **Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean** (ECLAC) are also excellent. This collaboration aims to potentiate monitoring and information about labour policies in the region, linked to the development of the international and regional macro-economy, on the basis of reliable information about decent work indicators. It has also set up a labour observatory that has an analysis of current labour and economic issues, and a review of the main issues, published in a regular newsletter. In the Caribbean, progress is being made in joint issues of interest linked to value chains and youth employment in strategic sectors (tourism, energy and manufacturing). The strategic potential of this cooperation is to contribute to the dialogue between labour, economic and financial authorities in the region's countries.
- With the **United Nations Development Programme** (UNDP) the ILO has furthered the alliance for jointly addressing issues of mutual interest such as the growing number of women in the labour market (following up on the 2009 "Work and Family" report, on strategies for reconciling work and family life). In 2011, work was begun on this subject, led by the ILO and UN-WOMEN, on the employability of women in Latin America and the Caribbean, focused on public and private policies that facilitate (or hamper) access to jobs and that define their quality, from the pers-



pective of equality and non-discrimination. This programme will culminate with a regional report giving recommendations, which will also include specific measures for each sub-region and country. The Office is also working with UN-WOMEN in the Caribbean on the question of domestic work.

- With the **United Nations Organisation for Food and Agriculture** (FAO) the Office has held a regional programme for making a situation report on the labour market and rural poverty in Latin America, gathering statistical data and making a policy analysis, which has been presented at various national and sub-regional seminars.

In addition to cooperation with the agencies, the ILO in the region is also working on specific themes and in particular countries with the **World Health Organisation**, the **United Nations Population Fund** and the **United Nations Children's Fund** (social protection floor, child labour and health and safety at work). It has also had some interesting albeit punctual experiences with the **Inter-American Development Bank** (labour justice in Central America and child labour), the World Bank's International Financial Corporation (labour intensive investments in Paraguay; Better Work in Haiti) and the **Caribbean Development Bank** (job and training programmes for developing small and medium enterprises). It has also signed an agreement with the **Corporación Andina de Fomento** which has not yet been implemented in concrete programmes. Work in this area is more complex, although the economic potential is greater, because these banks tend to work directly with the ministries of economy and finance in the countries in the region.

3.3 Integrated technical cooperation resources

The ILO's results-based management strategy involves integrating resources from different sources for obtaining the objectives and goals planned. This principle was strengthened in 2010 – 2011 and will continue to be a core element of the ILO's strategy in the region in 2012 – 2013.

In the last biennium, the ILO mobilised a total of US\$52.7 million for the region in extra-budgetary resources and over US\$4.5 million more in the regular budget supplementary account (RBSA).¹³ 2011 was the year when the fewest "fresh" resources were mobilised of the last five-years and the falling trend is expected to continue in 2012-2013, consid-

¹³ For reference, extra-budgetary resources mobilised in the 2009-2010 biennium totalled US\$71 million.

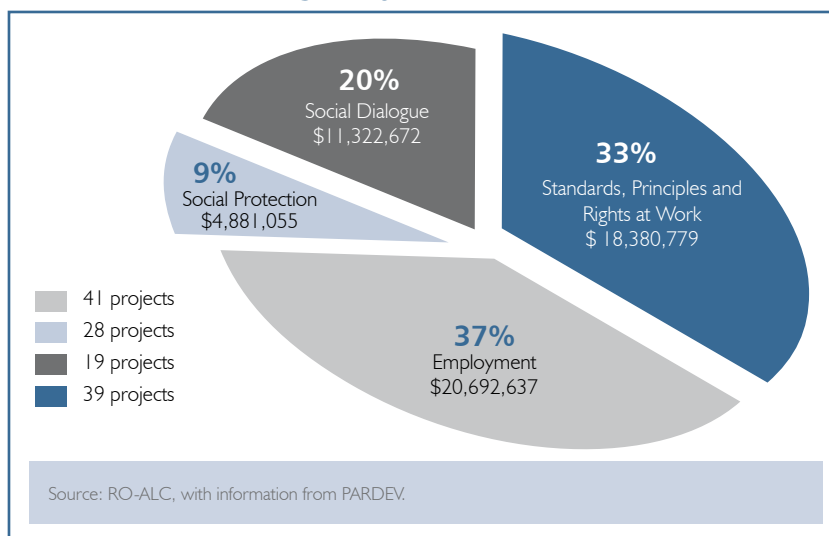


ring the crisis that is affecting the cooperation budgets of many of the region's traditional donors.

In 2010-2011, there were a total of 127 projects active in the region, at national and sub-regional level, on different themes (Graph 3). Most of the projects were in employment, with a large number related to youth employment and skills training. A significant number of projects concerned international labour standards, especially for the elimination of child labour.

In the current climate of uncertainty regarding the capacity for mobilising cooperation resources from traditional donors, the Office will promote strategic alternatives in the region for mobilising technical cooperation resources. It will use the South-South cooperation strategy – especially adequate in a region with a high number of middle and upper-middle income countries, with major technical capacity and human resources and which also have many circumstances in common – and public-private partnerships, that potentiate the technical and advisory services that the ILO provides combining them with those that private sector players offer, particularly companies, in order to promote full and productive employment and decent work as a basis for sustainable development.

Graph 3. Distribution of resources spent per strategic objective 2010-2011





3.4 Tripartite work and social dialogue

The core elements of the ILO's management strategies are drawn from its own tripartite structure. In the region, all the Decent Work Teams and the Regional Office itself have specialists in relations with workers' and employers' organisations who, in coordination with the technical departments at headquarters, ACTRAV and ACT/EMP, help ensure that the vision of social partners be considered in results-based management. The specialised information of, and sensitivity towards, the situation of employers and workers in the region are among the Office's strengths for promoting decent work on the basis of a more effective social dialogue.

It has already been mentioned that the ILO constituents provide guidance for the Office's action in the region, at global, regional and national level. As stated at the December 2010 American Regional Meeting, one of the chief challenges in the countries of the region remains effective social dialogue. Potentiating and increasing bipartite and tripartite channels for meeting and debating will facilitate the development of inclusive policies and enable the Office to offer relevant and rapid responses to the requirements of its constituents in Latin America and the Caribbean.

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This report summarizes the advances in the world of work in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2010-2011, to which the ILO has contributed in a variety of ways. It also includes a discussion about perspectives for 2012-2013 and the challenges the organisation must tackle to continue promoting its decent work agenda in this part of the world.

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