



3 Social dialogue for good governance, the rule of law and decent work



Social dialogue includes all types of negotiation, consultation and exchange of information between representatives of governments, employers and workers on issues of common interest.

ILO action focuses on improving good labour market governance. This is done through a wide range of technical assistance in areas such as labour law reform and labour administration (e.g. strengthening labour inspection systems, employment services and dispute-settlement mechanisms) as well as by empowering the social partners through collective bargaining. There is also emphasis on improving the ability of constituents to participate effectively in governance structures. Building the capacities of the social partners - employers' and workers' organizations — and their ability to work together around labour, social and economic issues is demonstrated to be the best way of ensuring social progress, peace, democracy and inclusive growth.

The ILO's strategy for the promotion of social dialogue is centred on:

Outcome 9

Employers have strong, independent and representative organizations

Outcome 10

Workers have strong, independent and representative organizations

Outcome 11

Labour administrations apply up-to-date labour legislation and provide effective services

Outcome 12

Tripartism and strengthened labour market governance contribute to effective social dialogue and sound industrial relations

Outcome 13

A sector-specific approach to decent work is applied

*In approximately **60%** of countries, less than **20%** of wage earners are covered by collective bargaining agreements*

Promoting workers' rights

The ILO strengthens the institutional capacity of workers' organizations to improve workers' livelihoods, employment and working conditions in 35 countries. For example, in **Egypt** the historic Freedom of Association Declaration was launched in March 2011 and a new independent trade union emerged with ILO support. A new regional Arab Democratic Union Forum was also established in September 2011. Trade unions in **China** expanded sectoral collective bargaining to address the increasing number of rights-related disputes, and promoted decent work for rural migrants.

In **India, Indonesia, Malaysia** and **Thailand**, trade unions lobbied their governments to strengthen maternity protection and ratify related ILO Conventions.

A coordinated trade union campaign was conducted in Asia and the Pacific for the ratification of ILO's freedom of association and collective bargaining Conventions. In **Nepal**, the fragmented trade union movement was brought under a single functional platform at the national level. In **India**, with ILO support, close to 21,000 new paying members were organized. Of these, over 11,000 members were enrolled into state social security programmes. Nine Workers' Information Centres are functional and nearly 4,000 complaints were resolved.



Strong employers' organizations promote a conducive environment for competitive and sustainable enterprises

Employers' and business organizations were strengthened in 56 countries to respond to the needs of their members and to influence national policy-making aimed at promoting sustainable enterprises, employment and growth. Across all regions, the ILO supported national employers' organizations to develop strategic plans to enhance their management structures, improve or develop new services, and strengthen their capacity to analyse their operating environment and influence policy development.

In the **Bahamas**, with ILO support, different organizations merged to form the Bahamas Chamber of Commerce and Employers' Confederation to better serve the interests of employers in the Bahamas.

In **Ecuador** the ILO supported a turnaround of the Guayaquil Chamber of Industries, with a dramatic improvement in services provided to its members through more effective membership management.

In **Ghana** a new Business Development Service Unit at the Ghana Employers' Association was established, leading to improved fee-based services for members.

In **Honduras** the newly established Enterprise Workforce Commission provides a valuable business service for members, including the preparation of position papers that serve as lobbying tools to promote business positions on prospective labour and social legislation. The [ILO Enabling Environment for Sustainable Enterprises toolkit](#), a comprehensive resource for

employers' and business organization's was applied for instance in **Botswana, Jordan, Mongolia** and **Swaziland**. The toolkit has proven effective in assisting employers' organizations to identify and tackle major constraints to enterprise development and employment growth.



Moldova

Labour law and gender equity

In Moldova many women find it difficult to find and keep a decent job. In July 2010, with ILO assistance, the Government amended the Labour Code to improve the legal framework of several aspects related to gender equality and non-discrimination at work, bringing them into conformity with relevant international labour standards, notably with regard to sexual and moral harassment, maternity protection and workers with family responsibilities.

Labour market governance

Clear labour legislation and professional labour administration are essential to labour market governance. They must be complemented by effective labour inspection and dispute settlement systems.

In **Uruguay** specific regulations were included in the labour legislation for agricultural and domestic workers. For the first time the rural workers' work day was reduced to eight hours and their salary increased by 50 per cent.

In **El Salvador** the ILO assisted the Government in the implementation of a training programme for labour inspectors. Labour inspectors now have stability of employment and effective enforcement powers, able to impose sanctions.



Social dialogue and tripartism: Negotiating for social justice

The global economic crisis has reemphasized the importance of social dialogue and tripartism in many countries. The Arab spring in particular, demonstrates the need for effective social dialogue, especially for young people, who lack the voice to articulate their concerns.

The ILO strengthens social dialogue institutions and reinforces their capacity to cushion the employment and social impact of the crisis and to shape sustainable reforms, improve the social dialogue climate, and accelerate economic recovery.

ILO revitalized economic and social councils and similar institutions in **El Salvador, Grenada, Lao, Serbia** and **The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**. Tripartite committees were created in **Zimbabwe** and **Oman**, which have played a key role in reforms related to respect for freedom of association. In **Montenegro** the newly established dispute settlement agency with ILO support facilitated a peaceful agreement in 72 per cent of cases. The ILO currently works with constituents in **Tunisia** in order to reactivate the National Commission for Tripartite Social Dialogue and to promote the formulation of a tripartite social pact meant to secure a smooth transition of the country towards stable democracy and economic recovery.

Cambodia



Building a reliable and efficient labour dispute resolution body

The ILO Labour Dispute Resolution project was put in place in order to assist the Government of Cambodia and the employers and trade unions to prevent and resolve such disputes through a variety of means.

A major accomplishment of the project has been the establishment of the Arbitration Council, Cambodia's only national, statutory, alternative labour dispute resolution body. The Council had a success rate of approximately 70 per cent of all cases resolved up to the close of 2010. Disputes concerned compliance with the minimum standards set out in national legislation, some of which concerned key human rights issues such as anti-union discrimination, freedom of association and the right to bargain collectively.

The Arbitration Council is widely viewed by observers and its users as having contributed significantly to the improved resolution of disputes and rule of law with respect to social and economic rights. Its reputation as a non-corrupt, transparent, credible and efficient national institution has built trust among stakeholders.

<http://www.arbitrationcouncil.org>

IMPROVING COMPLIANCE WITH LABOUR STANDARDS IN THE GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN

Better Work, a partnership of the ILO and the International Finance Corporation, improves the lives of workers and their families by driving sector-wide, sustainable improvements in adherence to core ILO labour standards and national labour law, and promoting business competitiveness in major garment producing industries. The ILO currently engages the garment sector in **Cambodia, Haiti, Indonesia, Jordan, Lesotho, Nicaragua and Viet Nam**. A total of 573 factories are currently involved in the programme, employing some 702,308 workers.

In Viet Nam this approach is seeing positive results. In examining both compliance performance in factories that have been assessed at least twice by Better Work Viet Nam and impact assessment data collected as part of Better Work's ambitious research agenda, the following changes are among those noted:

 <http://www.facebook.com/betterworkprogramme>

 <http://www.youtube.com/betterworkprogramme>

Better Work Viet Nam

Over 140 factories are participating at present, with an anticipated 500 factories by 2014.

Almost 200,000 workers are now covered by Better Work Viet Nam, 80 per cent of whom are women.

In 2011, 117 factories were assessed and 123 received advisory services.

85 per cent of participating factories developed improvement plans.



Compliance in **documentation and protection of young workers increased by 25 per cent.**

Compliance in **gender discrimination improved by 25 per cent.**

Within **freedom of association indicators**, compliance in interference and discrimination **improved by 50 per cent.**

Compliance in **occupational health and safety indicators**, specifically emergency preparedness and worker protection, **improved by 33 per cent.**

After two years in Better Work Viet Nam, all factory managers who were surveyed at least twice regarded the role of the trade union, factory worker committees and the PICC as effective in **improving worker-manager relations and resolving problems.**



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The Global Labour University



The ILO has supported the creation of the Global Labour University (GLU). This is a global, university-based qualification

programme for trade unionists. It was set up as a network of universities, international and national trade unions, civil society organizations and the ILO. With campuses in **Brazil, India, South Africa, and Germany**, the GLU provides a “one world” research and learning environment for labour to research, analyse, and identify effective policy measures to meet the labour challenges of today.

To date more than 200 trade unionists have received Master’s degrees and 80 per cent are active in the labour movement or labour research. GLU alumni today work for Global Union Federations or political foundations, are general secretaries of trade unions, work as full-time officials on economics, education, gender or international affairs in their trade union, as advisors to works councils, as freelance labour consultants and journalists, or have continued with PhD studies comparing trade union revitalization strategies.

<http://www.global-labour-university.org>