

# WORLD of WORK

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MIGRATION  
SHOULD BE  
A CHOICE



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# Welcome

In today's globalized world, labour migration is a rising policy priority. Economic hardship and geopolitical crises leading to the lack of decent work are resulting in growing and diverse migratory movements.

What's more, the governance of labour migration has increased in complexity. New thinking and new approaches are needed here. Particularly, a fair sharing of the prosperity migrant workers help to create. Policies should respond equitably to the interests of countries of origin and destination, as well as to migrant workers, employers and national workers.

This is why this year's International Labour Conference (ILC) will hold a general discussion on labour migration governance and fair recruitment. The discussion is expected to make a major contribution to the global debate on migration and a possible new Global Compact of the United Nations on migration.

The world's 150 million migrant workers make significant and essential contributions to the economic, social and cultural development of their host countries and their communities back home. Last December, an ILO team went to Nepal to produce a special report, which highlights the difficult choice migrant workers face between staying in their country or going abroad. In 2016, an estimated 1,500 people left the country every day, and the remittances they sent home make up almost one-third of Nepal's gross domestic product.

The example of Nepal also powerfully demonstrates that in situations of crisis and post-disaster, social dialogue between government and the social partners contributes to strengthening civil peace, democracy and reconstruction.

Another item on the Conference agenda is expected to support ILO efforts around the globe to promote decent work for people in countries emerging from conflict or disaster: the revision of ILO Recommendation 71 on employment and decent work for resilience. We present an overview of ILO activities in this area, while a feature story from the Philippines gives a concrete example of how social and economic development can help to build peace.

This magazine features two other issues discussed at this year's ILC: green jobs – the theme of the report of the ILO Director-General to the Conference, and the adaptation of international labour standards to new realities in the world of work.

We also look forward to the discussions at the 2018 ILC that will consider possible new standards on violence at work.

Last but not least, you will find the latest ILO publications in this magazine.

**Hans von Rohland**

Editor, *World of Work* magazine



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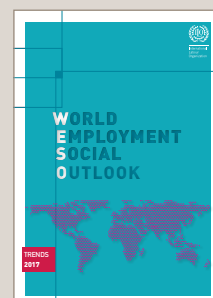
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# MIGRATION SHOULD BE A CHOICE

## Sharmila's story

Nearly one out of every four Nepalese households has a family member working abroad, sending home almost the equivalent of one-third of Nepal's gross domestic product. The ILO supports the country in promoting fair migration channels and, alternatively, developing labour market policies that create jobs and livelihoods at home. These activities sustain the post-earthquake recovery, and take account of declining labour migration remittances.

*By Hans von Rohland and Marcel Crozet (photos)*

CHARIKOT, NEPAL – Sharmila Rai Gurung, 27, lives with her mother-in-law, and two younger brothers who still attend school in Charikot, a six hour drive on a bumpy road from Nepal's capital Kathmandu.

A visitor of Charikot can't help but be struck by the contrast between the lush, awe-inducing landscape of the area – a favourite among trekkers and adventure seekers – and the hard life of its residents.

Gurung's family lives on a plot of land – rented for 10,000 Nepalese rupees (NPR) (about 92 US\$) a year – and earn their income from vegetable farming and breeding poultry. Their former house, a three story building situated further up the hill, was destroyed by the 2015 earthquake...a wall is all what's left from their old place.

When Gurung's husband comes back from Dubai in one month, they will probably both stay in Nepal for the rest of their lives. The couple has already bought a piece of land where they plan to build their own house and finally have children.

Gurung had gone to Saudi Arabia herself a decade earlier, when she was only 16, with a passport giving a false age of 26, because the minimum age to work as a domestic worker in Saudi Arabia was 25 at the time.

"We were seven children and my parents were poor. So they encouraged me to take the road of migration," Rai Gurung explains.

She had used an irregular migration channel via India where she waited one month to go to the Arabian peninsula.

Gurung paid 35,000 NPR (318 US\$) to a recruiter in India. It took her six months to get a work permit from the Saudi

Arabian authorities. For the first nine months, the head of the family would not let her talk to the other family members. As she worked the first three months 'on probation', she was only paid the equivalent of 8,000 NPR (74 US\$) instead of 10,000 NPR (92 US\$) as indicated in her contract with the Indian recruitment agency.

After two years, her cousin found her a job in Oman where the latter already worked himself. It was there that authorities discovered that the age in her passport was not correct. She was lucky to be able to stay in the country.

She spent two years (2010-11) in Oman, returned to Charikot where she still could not find a job and left again for Kyrgyzstan. Then she ended up in war torn Iraq for another two years as she was deceived by the Nepalese recruiter about her destination. However, she still managed to save money to buy the piece of land in Charikot.

### STAYING IN NEPAL

After this last migratory experience, Gurung decided to stay in Nepal where she learnt more about poultry farming thanks to the ILO and POURAKHI, its Nepalese partner organisation who provided a toolkit under the ILO-DFID *Partnership Programme on Fair Recruitment and Decent Work for Women Migrant Workers in South Asia and the Middle East* (Work in Freedom). The programme targets some 200,000 women and girls in South Asia, 40,000 of them in Nepal alone.

Gurung's income now is 15,000 to 20,000 NPR (138 to 184 US\$) a month – more than she used to earn abroad.









After long years abroad, Sharmila Rai Gurung has decided to stay with her husband in Nepal.

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“I still have to care for my family. But if I worked full time, I could even double this income. Now I feel like staying here...if I had known about these classes beforehand, I would not have gone through India to work abroad, but they did not exist at that time,” Gurung says.

The former migrant told us about her migration experience at a meeting of one of the orientation groups organized by the Work in Freedom programme. These meetings aim at enabling potential and former migrant workers to exchange ideas and make an informed decision about migration, use regular migration channels, and avoid situations of labour exploitation and trafficking.

Seventeen-year-old Sabitai Karki also attended the information meeting and was listening carefully to Sharmila's account. When asked whether she still wants to go abroad after what she had heard, she says that she wants to have a better life and thinks that migration will be safe. “My brother will collect information for me, and together with these information classes here, I think I will be safe.”

She has another year to make a decision, as she is not 18 yet. Sharmila may have decided to migrate at too young an age. But at that time, social mobilizers like Saangita Pokharel, who organize these information classes, did not exist in Nepal.

## MAKING AN INFORMED DECISION

A bit later, we met another young woman, Pratima Poudel, aged 23, at the same place. This married woman

with a three year old daughter is the owner of a beauty salon in Charikot.

She decided to stay after having planned to work in Dubai. She already had all the papers, but was not happy with the price asked by the recruitment agent, who demanded the exorbitant sum of 150,000 NPR or about 1,380 US\$ for his services. She received training as a beautician, some basic tools to open a salon from POURAKHI, and a loan from a bank to open the salon together with a small grocery shop.

“I am happy with my decision, and I want to stay in Nepal,” she says.

Pratima Poudel dreams of her beauty salon in Nepal.





For those who cannot walk a couple of hours to join these information classes, door-to-door peer educators like Samana Budhathoki come to see potential migrants at home. We met this 21-year-old woman the next day. She does not hesitate to walk for two hours to meet two of her clients living where further up the hillside Sharmila Rai Gurung settled.

The peer educator lives in a house that was partly damaged by the 2015 earthquake, while the neighbouring one was completely destroyed. The two women, mother and daughter, she met have also lost their house. They now live in a makeshift building, and the basement of the old house serves as a storage room. The mother was trained in vegetable farming and received a small amount from the Work in Freedom programme to start a small business.

The daughter, Manisha Tamang, aged 22, wants to go to Dubai as a domestic worker or work in a coffee processing company. Budhathoki will inform her about the migration process, to make sure that things work out better than they did for her 48-year-old mother, Sushila Tamang.

The latter went to Lebanon where she was locked-up by a family. She ran away to find a job with an elderly woman – a 24 hour caring job without any leave, where she was obliged to stay at home all the time. Back in Nepal, she had paid 40,000 NPR (368 US\$) to a recruitment agent to obtain this job. “The first year abroad was not sufficient to pay the interest (35 per cent) of the 40,000 NPR loan that I took to pay the recruitment agency,” she says.

What’s more, her daughter did not see her mother for three years. “If I had received vegetable farming training before, I would not have migrated to Lebanon,” her mother concluded.



Peer educator Samana Budhathoki in front of her house, which has been heavily damaged by the earthquake.

Stay or go: The peer educator counsels mother and daughter of the Tamang family.







## MIGRATION RESOURCE CENTRES

Migration Resource Centres (MRCs) in Kathmandu and several Nepalese districts, including Charikot, complete the set of offers proposed to potential migrants by the Work in Freedom programme.

In Charikot, the MRC is integrated into the government administration issuing passports. For those who are in a hurry, they can read a checklist for migrants. The others can go to the MRC office, where we met MRC officer Roshana Gautam and two future migrants who just got their passports: Ishwari Budhathaki, aged 26, who wears a traditional Nepalese dress and plans to go to Dubai as a domestic worker, and 20-year-old Sunita Karki in Western clothing, who wants to study abroad in an English-speaking country.

In Kathmandu, the ILO has supported the Foreign Employment Promotion Board and the Department of Foreign Employment to run an information centre at the 'Labour Village' since 2015 with EU funding. The 'Labour Village', under the Ministry of Labour and Employment, is a compound with several office buildings. Dozens of migrants patiently wait for their names to be called to receive the necessary documents for migration.

All workers pay 1,000 NPR (9.20 US\$) as a contribution towards the Migrant Welfare Fund at the onsite office of a local bank. The amount covers the risk of disability and death, while another 5,000 to 6,000 NPR (46.00 to 55.20 US\$) is to be paid for a compulsory life insurance scheme. Another office in the Labour Village provides translations of documents.







The creation of the Labour Village in 2014 reflected the Government of Nepal's intent to establish an area that houses under one roof all the foreign employment-related services. One year later, the Government of Nepal introduced the 'Free visa, Free ticket' policy, whereby potential migrants pay no more than NPR 20,000 (184 US\$) to private employment agencies to process fees, and the employer bears the costs of tickets and visa. The regulation applies to seven destination countries: Bahrain, Kuwait, Malaysia, Qatar, Oman, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

"Workers who used irregular channels to migrate and, consequently, were previously unregistered, are also encouraged to come to the Labour Village. This process is called 're-legalization'," explains Niyama Rai, the





## TRAINING MIGRANT WORKERS

Another important offer for women migrant workers is 210 hours of domestic work skills and basic language training, which is mandatory for all migrant workers heading for domestic work in the Middle East. Nepal's Foreign Employment Promotion Board (FEPB), which reports to the Ministry of Labour and Employment, has authorized 17 private training institutes to provide this training. The Work in Freedom programme provided technical support to the government to review the curriculum of these schools and trained the instructors of these institutes.

The women in the language class of Sakura Associates, one of these institutes in Kathmandu, greeted us in Arabic with "Salam aleikhoum" when we entered the room. Besides Hebrew or Arabic, they learn ironing, cleaning, cooking and how to take care of children or elderly people (for those going to Israel).

Here we met domestic worker-returnee, Shobha Sapkota, 38. With her paralysed husband being unable to work, she went to Kuwait for five years to support him and her children.

"I did not know the language...the owner was shouting at me and I felt very sad," she remembers. "At the beginning, they were more loving to their dog, but once I spoke the language and learnt how to deal with the kids, they no longer shouted at me."

It took her only three months to learn some basic Arabic, and later she had a good relationship with her employer. Her employer even found her a new job in a supermarket in Kuwait where she only worked 12 hours per day, 6.5 days a week – compared to the round-the-clock job she had with the family before.

Sapkota thinks that the training will considerably reduce the time to adapt to the new environment abroad: "Now we have here in Nepal a grand environment to learn before going abroad, when I went for the first time, there was not such a thing." Now she wants to go to Dubai – better informed, trained and well prepared. "If our employer is happy, we are happy," she concludes.

"In the last three months, more than 2,000 domestic migrant workers have passed our courses and – with the support of an international consultant from Bahrain – the duration of the courses has increased from 120 days five years ago to 210 days today focusing more on language and skills," says Khem Bhandari, the head of Sakura Associates.

Another domestic worker, Sanju Nepali, holds her two-year old girl on her knees. With no father or any relatives available, the little girl will stay in an institution, while her mother goes abroad for work. Will the little girl remember her when she comes back after two years?



ILO's National Project Coordinator for the Integrated Programme on Fair Recruitment (FAIR). Financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), FAIR is a new pilot programme to foster fair recruitment practices between Nepal and Jordan, for workers migrating to work in the garment industry.

In the last fiscal year, the Labour Village processed around 500,000 permits required for labour migration. 757 licensed recruitment agencies are accredited by the government. Their licenses can be withdrawn in case of abuse or fraud. Thousands of people come here to collect brochures on destination countries, and seek advice to make an informed decision.

"A major concern is that, according to official data, less than 10 per cent of the permits processed by the Labour

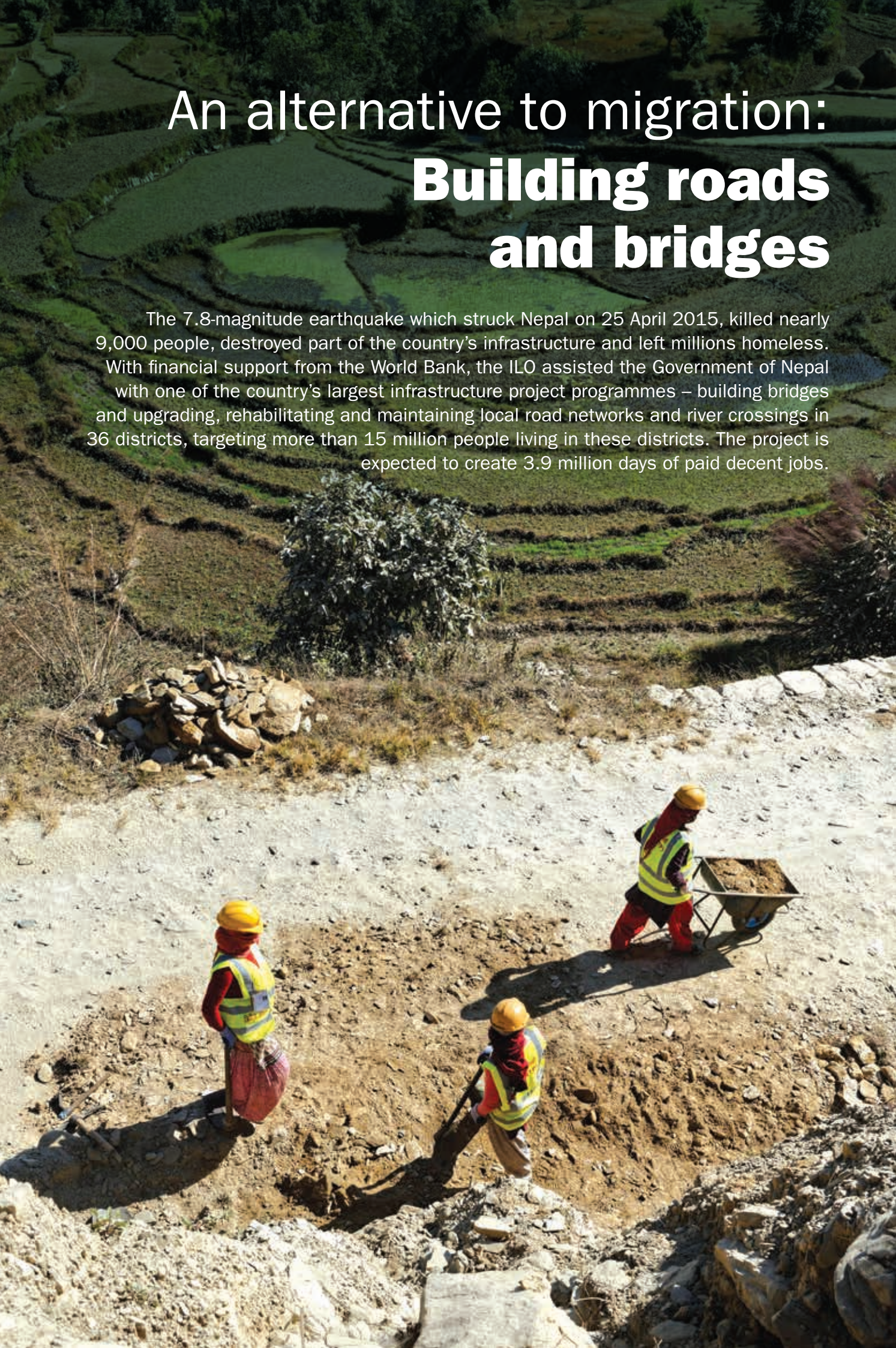
Village in Kathmandu are for Nepali women. Similarly, a small number of people coming to the Migration Resource Centre are women. Many women seem to take the more risky way of irregular migration channels, which most of the time go through India as a result of complex factors," says Rai.

Last December, on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ILO-Nepal partnership, ILO Director-General Guy Ryder visited the Labour Village. When asked about his impressions, he insisted that "migration should not be an obligation but a choice". He called for extending fair recruitment initiatives, and to make such policies a reality for all migrant workers in the country, including those from the most remote areas.



# An alternative to migration: **Building roads and bridges**

The 7.8-magnitude earthquake which struck Nepal on 25 April 2015, killed nearly 9,000 people, destroyed part of the country's infrastructure and left millions homeless. With financial support from the World Bank, the ILO assisted the Government of Nepal with one of the country's largest infrastructure project programmes – building bridges and upgrading, rehabilitating and maintaining local road networks and river crossings in 36 districts, targeting more than 15 million people living in these districts. The project is expected to create 3.9 million days of paid decent jobs.







## MIGRATING OR REBUILDING NEPAL?

The stories of Sharmila Rai Gurung and other migrant workers we met raise the question whether migration makes sense from an economic, social and political perspective. We try to find an answer in Chautera, a small town in Nepal's Sindhupalchok District.

Situated on a steep hillside at about 1400m, Chautera was the place most hit by the 2015 earthquake in Nepal. Ninety-five per cent of the city was destroyed or heavily damaged, but more than half of the town has already been rebuilt. 3,570 people were killed at the time, which represents 38 per cent of all deaths in Nepal due to the earthquake.

There is only the staircase left from the old government building dating back to colonial times.

More than 2,000 m<sup>3</sup> of debris have been removed so far. More than half of the roads have been damaged by the quake: 53 workers under the ILO's Strengthening National Rural Transport Programme (SNRTP) rehabilitate them. As in Kaski District, the chief engineer of the programme here is a woman. We learn that right after the quake, there was a lack of workers for these rehabilitation and reconstruction jobs, as most of the Nepali workers had migrated overseas. So India filled in, sending many construction workers after the quake.

One year later, we are told most of the workers are local, when we visit two construction sites in town. The workers earn up to 26,000 NPR (218.80 US\$)

a month, while women are paid 10-20 per cent less.

According to Lok Bahadur Tamang, a carpenter leading the works on one of the sites, "Women perform less than men". We are more than surprised to hear that as we can see them carry heavy loads of stones in huge baskets on their backs.

Talking to Karsan Lama, a migrant returning from Saudi Arabia, we learn that he earned between 12,000 and 15,000 NPR (110.40 to 138.00 US\$) abroad. Back in Nepal, he earns between 18,000 and 30,000 NPR (165.60 to 276.00 US\$, the upper range includes overtime).

## Cultural factors fuel migration

"If you compare salaries in the destination countries and in Nepal today, migration is not necessarily the best option – even from an economical perspective.

But there are also cultural factors: the low value attributed to certain occupations, including agricultural and domestic work, pushes many women into migration as they would be ashamed to do the same job here in Nepal," explains Bharati Sharma Pokharel, National Project Coordinator of the Work in Freedom Programme.

Certain women belonging to the lower casts (untouchables or Dalits) would not even be accepted for domestic work in Nepal. Similarly, many men prefer to go for construction work in the Arab region rather than doing the same job at home where everybody wants to work in the public sector.

This view is confirmed by Sawana Bhatta, Employment Counsellor at the



Lok Bahadur Tamang





Employment Services Centre in Kathmandu. The Centre is supported by ILO's Labour Market Information and Employment Services (LiFE) Project, which is financed by the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA). It aims to help Nepalese job seekers make well-informed choices about education, training and employment. "Most people look for scarce government jobs here," Sawana Bhatta says. She sees 10-20 jobseekers a month and hopes that soon there will be more clients, as much of the work can be done online now. We also learn that internal migration is not always easy, as the distance between home and work can be considerable in this mountainous country.

Bhagi Chand, one of Bhatta's clients, is a good example. The 27-year-old young man comes from Baitadi District in the far Western part of Nepal, a 24-hour bus ride from Kathmandu. Now that he has found a job as security guard with a local Telecom company in the capital, he can only visit his wife and children every three to four months.

"The challenge for the LiFE Project is to retain more people for work in Nepal. The ultimate objective of this project is to facilitate smoother transitions to training and work through expanded public employment services for rural youth in Nepal," says Saurav Ram Joshi, National Project

Coordinator for LiFE.

With more than 500,000 young Nepalese entering the labour market every year, ILO projects like LiFE and SNRTP face a formidable challenge: keeping potential migrants back home. Since farming is seen as a back-breaking and unglamorous profession in Nepalese society, a change in mind set and more investment in rural infrastructure will be needed, so young people will have no reason to migrate to the cities and abroad.

Another approach to retain people in the country is to improve the quality of work – finding more attractive and better-protected formal jobs for the more than 70 per cent of the economically-active population in Nepal engaged in the informal economy.

The ILO's Way Out of Informality (WOI) project promotes formal firms and jobs in Nepal through business help desks, the registration of construction sector subcontractors, the promotion of occupational safety and health, and skills testing and certification. Tourism is a particularly promising sector to promote local economic development – in Pokhara where the ILO also runs its SNRTP programme to boost local infrastructure – tourism represents 90 per cent of the local economy. WOI is financed by the Government of Japan.



Bhagi Chand



Sawana Bhatta





The 11.25 km of Dhampus Road in Kaski District represents only a small part of the more than 5,000 km of roads and bridges maintained under the SNRTP. But it leads to one of the most spectacular views in the country.

But before we enjoy the stunning view on hundreds of years-old rhododendrons and a 7,000-8,000 m high mountain range, including Annapurna 1, Fishtail and Dhalaugiri, we meet the five women and a man who maintain this road.

Over 80 per cent of the SNRTP workers are from disadvantaged groups, and two thirds are women. The hiring practice favours the landless poor and lower cast; five of the workers we met are “untouchables” or Dalits.

All of the workers wear gloves and a helmet – and the team leader holds a portable pharmacy in case of injury.

Their monthly wage of 14,000 NPR (126.80 US\$) is regularly paid into a bank account, workers have health insurance and get a monthly health check-up. One day per week is a day-off, usually the market day, to allow for shopping and recreation.

“It is the first time that these poor people are able to have a bank account, make savings and get a credit from the bank. Workers are often associated with cooperatives, which provide further advantages: workers learn how to save, and the probability to get a credit from the bank has risen from 0 to 100 per cent,” says Shailendra Kumar Jha, the SNRTP’s National Project Coordinator.

What’s more, the road benefits many people: tourists, tourism operators, sellers of trekking material, peasants, local people going for a picnic, the Dashain Festival,





## ILO-NEPAL: 50 YEARS OF PARTNERSHIP

Nepal became a member of the ILO in 1966, and an office was established in the country in 1994. The ILO has had an important role in Nepal in developing a constructive social partnership between government, employers and workers.

Based on this partnership, the three groups have engaged in better steering of migration and promoting alternatives to it. They have unionized informal workers, promoted gender equality and social protection, amended labour laws and ratified ILO core labour standards. Despite periods of extraordinary political and economic hardship, Nepal has sought to place social justice at the heart of its development and decent work agenda. The country has demonstrated its commitment to children by becoming the first country in Asia to implement a time-bound programme for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour. It was also the first nation in South Asia, and only the second country in Asia and the Pacific Region, to ratify the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169). Similarly, there have been commendable efforts to eliminate bonded labour, although more still needs to be achieved in this area. Many of the challenges that Nepal has faced in its modern history have stemmed from the need for inclusive growth and a fair distribution of wealth and opportunities across this diverse society. But finally, Nepal was able to create a unified democratic state through a more diverse and inclusive Constituent Assembly. The country has overcome a ten-year civil war, promulgated a new

Constitution in 2015, and had to face two massive earthquakes in April and May 2015.

The new Constitution has a strong focus on human rights and contains provisions on Decent Work that call for freedom of association, collective bargaining, fair working conditions and social protection for all workers.

“The example of Nepal powerfully demonstrates that, in situations of crisis and post-disaster, social dialogue between government and the social partners contributes to strengthening civil peace, democracy and reconstruction. The ILO will continue to stand by Nepal in firm partnership to achieve decent work and social justice for all,” concludes Richard Howard, director of the ILO’s office in Nepal.



and kids going to school. The regular maintenance of the road has reduced their journeys from 1.5 to 0.5 hours, on average. Even buses can go by the road now, and sick people arrive much faster at the local hospital than before.

The team leader of the group is a woman, Ganga Bhandari. She proudly shows us her logbook and work plan organizing a day’s work on the road. A Local Road User Committee and the chief district engineer decide on the long run work plan – under the oversight of the District Development Committee, housed in the local government office of Kaski District in Pokhara.

“Replacing the use of heavy machinery with the ILO’s labour-intensive, manual labour approach turned out to be an advantage for the whole community here as it creates decent and safe jobs for local people, mainly women and the deprived, reduces costs, and simplifies management,” concludes Kumar Jha.

## A BRIDGE TO DECENT WORK FOR THE POOR

Back in Kathmandu, we met Ram Krishna Sapkota, who is the Director-General of the Department of Local

Infrastructure and Agricultural Roads (DOLIDAR) reporting to the Ministry of Infrastructure.

Krishna Sapkota’s offices are housed temporarily in prefabricated structures as the main building dating back to British colonial times, has been severely damaged by the earthquake. It will have to be rebuilt from scratch with the exception of the facade. The state of the building is more than symbolic, as it reflects the scope of the reconstruction challenges after the 2015 earthquake.

DOLIDAR heads 35 district offices and together with them are responsible for maintaining 57,000 km high-cost rural roads in this mountainous country. The head of DOLIDAR cites the problems his department faces: the destruction caused by the earthquake, inadequate technical and human capacities and the fact that local parliaments – responsible for adopting the budget for road maintenance – have not been elected for the last 12 years.

Krishna Sapkota sees the ILO-World Bank-led SNRTP as a model for the country, and a bridge to decent work for the poor: “This is one of the most important projects of the Ministry of Infrastructure in terms of budget and scope. We want to replicate these projects across the country now.”



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# Labour migration *in* Latin America *and the* Caribbean

Like in other parts of the world, labour migration flows in Latin America and the Caribbean have expanded and become more complex over the last decades. *World of Work* spoke with Gloria Moreno-Fontes, Senior ILO Migration Specialist for the region.

## 1. What are the most dynamic migration corridors in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC)?

The United States continues to play an important role as the main country of destination for Latin American and Caribbean migrant workers (in 2015, 51 per cent of US immigrants originated from the Latin American and Caribbean region). However, the share of labour migration flows to other destinations, including

neighbouring countries and the European Union, has increased since the early 1990s.

As a result, a complex system of inter-regional labour migration corridors has evolved including the following South-South employment migration corridors: workers from Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala migrating to Costa Rica, Panama and Belize; Haitian workers moving to the Dominican Republic; Caribbean workers of all





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nationalities to Trinidad and Tobago and the Bahamas; Bolivians, Paraguayans, Peruvians and Ecuadorians working in Argentina; Haitians and Paraguayans migrating to Brazil for employment purposes; and Peruvians and Argentinians to Chile.

Importantly, major migration corridors outside the region have developed mainly before the 2008 financial crisis: Peruvians, Ecuadorians, Bolivians, Colombians and other Latin American workers moving to Spain, Italy or other Western European countries such as Switzerland and France.

## 2. What are the main characteristics of migrant workers in the LAC region?

The feminization of the migrant labour force during the past three decades is probably one of the most salient features that could be mentioned. Women migrant workers now represent on average more than half of the total number of migrants in North and South America.

Another prominent aspect is the large numbers of migrant workers finding themselves in irregular situations in destination countries. This partially explains the growing number of migrant workers in the informal

economy of destination countries' labour markets. Their working conditions (particularly working time and wages) are often considered deficient, and the large majority of them have no access to social security.

## 3. What are the main challenges for governments of the LAC region in terms of labour migration?

Labour migration is not a new issue in the region. What is lacking are medium and long-term policy responses and comprehensive governance measures that would recognize migrant workers' labour and skills as an asset, and a contribution to economic growth and sustainable development.

The main challenges encountered in the region are: the strong national security and border-control influence on migration policies in most countries; a weak focus on legal migrants' labour rights; the lack of social dialogue and participation in regional migration consultation processes (the Puebla Process and the South American Migration Conference); the absence of Ministries of Labour in inter-governmental commissions on migration; the lack of coherence between migration policies and employment policies; weak labour market institutions' inability to work

on labour migration issues; insufficient participation of migrant workers in trade unions and collective bargaining processes; and lastly, weak information and statistics systems and knowledge gaps about labour migration.

#### 4. What examples of good practices exist in the LAC region on labour migration?

Latin America and the Caribbean (particularly South America) is a region with a long tradition and experience in social dialogue between governments, employers and workers on social and labour issues.

The Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) is the regional integration process that has achieved most progress in building a common migration policy based on social dialogue. Its Sub-Working Group No. 10 is a tripartite body that has agreed through social dialogue on important instruments such as the *Multilateral Agreement on Social Security of MERCOSUR* (1997), which is in force since June 2005 and is implemented through the “MERCOSUR Retirees” program.

Another MERCOSUR best practice is the *Residence Agreement for Citizens of MERCOSUR States Parties and Associates* (signed in 2002 and in force since July 2009). It aims to facilitate access to residence status if migrants can accredit citizenship of one of the States Parties (now including all South American countries except Guyana, Surinam, and Venezuela). Initially, it gives two years of temporary residence with the right to work, and then offers permanent residence. Migrant workers enjoy equality of treatment with citizens of the host country, especially in terms of wages, working conditions, and social security. Family members who are not citizens of any of the countries party to the Agreement are granted residence status for the same period of time as the one granted to the person they are dependents of.

Lastly, a recent development has been the *2013 Plan to Facilitate the Free Movement of MERCOSUR Workers*, also an output of social dialogue and tripartite debate at the

national and regional levels.

Within the social and labour framework of the Andean Community of Nations (CAN), including Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Perú, the *Andean Labour Migration Instrument* was adopted in 2003. It provides standards for the free movement and residence of citizens from the Andean countries for labour purposes in the sub-region. The two other relevant social labour instruments are the *Andean Social Security Instrument* (Decision 583) and the *Andean Instrument on Safety and Health at Work*. However, it is important to mention that the CAN has had difficulties related to the three

instruments mentioned above, particularly to ensure that decisions made at the political level are actually put into practice.

#### 5. What has been the ILO's role in labour migration at the regional level?

The ILO promotes rights-based and fair systems of labour migration governance

worldwide. The current Latin American and Caribbean scenario is particularly conducive to deepening the ILO's work on labour migration, in line with its increasing global positioning in recent years.

Indeed, there are three major thematic areas on which the ILO's work will focus on in the Latin America and Caribbean region in the coming years: promoting the protection of migrant workers in an irregular situation, supporting the transition of migrant workers from the informal to the formal economy, and improving the working conditions of all migrant workers.

In order to develop such a strategy, the ILO will seek to strengthen regional and global alliances with other UN agencies, including the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), both within the framework of the Global Migration Group (GMG), as well as in discussion forums on migration such as the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), and others, such as the Inter-American System for the Protection of the Human Rights of Migrants and Members of their Families.



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# BUILDING BACK BETTER



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## How the ILO helps countries emerge from conflict and disaster and prevent future crises

Some 1.5 billion people live in countries experiencing situations of fragility and armed violence, and another 200 million people are affected by the slow or sudden onset of disasters. Conflict and catastrophic events are triggered by a variety of factors and can impact societies differently. One way or another, they all undermine peoples' livelihoods and create decent work deficits. Left unattended, these problems can lead to increased poverty, inequality and social unrest.

*By Moyette Gibbons*

The agenda of the 106<sup>th</sup> session of the International Labour Conference includes the revision of an ILO Recommendation: The Employment (Transition from War to Peace) Recommendation (No. 71) that was adopted in 1944. The revision reflects the growing international concern with the importance of employment and decent work in fragile and crisis-affected countries.

It relies on an increasing international consensus over both the need and the means to address such conditions in situations of fragility, conflict and disaster, and to

restore stability. The revised Recommendation is the only normative instrument covering employment and decent work – at the crossroads of developmental, humanitarian and peace-building initiatives, both at the national and international levels.

The ILO has a long history of direct contribution to promote employment and decent work in crisis-affected countries, such as Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Liberia, Mali, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Timor-Leste, and more recently, Ukraine. The work of the ILO

## RECOVERY SHOULD FOCUS ON JOBS

One of the five ILO's Flagship Programmes "Jobs for Peace and Resilience" (JPR), has been designed to build peace and resilience by creating jobs opportunities, enhancing employability and strengthening institutional capacity in conflict-affected and disaster-prone countries. The JPR supports employment-centered programmes aiming to facilitate immediate entry into the labour force through employment intensive investment strategies, building skills and enterprise capacity, as well as socio-economic recovery.

The JPR will contribute to the employability of young women and men with potentially important peace and resilience dividends. It will help build the capabilities of countries to graduate from the vicious cycle of disasters, poverty and conflicts caused by economic, social and environmental vulnerability.

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Typhoon Haiyan devastated parts of the Philippines killing thousands. The ILO helped the victims to recover and build back better.

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in these and several other nations covers all areas of the organization's strategic agenda, namely promoting fundamental rights at work, creation of employment opportunities, social protection, and promoting social dialogue and tripartism. Here are some examples:



### LIBERIA

Since the 14-year civil war ended in 2003, Liberia has made significant progress towards securing peace, building the economy, improving social services, and engaging in wide-scale infrastructure reconstruction and development. In 2013, it was one of the world's fastest growing economies with an estimated 8.7 per cent growth rate. However, the Ebola crisis has eroded some of these important gains.

Ninety-one per cent of young workers in Liberia are in informal employment and lack vocational training, employment opportunities and access to adequate health care. Youth unemployment, particularly high among ex-combatants, remains a major threat to peace and stability in the country.

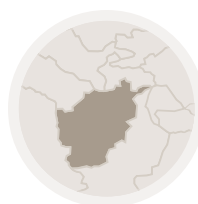
As part of the post-Ebola recovery strategy, the ILO is collaborating with UNICEF, the UN-Habitat country office and Monrovia authorities on a Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) pilot project in Clara Town, one of four beneficiary communities.

The ILO project is expected to expand basic sanitation, improve environmental conditions and hygiene, and

promote youth employment in the slum communities of Monrovia. As well as improving water and sanitation quality, it will also focus on solid waste management. To promote community engagement with the pilot, a two-day launch and workshop was held last year in Clara Town.

"It's in the interest of the community, especially the youth, who are the bulk of the people facing high unemployment rates... with this project there will be skills training of several kinds and this will also empower them to have a job in the future," said Bestman Toe, President, Slum Dwellers Association of Liberia.

In other countries, conflict and violence are the most important obstacles in achieving internationally agreed development goals, and deprive citizens of income-generating opportunities and socio-economic progress.



### AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan has been at war for over 30 years, and is still in the midst of fighting and insurgency. More than 90 per cent of jobs in the country can be classified as vulnerable employment. By supporting the development of market systems, the Road to Jobs (R2J), a three-year Sida/ILO/Government of Afghanistan project, aims to create more and better jobs in the provinces of Samangan and Balkh in Northern Afghanistan.

"The project follows a market systems approach to address important underlying constraints inhibiting







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better growth and employment outcomes, which in turn contribute to improving livelihoods and poverty reduction,” said Julius Mutio, Chief Technical Adviser, ILO Road to Jobs. “R2J targets poor and vulnerable rural households and income earners who work either in rural communities, or in urban centres and other major centres of employment.”

R2J’s achievements so far include training more than 1,500 women dairy farmers in cattle and fodder management, linking grape farmers with a juice-producing business, establishing a chicken buy-back scheme to support poultry farmers, and improving access to good quality livestock medicines.



## SOMALIA

Since the collapse of the Siad Barre government in 1991, Somalia – one of the poorest countries in the world – has undergone cycles of conflict that have fragmented the country and created widespread vulnerability. 47 per cent of the population is unemployed and 75 per cent of young women (15-24 years-old) are illiterate.

Fartun Abdi Omar and Rahma Abdi Omar took part in the Youth for Change programme in mid-2014, a joint ILO, UNDP and UNICEF initiative. The sisters, who dropped out of school because of the deteriorating security situation in their town, were trained in business, entrepreneurship and financial management skills, after which they participated in a business plan competition and won a start-up grant of US\$700.

They decided to buy a bajaj (tuk-tuk), a form of public transport which is widely used in Mogadishu. Since the money they won was not enough, they borrowed the difference and hired their unemployed older brother, Mohamed, to be the driver.

“We have a great ambition of continuing our business, repaying the loan and buying many other bajajs, and applying what we learned from the training we received,” Fartun said. “I strongly believe that we will be able to invest in other businesses, if we manage our net income from this business effectively.”



## TIMOR-LESTE

In Timor-Leste, the ILO’s Business Opportunities and Support Services (BOSS) project has helped local communities to improve farming practices, develop market access, create jobs and develop small and medium-sized enterprises. Jointly funded by Irish Aid and the New Zealand Aid Programme, it has boosted economic development for the poor, and quality employment for women and men, while contributing indirectly to peace consolidation and conflict prevention.

BOSS is embedded within Timor-Leste’s Institute of Business Support (IADE), an arm of the State Secretary for the Support and Promotion of the Private Sector. The project has strengthened the capacity of IADE to deliver effective business development services to Timor-Leste’s emerging private sector.

Decent work helps pull people and societies out of crisis and onto a sustainable development path. It also offers crisis-affected people freedom, security, dignity, self-esteem, hope, and a stake in the reconciliation and reconstruction of their communities. The ILO supports national actors to cope with crises and avoid the rolling back of previous advances in sustainable development. The idea is to offer long-term investment strategies to the international community with a view to preventing the escalation of humanitarian crises, sustaining peace and securing the observance of human rights.



# **BUILDING PEACE** *through* economic development *in the* **southern Philippines**

An ILO project in the southern Philippines shows how the spirit of the possible new ILO standard can be put into practice by lifting conflict-hit communities out of poverty through local economic development.

*By Minette Rimando, ILO Country Office for the Philippines*







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DAVAO ORIENTAL, PHILIPPINES – The southern Philippines looks back at a long history of insurgency and conflict. Decades of armed struggle have taken their toll on people's lives and livelihoods, fuelling poverty in conflict-affected areas in Mindanao.

Elmer Donaire is a 47 year-old farmer and father of four children. When he was 13, Elmer dropped out of school to work on the farm. His typical day would start at five in the morning to plow rice fields and to fetch water, carrying a load that was often too heavy for a young boy.

"It is not bad to dream of big things. I promised that my children will not suffer the same fate. I will work hard so that they can finish their studies and find a decent job one day," he said.

Elmer now heads the Tomaong United Lumad Association (TULAD) in Davao Oriental, which produces organic banana ketchup, flavoured banana chips, native coffee, coco vinegar, banana cake, honey and custard candies.

The association is one of the registered business groups in Mindanao that was supported by the Programme for Local Economic Development through Enhanced Governance and Grassroots Empowerment (PLEDGE).

This joint project of the ILO and the Bangsamoro Development Agency (BDA) was launched in 2013.

The three-year programme supported confidence and peace-building efforts through local economic development of the conflict-affected provinces in Mindanao. The Mindanao Trust Fund supported the programme through a multi-donor grant facility by the European Union, Sweden, Australia, Canada, United States, New Zealand and the World Bank.

PLEDGE was the first enterprise and economic development project of the BDA, a local development agency created by the Philippine Government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) via the Tripoli Agreement on Peace in 2001. The agency is mandated to lead, manage and determine relief and rehabilitation in conflict-affected areas in Mindanao.

## PUTTING GUNS ASIDE

"We are for normalization. We have put aside our guns because this is a programme for the Bangsamoro community. It has changed the way we value things, and we have learnt how to run a project. They taught us everything. It really makes a big difference," said Abu Saff





Elmer Donaire



Zuvaira Mangelin

Onofre, Brigade Commander of the MILF from Davao Oriental.

When Onofre refers to normalization he summarizes what this project is all about: local communities benefit from a quality of life and work, and political participation that contributes to sustainable development and peace.

PLEDGE has provided the tools and strategies to build peace through sustainable livelihoods, enhanced institutional capacities and community ownership.

According to Zuvaira Mangelin, the voice of the people mattered in the programme. This 34-year old mother of four children is now earning a living as an officer of the Strongly United Koronadal Proper Organization (SUKOR).

“PLEDGE brought communities and people’s organizations together. Our needs and ideas were considered from the onset of the project. I felt empowered when I started to earn a living, and I am now more confident. The project also helped to build human ties – whether we were Christians or Muslims – and it strengthened these ties as we got to know each other better and worked together,” said Zuvaira.

SUKOR started its Halal catering business in Southern Mindanao. The profit is shared among the members of the organization. “The ILO’s Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) training helped us with procurement, bookkeeping and marketing of our products. Women in our community learned how to make business proposals and promote their products,” Zuvaira added.

## GAINING CONFIDENCE

SUKOR used its profits to buy equipment to expand its catering and food packaging business. The organization was able to build its own Community Learning Centre,

which serves as its home office, and is also rented for events, meetings and other purposes in the area.

“The simplified business training has contributed to the self-confidence of communities and allows them to pursue a productive life. The SIYB training was brought to rural communities in partnership with the Bangsamoro Development Agency,” explained Hideki Kagohashi, Enterprise Development Specialist of the ILO Country Office for the Philippines.

“Community enterprises have introduced a simplified bookkeeping system to better control costs and project profits. They can now market their products beyond their neighborhood to include high schools, souvenir shops, and city malls,” Kagohashi added.

So far, PLEDGE has reached more than 4,800 beneficiaries in 11 conflict-affected communities, while some 1,100 people were trained in local enterprise development. Forty-two new businesses provided jobs to more than 1,000 people. However, there is still a need to scale up the programme building on these achievements.

With their potential to end decades of poverty, conflict and inequality, programmes like PLEDGE are at the heart of peacebuilding efforts in Mindanao and elsewhere.



A large, diverse crowd of people, including men, women, and children, are walking down a wide, tree-lined street. The crowd is dense and fills the entire frame. Many women are wearing colorful saris and headscarves. The text "GLOBALLY most women prefer to be working" is overlaid in the upper right corner.

GLOBALLY  
**most women** prefer  
to be **working**



# and the majority of men agree

The World of Work Summit is one of the highlights of the International Labour Conference. This year it will address the role of women in the world of work. A recent ILO-Gallup report, “Towards a Better Future for Women and Work: Voices of Women and Men” published on International Women’s Day will also feed into this discussion.

*By Moyette Gibbons*

The report on global attitudes and perceptions of women and men regarding women and work captures a first-hand account based on the 2016 Gallup World Poll. The poll was conducted in 142 countries and territories and surveyed almost 149,000 adults.

The findings of the first ever attitudinal survey of this kind are revealing: a total of 70 per cent of women and a similar 66 per cent of men prefer that women work at paid jobs. Only 27 per cent of women want to stay home.

Men’s views are very similar to those of women, according to the joint ILO-Gallup report. Twenty-eight per cent would like women in their families to have paid jobs, 29 per cent would like them to only stay at home, and 38 per cent would prefer that they be able to do both. Women and men with higher levels of education are also more likely to prefer that women are able to do both.

According to Susan Maybud, Senior Gender Specialist at ILO headquarters in Geneva, social norms form the roles that women and men are assigned in their societies. She thinks that the survey responses point towards a shift in attitudes of what individuals accept and prefer, moving beyond these gender norms.

“Whether driven by changes in social models in an increasingly globalized world where cross-cultural influences abound, or by economic necessity, the findings are providing policy-makers with a mandate to accelerate the pace of proactive measures to facilitate better access of women, both in

terms of quantity and quality, to decent work,” she said. “For example, better policies for the reconciliation of work and family responsibilities, such as paid maternity and parental leave, affordable quality childcare, or flexible working hours are measures that would make a huge difference.”

## REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

The report highlights major regional differences in perceptions on women and work, but also common attitudes towards these issues.

The 70 per cent of women who would like to work at paid jobs includes a majority of women who are neither in paid employment nor looking for a job. This is true in almost all regions worldwide, including several regions where women labour force participation is traditionally low, such as the Arab States.

In the Arab States and territories, where just 29 per cent of women participate in the workforce, 64 per cent of the youngest group of women (15 to 29) would like to only work at paid jobs, or to both work and care for their families. However, this drops below the majority level after the age of 30, and continues to decline after that.

Women in Eastern Europe, Central and Western Asia, and Northern Africa are among the

most likely to say they prefer working at paid jobs.

But in Northern Africa, there is a large disconnect between desire and reality. Sixty-seven per cent of women



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in Northern Africa would prefer to have paid jobs, or to both work and care for their homes and families. Women in this region are the least likely in the world to participate in the workforce (25 per cent), and of them, 31 per cent are unemployed. These results may reflect cultural pressures;

51 per cent of men – the highest percentage worldwide – would like to see them stay at home.

Sizable majorities of adults in the Arab States and territories (62 per cent) and Southern Asia (64 per cent) – which together account for about 25 per cent of the world's adult population – agree that it is acceptable for women in their families to work outside the home. However, they are still the least likely regions in the world to agree with this.

In Northern Africa, the attitudes of men and women are relatively far apart, as they are on their preferences for work: 79 per cent of women in Northern Africa believe that work outside the home is acceptable, compared with 57 per cent of men. And while women's opinions do not change with their age, younger men in the region are less likely than older men to find it acceptable for women in their families to work outside the home.

The gender gaps in perceptions about the acceptability of women working outside the home are wide in some countries, most of which are predominantly in the Middle East and North Africa. Gaps in Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Egypt, Palestinian Territory, and Azerbaijan range from 20 to 37 percentage points. In Kuwait, 90 per cent of women believe it is acceptable, compared with 53 per cent of men.

## WORK-FAMILY BALANCE

Reconciling work with care for their families, however, poses a significant challenge for working women globally. In fact, both men and women in the vast majority of countries mention “balance between work and family” as one of the top problems facing women in paid jobs.

Other issues such as unfair treatment, abuse, harassment in the workplace, lack of good-paying jobs, and unequal pay also emerge among the top problems in various regions of the world.

In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, about as many cite reasons that fall into the response category of “unfair treatment/discrimination” in the workplace (19 per cent) as work-family balance (18 per cent). In Europe, more

mention work-family balance, but equal pay is also viewed as an important obstacle.

And in Northern America, people are most likely to cite unequal pay (30 per cent), followed by work-family balance (16 per cent) and unfair treatment/discrimination (15 per cent). In Northern

Africa, sub-Saharan Africa, Southern Asia, and the Arab States, “family members do not approve of women working” is among the top-five mentioned obstacles that women face.

In all regions of the world, young women between the ages of 15 and 29 are more likely than older women to mention unfair treatment, abuse or harassment at work. Meanwhile, those between 30 and 44 are more likely than women in other age groups to mention lack of affordable care for their children and families. As women get older, they become more likely to mention unequal pay relative to men.

## WOMEN'S EARNINGS AND JOBS: GROWING EQUALITY?

Worldwide, the majority of women who work for an employer or are self-employed say what they earn is a significant source (30 per cent) or main source (26 per cent) of their household's income. Men are still more likely than women to report being the main providers: 48 per cent of employed men say what they earn is the main source of their household's income.

However, among employed women and men with higher levels of education, the gap regarding their contribution to their household's income is smaller.

Globally, women and men share similar views on women's employment opportunities. The report found that, if a woman has similar education and experience to a man, women and men worldwide are most likely to say that she has the same opportunity to find a good job in the area where they live. Worldwide, 25 per cent of women and 29 per cent of men say that women have better opportunities in finding good jobs. Existing evidence however, shows systematic gender gaps in labour markets worldwide.

These attitudes vary, however, from region to region, and largely along women's educational attainment and their level of participation in the labour force. Northern America, for example, leads other regions in terms of perceived equal opportunity. The majority in the region (55 per cent) say a woman with similar qualifications as a





man has the same opportunity to find a good job. Men (60 per cent) are more likely than women (50 per cent) to feel this way.

Northern, Western, and Southern Europe as well as Eastern Europe, on the other hand, lead other regions in terms of perceiving worse opportunities for women who have similar experiences and educational qualifications as men.

“In some cases, there is a wide difference between what women and men perceive regarding women’s opportunities in finding jobs. For example in the Nordic sub-region, 47 per cent of women say that women have worse opportunities than men, but only 39 per cent of men mention that women have worse opportunities,” Maybud explains.

In Northern Africa, the Arab States, and Central and Western Asia, people living in rural areas are more likely to perceive similarly qualified women as having worse opportunities than better opportunities. In other regions, such as Latin America and the Caribbean and South-Eastern Asia and the Pacific, the situation is the opposite: People living in rural areas are more positive about opportunities for women than are those living in urban areas.

The report is expected to help shape future ILO action in the context of its women at work centenary initiative, which aims at achieving full and lasting gender equality in a changing world of work.





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## Switching *to the* GREEN ECONOMY boosts local jobs in **Brazil**

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The report of the ILO Director-General to the Conference this year will address the opportunities and challenges linked to the creation of green jobs. The following story from Brazil shows how green jobs not only benefit the environment, but also boost jobs in the local economy.

*By Isabel Gimenez*

Extending from the south of the Amazon rainforest, the Pantanal is the world's largest tropical wetland. It stretches across two Brazilian states and parts of neighbouring Bolivia and Paraguay. A myriad of waterways swells and recedes with the seasons, giving way to vast savannahs and thick gallery forests lining the banks.

The Pantanal is wild and remote and has one of the largest concentrations of biodiversity in the world. However, most parts can only be accessed by tiring, bone-jangling drives along dirt tracks.

The SESC Pantanal Private Natural Heritage Reserve (*Reserva Particular do Patrimônio Natural SESC Pantanal*), a privately owned nature reserve of more than

1000 km<sup>2</sup> in Brazil, makes it easier for tourists to see these wonders.

SESC Pantanal has an innovative approach to the environment, extending renewable energy use beyond solar water heating, to include the generation of electricity with a photovoltaic installation. The hotel also has water and sewage treatment, a solid waste treatment plant, rainwater harvesting and solar heating, as well as the composting of organic waste, which becomes fertilizer.

The director of the ILO office in Brasilia, Peter Poschen, recently visited the Reserve and its hotel. "SESC Pantanal is a sustainable tourism laboratory that can serve as a model and training centre for other projects in the state of Mato Grosso and in Brazil," he said.





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## GOING SOCIAL, GOING GREEN

Mato Grosso has a great potential for tourism, but the fragility of its ecosystems requires the adoption of measures that respect the environment and preserve the local culture.

“I think it was very appropriate to visit SESC Pantanal, since this hotel can be considered a kind of model for sustainable tourism, while making nature its main attraction, it contributes in many ways to its conservation,” said the Director of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in Brazil, Peter Poschen.

Before he visited the hotel, Poschen participated in the launch of the Ciclos programme in Cuiabá by the Governor of Mato Grosso State. Ciclos is part of the Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE), a global initiative of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). PAGE is aiming to assist 20 countries to move towards a green economy. It is currently supporting 11 countries around the world.

The partnering agencies argue that tourism development has significant potential to contribute to greening the economy, provided it preserves and restores rare and precious natural resources, especially water, energy and biodiversity, which should be encouraged by national, regional and local public authorities.

## BOOSTING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

The main goal of the Ciclos programme is to develop and implement state and local economic policies and practices to promote economic growth in a sustainable and inclusive way, fostering income generation and decent work, reducing poverty and social inequality while strengthening environmental sustainability. To this end, it will support the development of family agriculture, sustainable forestry, renewable energy, basic sanitation infrastructure and sustainable tourism.

In tourism and in other economic sectors, the population of Pantanal plays a special role.

At the SESC hotel, the residents of the region have preference in the selective hiring processes for all tourism and conservation services. When visitors arrive at the hotel, they find a butterfly garden that enchants all who come to this place. The space contains three thousand butterflies from 20 different species. It is maintained by the work of 25 local families in situations of social vulnerability. They have managed to lift themselves out of poverty with the extra income earned by rearing butterfly larvae for the garden. Locals acting as guides explain the nature and culture of the Pantanal to visitors, with a knowledge and authenticity that no one can learn in a school or college. Thus, the importance of sustainable tourism lies not only in the preservation of the environment, but equally in the inclusion of the local population.

“Sustainable tourism preserves the environment, natural resources and ensures that economic growth benefits working people and satisfies the needs of present and future generations,” concludes Poschen.

## GREEN JOBS

Green jobs are central for sustainable development, and respond to the global challenges of environmental protection, economic development and social inclusion. By engaging governments, workers and employers as active agents of change, the ILO promotes the greening of enterprises, workplace practices and the labour market as a whole. These efforts create decent employment opportunities, enhance resource efficiency and build low-carbon sustainable societies.







# How the **ILO** keeps a benchmark for **social justice up-to-date**

The abrogation of six International Labour Conventions is on the agenda of the 106<sup>th</sup> session of the International Labour Conference. Does it mean that a growing number of ILO standards have become obsolete, or that it is time to promote the ratification of up-to-date instruments corresponding to the new realities of the world of work?

*Word of Work* spoke to Corinne Vargha, Director of the ILO's International Labour Standards Department.

## **WoW: Why do we propose to abrogate or withdraw a number of ILO conventions this year?**

The abrogation of outdated conventions is just one part of a comprehensive initiative to build a clear, robust and up-to-date body of international labour standards, and to promote their ratification and proper implementation.

The current system of international labour standards has been developed since the creation of the ILO in 1919, and stands as the global normative foundation of the Decent Work agenda and its related sustainable development goals.

However, the world of work has evolved significantly since those early days. New Conventions and Recommendations have been adopted to reflect these changes. Some older instruments have become obsolete, while remaining in the ILO body of standards.

As a result, the ILO normative corpus encompasses a few overlapping Conventions on the same subject-matter. A good example is the evolution of the international labour standards regulating night work for women. The first Night Work (Women) Convention (No. 4) was adopted in 1919 to prohibit night work for women, and revised first in 1934 by Convention No. 41 and later in 1948 by Convention No. 89. In 1990, reflecting new regulatory approaches to gender equality, the International Labour Conference adopted a Protocol partially revising Convention No. 89, as well as the Night Work Convention, 1990 (No. 171) to regulate night work for men and women alike. All these conventions are still part of the corpus of international labour standards, as it was not possible to abrogate conventions.

## **WoW: What is the legal process to abrogate or withdraw Conventions?**

Following the entry into force of an amendment to the ILO Constitution in 2015, only the International Labour Conference can abrogate a convention in force – upon recommendation by the Governing Body – if it appears that it has lost its purpose or no longer makes a useful contribution to attaining the objectives of the Organization. A two-thirds majority is required for such an abrogation. If the 106<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference decides to abrogate the four Conventions and withdraw the two Conventions on its agenda, they will be removed from the ILO's body of standards, and member States will no longer have any obligations regarding to them.

At the same time, action is foreseen in the framework of the Standards Review Mechanism, to ensure that any gaps in protection that might result from the abrogation of ratified Conventions are filled-in through the ratification of the more up-to-date instruments. Furthermore, identified gaps in protection will eventually be addressed through initiatives for normative action. For example, the Standards Review Mechanism has already identified such a gap in the area of apprenticeships. Consequently, the Governing Body asked the Office to develop a proposal for placing relevant normative action on the agenda of a future ILC session.

## **WoW: You mentioned the necessity to keep ILO conventions up-to-date and in line with changes in the world of work. Can you give us a few examples?**

As I mentioned earlier, the ILO can adopt Conventions to revise older ones. It can also adopt protocols to complement older conventions with new provisions.

The most recent example is the Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930, which entered into force last year. The Forced Labour Protocol is a legally-



binding treaty that requires governments to take measures to prevent and protect against modern slavery in all its forms. With this Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, the international community is equipped to fight the modern scourge of human trafficking.

Even though not legally binding, Recommendations provide equally useful guidelines to ILO member States on specific policy issues. Take for instance the Social Protection Floors Recommendation (No. 202) adopted in 2012, or even the more recent Recommendation on the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy (No. 204) adopted in 2015, which aims at moving workers from the informal to the formal economy. This year, the 106<sup>th</sup> session of the ILC may revise the Employment (Transition from War to Peace) Recommendation, 1944 (No. 71). The first discussion at the Conference in 2015 clearly established the continued relevance of the purpose of this Recommendation in responding to the contemporary challenges arising from numerous crises, conflicts and disasters, which affect many countries and significant segments of the population. There was agreement on the proposed broadening of the scope and purpose of the new Recommendation to include crisis situations arising from conflicts and disasters.

Let me just add here that our normative action goes beyond revising or abrogating older conventions. New

legal instruments have been adopted over the last few years to regulate areas of the world of work that were not previously covered by ILO standards. A recent example is the Maritime Labour Convention adopted in 2006, which establishes a level playing field for ship owners, and constitutes a bill of rights for seafarers around the globe. Another example is the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189), which extends basic labour rights to domestic workers, a group of workers that previously enjoyed very little or no legal protection at all.

### **WoW: How do you see the future of international labour standards?**

One of the seven Initiatives launched in the run up to the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ILO in 2019 aims at further strengthening the ILO's unique standards system, so that international labour standards remain the benchmark for social justice around the globe.

The Standards Review Mechanism has launched a challenging but welcomed debate for the ILO and the international community. The successful review of international labour standards will ensure that international labour standards are responsive to sweeping changes currently affecting the world of work.







# ENDING *violence* at the workplace

This article is a preview to the agenda of the 2018 International Labour Conference, which will discuss possible new international labour standards to fight violence at work. It features the ILO-IFC Better Work programme, which succeeded in reducing the number of cases related to sexual harassment at work – in line with recently adopted ILO guidelines on violence at work.

*By Arianna Rossi, Better Work*

Violence in the workplace is a violation of fundamental human rights, and a common occurrence in the garment industry. In high-pressure environments, workers can be subjected to bullying, verbal and physical abuse, as a means to intimidate or, perversely, motivate them to reach production targets.

One prevalent form of violence at work in the export-oriented garment industry is sexual harassment. The industry is largely comprised of women workers under the age of 30, many of whom migrate from rural areas or from abroad for their first formal job. They often occupy a position of low power in factories, especially in relation to a line supervisor who assesses their performance. Supervisors can use their position to sexually harass them, and disempowered workers may interpret such conduct as a condition of their employment or promotion. In addition to the damaging psychological and physical effects sexual harassment can have on victims, it can negatively affect workplace communication and overall productivity.

The Better Work programme, a partnership between the ILO and the International Finance Corporation,

a member of the World Bank Group, engages with employers and workers throughout the garment industry to address poor conditions, including violence, in the workplace. The programme provides several insights into the dynamics and ways to combat violence at work.

Better Work offers three interlocking services at the factory-level. Its locally recruited staff, or Enterprise Advisors, are trained extensively on how to use unannounced compliance assessments to detect violations of international labour standards and national labour law. Enterprise Advisors also deliver Better Work's advisory services. They are trained to assist in establishing worker-management dialogue mechanisms designed to address compliance violations and ensure continuous improvement. The programme also offers specialized training, including topics such as the skills needed to become a successful line supervisor in a factory.

Better Work compliance assessments cover issues related to the ILO's core labour standards addressing discrimination at work. They are designed to detect gender-based discrimination, and specifically whether





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sexual harassment is present in the workplace. They also attempt to discern if workers are being bullied, verbally abused, or subjected to other humiliating and violent treatment.

## CONFIDENTIAL SURVEYS

Many women may feel uncomfortable discussing sexual harassment at work in face-to-face interviews. Researchers led by an interdisciplinary team from Tufts University, designed confidential worker surveys, which are delivered on tablet computers with Audio Computer-Assisted Self-Interviews (ACASI) software.

The survey programme included a tutorial to assist workers unfamiliar with how to manipulate a cursor on-screen. The survey script and questions were translated and read out in the local language, complemented in some cases with images to help low literacy workers. In this way, the researchers ensured workers felt maximum comfort and anonymity, in sharing their concerns about or experience of sensitive topics such as workplace violence. This method also shielded them from the risk of being overheard by supervisors or managers while sharing their responses.

Results from the survey related to workplace violence showcase how researchers successfully provided a platform for workers to express concerns on issues at

work that proved difficult to detect during compliance assessments.

Compliance assessments alone rarely detect definitively that sexual harassment existed in the workplace, when workers responded directly through Better Work's impact assessment methodology. However, the magnitude of the problem was better understood. Across several country contexts, the issue of sexual harassment was identified as a significant concern (see table on page 39).

Sothea Siv from Better Factories Cambodia conducting an assessment at Xin Fang (Cambodia) Garment.



© Better Work



## THE ILO EMBARKS ON A STANDARD-SETTING PROCESS ON VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT IN THE WORLD OF WORK

Violence and harassment in the world of work affect millions of workers and employers every year, causing anxiety, harm, and suffering, and can result, in extreme cases, in murder and suicide. Violence and harassment also cost enterprises billions in absenteeism, replacement costs and productivity.

Promoting laws and policies to prevent and protect against violence and harassment in the world of work is at the heart of the ILO's mandate. Some of the ILO's first international labour standards were in response to violence in the world of work. A number of its recent standards refer to violence and harassment, although none defines it or gives guidance on how to address it.

Continuing this tradition, the ILO is embarking on a standard-setting process on "Violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work", with a first discussion on the subject scheduled for the International Labour Conference (ILC) in June 2018. In preparation for the Conference, a Meeting of Experts was held in October

2016. The experts proposed that violence and harassment be seen as a "continuum of unacceptable behaviours and practices that are likely to result in physical, psychological or sexual harm or suffering." They also recommended an integrated approach, which could include aspects such as prevention, protection, enforcement and monitoring, remedies, victim protection, and policy tools to assist employers, workers and their organizations, as well as other stakeholders in eliminating violence and harassment in the world of work.

Based on the meeting's conclusions, the International Labour Office is currently producing a Law and Practice report. This preliminary report contains a systematic legal analysis of 80 countries' regulatory frameworks to address violence and harassment in the world of work, and a questionnaire. The report was sent to all ILO member States by 30 April 2017. The deadline to receive replies to the questionnaire is September 2017, the results of which will facilitate the discussion at the 2018 ILC.

The second discussion of this historic process is currently being scheduled, and may take place either in 2019 or 2020.

Based on workers' responses, researchers demonstrated that the remuneration system of workers and line supervisors plays a role in the likelihood of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is most common in factories where workers are strongly incentivized to work (i.e. they are paid 'by the piece'), while supervisors have weaker incentives (i.e. they are paid a fixed salary). When a factory's pay scheme is misaligned, supervisors lack the incentive to improve the overall efficiency of their production line. In addition, supervisors who are charged with monitoring individual worker productivity and determining bonuses, may exercise their power over workers by forcing them into sexual encounters.

Because of the important insights provided by Better Work's impact assessment surveys on workers' sexual harassment concerns, and the difficulty in identifying evidence to support non-compliance during factory

assessments, the programme decided to roll-out in factories an approach to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace, regardless of their non-compliance findings on the issue. In 2012, Better Work developed a template factory toolkit consisting of a model policy on harassment, an awareness raising poster, a training brochure and a quick reference 'do's and don'ts' to display on the factory floor.

Tools are adapted to the specific cultural context in which Better Work countries operate, after focus group discussions with industry stakeholders, as well as collaborations with local NGOs. A training module on sexual harassment prevention, targeting general managers, middle management, line supervisors and workers, was also developed. Better Work Jordan was the first country programme to adapt the toolkit, and to implement the training in factories in 2013.

### "IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT A CONCERN FOR WORKERS IN YOUR FACTORY?"

PER CENT, BASELINE	JORDAN N=444	INDONESIA N=626	HAITI N=63	NICARAGUA N=277	VIETNAM N=2,207
No, not a concern	70.1	15.7	58.3	70.4	97.6
Yes, discussed with co-workers	8.8	12.8	19.1	13.7	0.9
Yes, discussed with supervisor or manager	10.1	36.7	7.9	8.7	0.7
Yes, considered quitting	2.5	20.9	–	2.9	0.5
Yes, nearly caused a strike	3.2	8.6	4.8	3.3	0.2
Yes, caused a strike	4.5	4.3	–	–	0.1





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## IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Through their extensive longitudinal analysis, impact assessment researchers have identified a reduction in concerns about sexual harassment attributable to Better Work's efforts. Even after taking into account external factors, the programme's services account for a significant share of a reduction in sexual harassment concerns.

The impact of Better Work is most evident in Jordan, where the programme reduced the probability of workers being concerned with sexual harassment by 18 percentage points by the sixth year of participation in Better Work. While the average level of sexual harassment concern reported per factory is higher in Indonesia than in Jordan, there is evidence to suggest that workers are more comfortable in doing something about their concerns. This includes seeking help from their trade union representative or from human resources, which suggests workers are becoming more aware of their rights, and are increasingly confident about seeking help to address the issue.

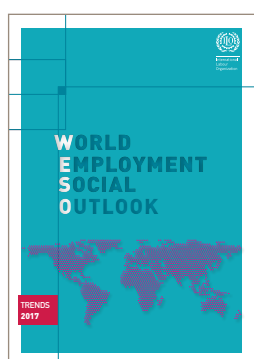
In Nicaragua, despite the small number of factories evaluated, there is evidence that when managers are

aware of the problem, worker concerns decline by 29 percentage points. It is arguable that manager awareness could translate to broader organizational awareness, such as the establishment of anti-harassment policies. The Tufts analysis suggests that change is driven by a combination of Better Work interventions, starting with the compliance assessment, the introduction of anti-sexual harassment policies, and the provision of targeted training services.

Despite falling levels of concern, sexual harassment remains a pressing problem for workers in many factories. This is exemplified by the high percentage of workers who did not want to answer the question on impact assessment surveys about sexual harassment, suggesting continued reticence to report concerns about the issue.

Understanding the magnitude of the problem of violence at work is an important first step to addressing its root causes. Using the experience and analysis of data gathered through programmes like Better Work, can help in this endeavour and support efforts to ensure workplaces free of violence.





## World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2017

January 2017

This edition takes stock of the current global labour market situation, assessing the most recent employment developments and forecasting unemployment levels in developed, emerging and developing countries. It also focuses on trends in job quality, paying particular attention to working poverty and vulnerable employment.

ISBN 978-92-2-128881-7

CHF 15; US\$ 15; GBP 11; EUR 13



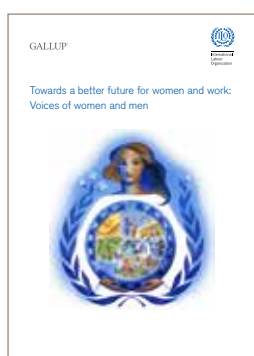
## Global Wage Report 2016/17: Wage inequality in the workplace

December 2016

This report analyses the evolution of real wages around the world, giving a unique picture of wage trends globally and by region. The 2016/17 edition examines inequality at the workplace level, providing empirical evidence of wage inequality between enterprises as well as within enterprises. The report also includes a review of key policy issues regarding wages.

ISBN 978-92-2-130928-4

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## Towards a better future for women and work: Voices of women and men

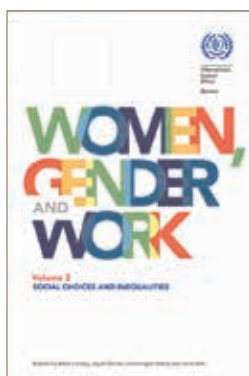
March 2017

This study provides a first-ever account of global attitudes and perceptions of women and men regarding women and work based on the 2016 Gallup World Poll. The poll, which was conducted in 142 countries and territories, is representative of 98 per cent of the global population. The results suggest that women might find support in their quest for productive employment and decent work coming from a rather unexpected source – men.

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Available as a free pdf only





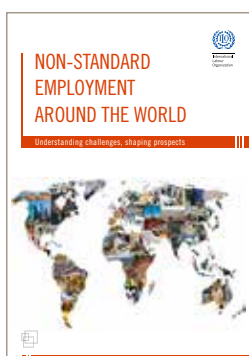
## Women, gender and work: Social choices and inequalities (volume 2)

March 2017

On many aggregate measures of labour market performance, gender gaps have narrowed steadily across much of the world. Yet, the statistical picture is not entirely what it seems. This volume of Women, Gender and Work features some 30 recent articles selected from the International Labour Review, offering the insights of economists, sociologists and lawyers into a wide range of gender issues and country settings, from Mali to Switzerland, from Jamaica to Malaysia.

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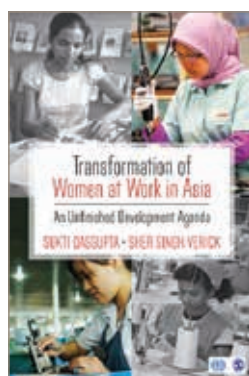
## Non-standard employment around the world: Understanding challenges, shaping prospects

November 2016

Non-standard forms of employment – including temporary work, part-time work, temporary agency work and other multi-party employment arrangements, disguised employment relationships and dependent self-employment – have become a contemporary feature of labour markets the world over. This report documents the incidence and trends of non-standard forms of employment across different countries of the world, and explores the reasons behind this phenomenon.

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CHF 40; US\$ 40; GBP 26; EUR 35



## Transformation of women at work in Asia: An unfinished development agenda

October 2016

This book examines the drivers of, and barriers to, participation of women in the Asian labour market for its socio-economic development and structural transformation. Based on original comparative research and extensive fieldwork, it highlights challenges that women across Asia face in gaining access to more and better jobs. This publication also provides policy options for governments to promote decent work opportunities for women across social strata.

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CHF 35; US\$ 35; GBP 27; EUR 32



## Key labor market indicators: Analysis with household survey data

October 2016

This publication is an introduction to labour market indicator analysis, and a guide for analysing household survey data using the ADePT ILO Labour Market Indicators Module. The ADePT module is a powerful tool for producing and analysing key indicators of the labour market using household survey data. The software allows researchers and practitioners to automate data production, to minimize data production errors, and to quickly produce a wide range of labour market data. Co-published with World Bank.

ISBN 978-92-2-130354-1

CHF 30; US\$ 29.95; GBP 20; EUR 28





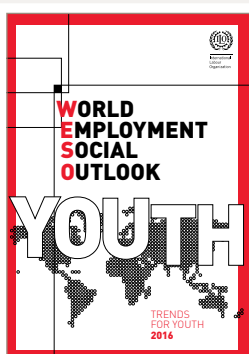
## Europe's disappearing middle class? Evidence from the world of work

October 2016

While recent studies have highlighted the phenomenon and risks of increased inequalities between the top and the bottom, little research has been carried out on trends relating to the mid-income range that generally represents the middle class. This volume examines the main transformations in the world of work over the last 20 years in terms of the labour market, social dialogue, conditions of work, wages and income, and looks at how these changes have impacted the middle class. Co-published with Edward Elgar.

ISBN 978-92-2-130381-7

CHF 45; US\$ 45; GBP 30; EUR 40



## World Employment and Social Outlook 2016: Trends for Youth

August 2016

This report tries to shed light on the current and future challenges faced by young people throughout the world. In particular, it looks at recent developments and the outlook for a number of labour market indicators, including youth unemployment, working poverty and employment quality. It also discusses the barriers and inequalities in opportunities affecting youth labour market prospects, notably the gaps between young men and women.

ISBN 978-92-2-131277-2

Publication not for sale



## Building a social pillar for European convergence

July 2016

Guided by international labour standards, this report presents a range of policy and institutional levers at the EU level, considered central to the European Pillar of Social Rights, announced by the President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, in 2015. It further argues that the role of the social partners, both at the EU and national levels, is key to building consensus and strengthening the societal support for the continued construction of the EU.

ISBN 978-92-2-131174-4

CHF 20; US\$ 20; GBP 14; EUR 19



## Assessment of labour provisions in trade and investment arrangements

July 2016

Nearly half of trade agreements concluded in the past five years included either a labour chapter or provision that refers to international labour standards and ILO instruments. The evidence so far suggests that labour provisions have been an important tool for raising awareness and improving laws with respect to workers' rights. This report gives a full examination of the scope and effectiveness of these labour provisions.

ISBN 978-92-2-130375-6

CHF 30; US\$ 30; GBP 20; EUR 28

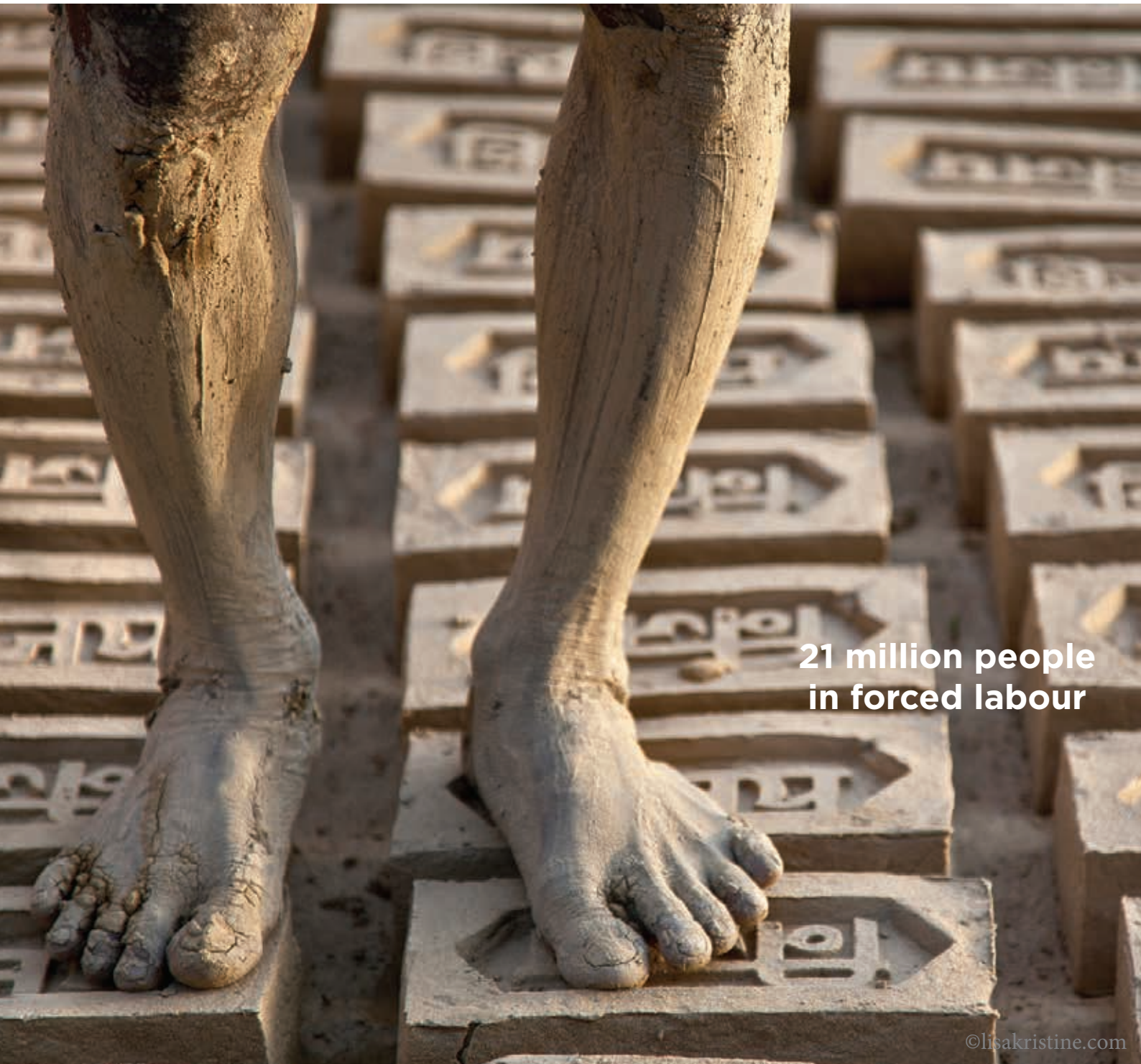


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**21 million people  
in forced labour**