

Alliance 8.7

Working together to end child labour and modern slavery

In September 2015, a summit of heads of state adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which will frame the global development agenda for the next 15 years. One of the seventeen goals (goal 8) calls for the promotion of sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all by 2030.

A specific target 8.7 under this goal calls for effective measures to end forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking and child labour in all its forms, including the worst forms of child labour.

This is in line with and supportive of the “G20 Labour and Employment Ministerial Declaration” adopted in Melbourne in September 2014, which stated “We take a strong stand against forced and child labour, and encourage the implementation of applicable international labour standards by governments and social partners ...” and “prioritise measures to support under-represented and vulnerable groups [...] to escape working poverty and eliminate forced labour and child labour”.

The SDGs consist of a set of inter-related and mutually reinforcing goals, with a network of related targets. Their implementation requires integrated thinking, policy-making and coordination at different levels.



The process leading to the formulation of these goals has fostered an understanding that strategic multi-stakeholder alliances are required for their successful implementation.

Many Governments, UN agencies, workers’ and employers’ organizations, businesses, civil society organizations, academia and other stakeholders are involved in the SDG process and will continue to contribute to implementation using their expertise and resources.

Framing the challenge

The realization of fundamental principles and rights at work stands as a goal in itself. The ILO strives for a world in which there is no child labour, no forced labour and no discrimination, and where all are free to organize and to defend their interests. These fundamental principles and rights at work are inseparable, interrelated and mutually reinforcing.

Significant progress has already been made towards the elimination of child labour and forced labour in the last two decades. Many challenges however remain and lessons learnt need to be critically assessed. In order to reach target 8.7, the annual rate of reduction of child labour must be accelerated, and stronger efforts are required to achieve a significant reduction in forced labour.

Concerted global action against child labour commenced in the mid-1990s, whereas the world really only woke up to contemporary forced labour in the mid-2000s. For child labour, the period 2008 – 2012 saw a substantial reduction, whereas no such decline has been witnessed yet in forced labour, despite policy and other responses being put in place in many countries.

However, 168 million children are still in child labour, with about half of them in hazardous work and other worst forms. According to the ILO's global estimates on forced labour, an estimated 21 million people are in forced labour, more than half of whom are women and girls, and including 5.5 million children. Available data indicate that numbers of people in forced labour are not yet going down and may even be on the rise.

A major challenge will be to strengthen on-going efforts and to pool resources in order to scale up successful interventions and to monitor progress towards achieving target 8.7. While the monitoring framework of the SDGs is still subject to discussion, a consensus has already emerged that action and monitoring will mainly take place at the national level, with complementary action and monitoring at regional and global levels. The SDGs monitoring framework will have to take into account the complexity of the goals and targets while serving also as a practical tool for policy making and for measuring progress.

Why a New Alliance?

- The scale of the challenge demands urgent attention: 21 million women, men and children trapped in forced labour, \$150 billion illicit profits generated annually from forced labour; 168 million girls and boys in child labour, despite significant reduction in recent years.
- The universal support for the SDGs is likely to generate a new momentum to end slavery, trafficking, forced labour and child labour.
- Each partner has taken successful measures, but only by joining forces will we be able to achieve our extremely ambitious target.
- Duplication of efforts must be avoided and the best solutions brought to scale.
- Technological innovation presents unprecedented opportunities to share knowledge and to monitor progress collectively.

The Alliance 8.7

Through concerted and focused action involving many actors, the world community can live up to its commitments and achieve target 8.7 by 2030. But there is an urgent need to coordinate this endeavour, both within and beyond the UN system. With no time to lose, the ILO therefore proposes to bring together all interested parties through a multi-stakeholder “Alliance 8.7”.

Once partners of the Alliance have agreed on the mission and goals, a detailed success matrix will be developed to evaluate the contribution of the Alliance to improved coordination and impact with regards to target 8.7.

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Vision

A world free from:

- Forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking
- Child labour in all forms, with particular attention to its worst forms

Mission

Assist all member States of the United Nations in achieving target 8.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals: Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.

Goals

Achieve a significant increase in the rate of reduction in child labour and forced labour, through:

- Increased global awareness
- Powerful advocacy for high-level commitment
- Coordinated and coherent action at the global, regional and country level
- More effective policies and action plans, including a sharper focus on prevention
- Support for new and innovative initiatives
- Better monitoring and knowledge sharing
- Creation of a global financing facility
- Empowerment of women, men and children to claim their rights

Partners and Governance

“Alliance 8.7” sets out to be inclusive, involving the governments, workers’ and employers’ organizations, UN agencies, regional organizations, partners for development, the private sector, civil society organizations, academia, experts, the media and other actors supporting the aims of SDG 8.7. Further discussion is required to clarify roles, responsibilities, and principles of partnership. The “Alliance 8.7” would bring the added value of engaging with public and private development partners in a more coordinated manner to avoid duplication of efforts and to channel funding towards proven practices for replication and scale while ensuring continued focus on root causes and sustainable policy change. The Alliance will start with a very light and flexible governance structure, allowing for alterations and improvements, developing overtime into a more formal structure.

Budget and work plan to set up Alliance 8.7

The Alliance will require sustained funding to maintain a high profile and to accomplish its goals. For the time being, the ILO will provide seed funding to facilitate the inception phase, in particular consultations with key partners. Upon agreement on partnerships and objectives, a more detailed financial plan will be developed. In the short-term, there is a need to further refine the strategy and to start stakeholder consultations. In 2015, priority will be given to the following action points: developing a monitoring framework for Alliance 8.7, developing a strategy for setting up a global knowledge gateway on child labour and forced labour, including stakeholder engagement and partnerships, and facilitating virtual and face-to-face consultations with key partners.

Proposed timeframe (September 2015 – June 2017)

October 2015 – December 2015

3. Ongoing consultations with member states, UN and other partners
4. Development of a communication strategy
5. Development of monitoring, knowledge and data sharing strategy
6. Creation of basic framework for knowledge gateway
7. Joint meetings with core partners to agree on governance structure, action groups and other building blocks of the alliance

January 2016 – June 2017

8. High-level launch of Alliance 8.7
9. Action groups begin their work
10. Further development of knowledge gateway
11. First Partnership Forum 2017