

Local Economic Development (LED)

Communities, cities and governments around the world increasingly turn to Local Economic Development (LED) strategies in response to the challenges of globalization and the drive for decentralization.

LED means more than just economic growth. It is promoting participation and local dialogue, connecting people and their resources for better employment and a higher quality of life for both men and women.

The ILO's goal of Decent Work for All is reflected in LED strategies through its focus on growth, poverty reduction and social inclusion. The organisation's social partners increasingly adopt LED in Decent Work Country Programmes, which are developed and agreed upon by Governments, Workers' and Employers' Organizations. LED strategies are also deployed in countries affected by the global jobs crisis, increasing the coherence and effectiveness between national policy packages and local realities.

Where we work

The ILO is assisting its constituents in developing and implementing LED strategies in a wide range of economic, social and political settings across the world. This includes countries emerging from crisis, Indigenous Peoples, rural and backward areas with child labour, city slums as well as growth-oriented clusters where territorial competitiveness is addressed. Given the growing demand for support to address the local effects of climate change, LED strategies are more and more incorporating the “green jobs” dimension.

Our strategies include the use of private sector development approaches and tools such as value chain development, linkages with microfinance institutions, skills development, institutional capacity-building and green jobs.

Under the One UN framework, projects with a strong LED component include those in countries such as Egypt, Namibia, Indonesia, Vietnam and Costa Rica, and Dominican Republic among others.

Knowledge management and sharing

As part of our knowledge management and sharing strategy, a study on lessons from the ILO LED experience in Ghana is underway. The study particularly looks into the policy and institutional impact of LED which is evidenced by national and local ownership of the LED approach. For instance, ILO is involved in efforts to shape policy implications of LED for accelerated decentralization.

Besides, we are carrying out a survey among LED practitioners in the ILO and in other agencies and organizations on the needs for LED tools and capacity building.

If you want to learn more about LED, visit our knowledge sharing portal at www.ledknowledge.org and be part of a growing global community of practitioners.

More information

Contact the LED team at led@ilo.org

To learn more about face-to-face and distance learning courses on local economic development, visit www.itcilo.org/emld