

ASIA-PACIFIC 2006
DECENT WORK
DECADE 2015



International
Labour
Organization

The ILO in India



Key Facts and Figures

Population (2012): 1.2 billion

GDP per capita (2012): US\$ 1,106

Labour force (2012): 484 million

- 362 million male
- 122 million female

Labour force participation rate (2012): 55.5%

- 80.9% male
- 28.8% female

Employment to population ratio (2012): 53.7%

- 78.3% male
- 27.6% female

Unemployment rate (2012): 3.6%

- 3.4% male
- 4.0% female

Over the past two decades India has made very significant economic development, reaching an average growth rate of 8 per cent between 2007 and 2012. It showed resilience during the global financial crisis in 2008 and managed to attain strong 10.5 per cent growth in 2010. However, in 2011, economic growth slowed to its slowest rate in more than a decade, dropping sharply to 6.3 per cent in 2011 and 3.2 per cent in 2012. The reasons for this economic downturn include persistently high domestic inflation and a sluggish international economic environment, notably in the USA and Europe.

India faces a range of labour market challenges. One is insufficient job creation. Between 2004 and 2009, net employment grew by only 2.7 million. This period is often



referred to as one of jobless growth. Another challenge is the nature of the employment growth; more than half of the growth took place in agriculture and in the informal sector. The formal sector, on the other hand, where better jobs are often found, showed no significant expansion.

Informality pervades the labour market, with an overwhelming number of workers in informal employment. A growing concern is the informalization of the formal sector, mainly through the use of contract labour.

Women in India face more obstacles to entering the labour market than men. Often they are victims of discrimination, sexual harassment and other forms of unfair workplace treatment. Promoting gender equality and encouraging women to enter the labour market are essential.

Young people face similar challenges. India has the world's largest youth population and many of them lack both adequate skills and employment opportunities.

India's 12th Five Year Plan (2012-17) aims for inclusive growth. It gives special attention to vulnerable groups such as women and youth, and focuses on employment creation, implementing labour laws and universal social security coverage.

Sources: ILO KILM.

Ratified Conventions

India has ratified 43 ILO Conventions including four Fundamental Conventions:

- C.29 - Forced Labour Convention, 1930
- C.100 - Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951
- C.105 - Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957
- C.111 - Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958

The ILO - Who We Are

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is the UN specialized agency dealing with work and workplace issues, and related rights and standards. Its overarching goal is to achieve decent work for all so everyone benefits from working conditions that offer freedom, equity, security and human dignity. In working towards this goal the ILO has four principal strategic objectives:

- To promote and realize standards, and fundamental principles and rights at work.
- To create greater opportunities for women and men to secure decent employment.
- To enhance the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all.
- To strengthen the relationship between workers, employers and governments, and encourage social dialogue.

Founded in 1919, the ILO is the only surviving major creation of the Treaty of Versailles, which established the League of Nations. It became the first specialized agency of the United Nations in 1946.

The ILO in India

India is a founding member of the ILO and has been a permanent member of the ILO Governing Body since 1922. The ILO Office in India was established in 1928 and is, at present, composed of two teams: The Decent Work Team (DWT) provides technical support to India and other south Asian countries and the Country Office (CO) is responsible for ILO activities in India.

Current areas of work

The ILO's work in India is carried out within the framework of the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP). India's first DWCP covered the period 2007-12 and achieved satisfactory results, especially with regard to promoting livelihoods, eliminating child labour, reducing the vulnerability of bonded labourers, empowering women and informal economy workers, and developing employment generation agendas.

In response to the fast changing socio-economic environment in India (notably with its emergence as a middle-income country) and in line with the country's 12th Five Year Plan, the DWCP for 2013-2017 has set the following four priorities:

- Promotion of international labour standards and fundamental principles and rights at work.
- Promotion of policies for job-rich and inclusive growth, especially for women, youth and disadvantaged groups.
- Building a national social protection floor and strengthening workplace compliance.
- Enhancing labour administration, tripartism and social dialogue at national and state levels.



A range of programmes and projects have been designed and are implemented to achieve these priorities, including:

- Building on existing initiatives at national and state levels to prevent unacceptable forms of work, e.g. bonded labour, promote decent work for domestic workers, increase workers' awareness and access to social security schemes, and enhance fundamental rights of migrant workers – both national and international.
- Promoting Decent Work for migrant health professionals and skilled workers and preventing trafficking of women and girls in South Asia.
- Promoting gender equality in the workplace, preventing sexual harassment, gender-based violence and wage discrimination, and implementing ILO Conventions and national laws on equal remuneration and employment.
- Conducting evidence-based policy research on topics of national importance including low rate of women's participation in the labour force and youth employment. Introducing tools to integrate employment goals in national policies and programmes, promoting Decent Work elements in selected government programmes and strengthening partnerships with research/academic institutions, the UN family and knowledge-sharing networks.
- Strengthening collection, analysis and dissemination of labour statistics at national and state levels including through inter-ministerial mechanisms.
- Formalizing the informal economy, curbing the growth of informal economy and reducing vulnerable employment.
- Promoting sustainable enterprise development by using, amongst others, ILO's global tools and methodologies to increase productivity and competitiveness of micro, small and medium enterprises (e.g. SIYB and SCoRE). Providing technical assistance for developing and launching innovative and sustainable rural roads maintenance.
- Supporting the creation of a national social protection floor (SPF) by providing advisory services to identify gaps/challenges in implementation of selected schemes and support efforts to build a nationally-defined SPF.
- Strengthening tripartite institutions' ability to carry out social dialogue at both national and state levels and promoting capacities of employers' and workers' organizations to provide better services to their members and to influence labour policy formulation.

Social partners

ILO's constituents in India include the Ministry of Labour and Employment, representing Government, the 12 central trade unions and their regional and state-level affiliates, and major employers' organizations constituting the Council of Indian Employers (comprising of All India Organisation of Employers, Employers Federation of India and Standing Conference of Public Enterprises).

The Asia Pacific Decent Work Decade

The International Labour Organization's members in Asia and the Pacific - governments, employers' and workers' organizations - have committed themselves to an "Asia-Pacific Decent Work Decade 2006-2015". In doing so they reaffirmed their commitment to achieving full, productive and decent employment for their people. To help realize the aims of the Decade five regional priority areas were selected:

- Competiveness, productivity and jobs.
- Labour market governance.
- Youth employment.
- Managing labour migration.
- Local development for poverty reduction.

These priorities compliment each member country's individual goals, which are outlined in their national Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs). In turn, these DWCP's shape the ILO's work with its member States and so support the Organization's mandated aim, of Decent Work for All.

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DECENT WORK

A better world starts here.