



International  
Labour  
Organization

***Promotion of decent work in  
cotton-producing countries in  
Africa and Latin America***

**Brazil/ILO Partnership Program for the  
Promotion of South-South Cooperation**



# How the project started?

The Brazil/ILO Partnership Program for the Promotion of South-South Cooperation started formally in 2009, with the approval of the Complementary Adjustment to the Agreement on Technical Cooperation with Latin American and African countries. On that occasion, the country and ILO signed a commitment to promote cooperation among developing countries in the context of the Decent Work Agenda, with reference to its four strategic axes (respect to labour rights, more and better jobs for men and women, expansion of social protection and social dialogue).

It is in this context of strengthening the Brazil / ILO partnership for development that negotiations of the cotton dispute occurred at the multilateral level. Cotton subsidies have increased the stock in the international market, driving prices of the product down in countries dependent on its exports, impairing the competitiveness of this commodity.

As a result of the cotton sector crisis, in May 2003, during a special session of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Committee on Agriculture, the Cotton-4 countries have proposed the "Cotton Initiative"<sup>1</sup>, considered a milestone within the organization as it exposes the delicate balance between trade and development, establishing a link between the drop in international prices and the damaging effects arising from the practice of subsidies. The four proponents of the initiative argued that the declines in exports revenues have direct consequences on programs for poverty reduction, employment generation, income distribution and development.

As of then, the issue of cotton within the WTO began to be considered according to two dimensions: the trading component (general agriculture negotiations) and the development assistance component.

Recent results achieved by Brazil under the cotton dispute at WTO opened up positive prospects for cotton production in the country, particularly with the signing, in April 20th, 2010, of the "Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil on a Fund for

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<sup>1</sup> World Trade Organization, Agriculture Committee. Poverty Reduction: Sectoral Initiative in Favour of Cotton – Joint Proposal by Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali (TN/AG/GEN/4, 16 May 2003).

Technical Assistance and Capacity Building Related to Cotton Dispute (WT / DS267), in the World Trade Organization (“Brazil-US MoU”), succeeded by the Memorandum of Understanding regarding the Cotton Dispute (WT/DS267), signed by the Ministry of External Relations, Ministry of Agriculture, and the Government of the United States of America (Washington, October 1st, 2014), including **“technical support activities and capacity building to the cotton culture sector in Brazil and related to the international cooperation for the sector in Sub-Saharan African countries, in associated or member-states of MERCOSUR, in Haiti or any other developing countries according to further agreement between parties”**. The resources of the aforementioned fund are managed by the Brazilian Cotton Institute (IBA), created for this very purpose.

## Why cotton?

Cotton is one of the world's most important agricultural commodities, responsible for income and employment generation, and food security of millions of farmers' families, especially in developing countries whose economies and agricultural production depend on this commodity. Directly and indirectly affecting significant portions of the population, the sector occupies a strategic position in the development of poverty reduction policies and programs in many countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. By generating income as an exports commodity, for example, cotton contributes to the access of small farmers and their families to food, housing and many other goods and services. Additionally, the product contributes to the growth of the economy as a whole, considering the multiplier effects and the density of the textiles production chain, which result in additional income and employment generation in the industrial sector.

## What is the objective of the project?

The project aims to promote the **decent work** in cotton-producing countries through the systematization, sharing and adaptation, by interested countries, of relevant Brazilian experiences in areas such as fighting poverty, productive inclusion, prevention and eradication of child labour and forced labour, formalization of work, promotion of youth employment, combating discrimination, and promoting gender, race and ethnicity equality, and social dialogue.

## What is Decent Work?

The concept of Decent Work (DW) was adopted by the ILO in 1999 as a summary of its historical mission to promote opportunities for men and women to obtain productive and quality work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity.

## Who are the beneficiaries?

### Direct Beneficiaries

Governmental institutions, organizations of workers and employers of developing countries involved in cotton production that are partners of this South-South technical cooperation project.

### Indirect Beneficiaries

Children, adolescents, youth, women and their families in cotton-producing countries partners of this technical cooperation.

# Where the activities take place?

After a consultation process and a formal request of governments to the ILO and/or the Brazilian authorities, five targeted-countries were identified: Mali, Mozambique, Paraguay, Peru and Tanzania. Moreover, the project will promote regional activities in Latin America and the Caribbean as well as in Africa that can involve a larger group of countries.



Foto: Carlos Rüdiney/Abraça

## Who is involved in the project implementation?

The Project is part of a trilateral south-south cooperation arrangement between the Brazilian Government, the partner countries and the ILO Office in Brasil. South-south cooperation actions will be articulated in Latin America and the Caribbean and Africa.

Brazilian institutions that have developed the selected good practices, as well as their counterparts in the targeted countries also participate actively in the project, from its planning and execution to its final evaluation. The project activities are coordinated with the bilateral cooperation actions that both the ILO and the Brazilian Government implement directly in the selected countries.

The Brazilian Cotton Institute (IBA) provides the financial resources needed for the implementation of the project and participates as observer, along with ABC/MRE and the ILO, in the Project Steering Committee.

# What are the experiences to be shared?

In the context of the decent work promotion, the Project structures the main Brazilian experiences for south-south cooperation in two main axes:

## **Prevention and Elimination of Child Labour and Forced Labour**

Child and forced labour are considered serious violations of human rights and of the fundamental principles and rights at work, and the antithesis of decent work and, therefore, should be eliminated. Brazil has played a key role in achieving this goal, both for the international recognition of the effectiveness and good results of its policies for prevention and elimination of these violations, and for the fact that the figures contribute to global targets, in particular those for Latin America and Caribbean.

In order to achieve this goal, it is important to prioritize policies that recognize that the path to an effective solution for the elimination of child and forced labour involves the active involvement of all stakeholders, the exchange of experiences and best practices, increased awareness, efforts, knowledge and skills of all, in a sustainable manner. The need for such joint and multidisciplinary approach in the different public policy areas (labour and employment, social welfare, health, education, equality and non-discrimination, etc.) is evident both for the maintenance of achievements over the years, and for progress in dimensions of the problem that are still resistant to the strategies used so far. In this sense, the following experiences were selected:

- **Conditional cash transfer programs and reintegration programs for victims of child labour and forced labour**
- **Promotion of the social dialogue (CONAETI and CONATRAE)**
- **Labour inspection in the area of child labour and forced labour**
- **Promotion of national and international labour legislation, with a close relation between the Judiciary and society.**
- **The ABRAPA Experience (Programme Responsible Brazilian Cotton of the Brazilian Association of Cotton Producers)**



## Productive inclusion focused on capacity building and employment for youth and women

The axis of productive inclusion aims to provide the population in extreme poverty with access to employment and income opportunities, with distinct strategies for urban and rural areas: increase production in the field and job and income generation in cities.

Urban productive inclusion brings together actions and programs that facilitate the entry into the labour market either through formal employment, or entrepreneurship or solidarity economy enterprises. It gathers social and professional qualification initiatives and labour intermediation, aimed at providing job placement in registered positions that include social security protection, and support to micro-entrepreneurs and cooperatives in the solidarity economy.

Specifically in this context, the project will work with professional and technical education programs for access to the labour market, within the national learning policy and the decent work agenda, as follows:

- Professional and technical education programs for access to the labour market
- National Learning Policy
- Decent Work Agendas



# What is the implementation strategy?

Taking into account the principles of South-South cooperation and the mechanisms adopted by the Brazilian government for trilateral South-South technical cooperation, technical inputs to capacity development in partner countries will be provided by cooperating Brazilian institutions. To that effect, such institutions shall rely on ILO technical support, in line with their mandates and based on their body of knowledge and institutional specialties, with emphasis on the role of supporting the identification and systematization of technical content object of the cooperation, as well as the development of methodologies and tools to enable the transfer and adaptation between Brazil and other partner developing country.

The Project is an “umbrella” programme, which will be implemented by means of work plans by country or group of beneficiary countries. Such actions must be aligned with national priorities and country development strategies, and integrated with other South-South cooperation initiatives held between the Brazilian Government and these nations.

To that effect, Project’s actions were organized into three strategic phases, described below:

- 1 – Identification of cotton-producing countries interested in joining the initiative and preparation of work plans by country or groups of partner countries.
- 2 – Implementation of work plans and South-South technical cooperation activities in one or more pre-established areas.
- 3 – Systematization of experiences developed by the project in order to strengthen the capacities for the promotion of technical cooperation among developing countries.

## LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

### Development objective:

Through South-South cooperation, to contribute to the promotion of decent work with emphasis on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and the improvement of working conditions in cotton-producing developing countries.

**Objective 1:** Based on the Brazilian experience, to develop skills in public institutions in partner countries to design and implement national and sub-regional policies and programs to promote decent work in the cotton production sector, in the themes prioritized in the project.

**Output 1.1: South-South cooperation needs for the promotion of decent work in the cotton production sector identified between Brazil, the ILO and cotton-producing countries in the regions of Latin America and the Caribbean, and Africa.**

### Activities:

1.1.1 Identify countries' technical cooperation needs.

1.1.2 Promote interest surveys with the identified countries.

1.1.3 Identification of Brazilian institutions engaged in the implementation of the pre-selected policies and negotiating their participation in the project's actions.

1.1.4 Carry out prospecting missions in the countries with the participation of Brazilian institutions involved.

**Output 1.2: Work plans developed, agreed and executed between Brazil, the ILO and cotton-producing countries in the regions of Latin America and the Caribbean, and Africa.**

1.2.1 Elaborate work plans based on prospecting missions.

1.2.2 Validate and execute work plans.

1.2.3 Support the adaptation and exchange of best practices and technologies identified in the

Brazilian experience of decent work promotion both in the public sector as well as the cotton-producing sector to other cotton-producing countries.

1.2.4. Monitor and evaluate the implementation of work plans in countries through various channels, particularly in the framework of the Regional Initiative Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labour.

**Output 1.3: Regional seminars on topics of priority interest to the project using different methodologies of exchange carried out.**

1.3.1 Elaborate a plan for regional exchange of experiences related to the pre-selected exchange themes.

1.3.2 Develop Terms of References detailing the experience to be shared, target audience, stakeholders involved, activities to be developed and expected results.

1.3.3 Organize and execute regional exchanges.

**Output 1.4: Best practices of Brazilian policies to promote decent work systematized and documented.**

1.4.1 Document and systematize decent work policies identified as best practices.

1.4.2 Validate best practices identified and systematize with the relevant Brazilian institutions.

**Output 1.5: Management tools, methodologies and results of implementation of the different work plans analyzed, systematized and documented to be disseminated in other similar contexts.**

1.5.1 Develop tools and methodologies based on best practices and lessons learned on the relevance of the project for dissemination purposes.

1.5.2. Sharing the evaluation results of the implementation of the work plans in 4 countries, through various channels, particularly in the framework of the Regional Initiative Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labour.



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