

Norway and ILO sign new Partnership Cooperation Agreement for 2012-15

On 5 December 2011 Norway and the ILO signed a new Partnership Cooperation Agreement, which will provide a total of NOK 160 million (approximately US\$ 27.3 million) over the period 2012-15 through four annual contributions.

The new agreement is innovative and state of the art in terms of development financing. Half of the Norwegian funding will be unearmarked and channelled through the Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA) - a flexible funding modality directed towards the most strategic interventions in support of ILO Decent Work Country Programmes. The other half will be lightly earmarked at the level of selected Decent Work Outcomes and cover such themes as social dialogue and strengthening of workers' and employers' organizations, labour administration, the promotion of standards and fundamental principles and rights at work, gender equality and international policy coherence. The selected thematic areas provide a good overlap between the priorities of ILO constituents and the objectives of the Norwegian Government's strategy for the promotion of Decent Work "The ILO has a key mandate and a leading position in the international arena during the economically troubled times the world has been facing since 2008. Unemployment, compromising labour rights, lack of social protection – these are challenges shared both by the industrialized and developing countries" said Halvor Sætre, Deputy Director-General of the Section for Human Rights and Democracy in the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs "The Decent Work Agenda is essential to create equitable globalization and sustainable growth that is driven by jobs. The Arab spring is perhaps the foremost example of the importance of employment and social issues."

"Norway and the ILO have a long history of close partnership, which goes well beyond funding for the ILO's technical assistance programmes. In recent years the ILO has undergone several major changes in its governance systems and field structure, and has demonstrated significant progress in the application of Results Based Management. We have seen these efforts rewarded by the trust given to us by such key donors as Norway", said . Jürgen Schwettmann, Director of the ILO Partnerships and Development Cooperation Department. "This strategic support is particularly appreciated at a time when the global demand for the ILO's services has seen a dramatic increase. The new Partnership Cooperation Agreement provides a major contribution to the ILO's efforts to further improve efficiency, simplify procedures, and improve reporting on overall ILO achievements."

In the period 2006-10 Norway was the third largest multi-bilateral donor to ILO technical cooperation, providing a total of over US\$ 64 million. In addition, Norway has also been the third largest donor to the RBSA, with a total contribution of US\$ 13.5 million during this period.