

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION

Measurement of decent work

**Discussion paper for the Tripartite Meeting of
Experts on the Measurement of Decent Work**

Geneva, 8–10 September 2008



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First published 2008

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ILO Cataloguing in Publication Data

Measuring decent work : tripartite meeting of experts on measurement of decent work, 8-10 Sept. 2008

(TMEMDW/2008) / International Labour Office. - Geneva: ILO, 2008

iii, 61 p.

ISBN: 9789221216414; 9789221216421 (web pdf)

Tripartite Meeting of Experts on Measurement of Decent Work; (Geneva, Switzerland; 2008); International Labour Office

conference paper / decent work / measurement

13.01.1

Also available in French: *La mesure du travail décent : réunion tripartite d'experts sur la mesure du travail décent: document d'information*: Genève, 8-10 septembre 2008 (ISBN: 9789222216413 (print); 9789222216420 (web pdf)); in Spanish: *La medición del trabajo decente : documento de debate para la reunión tripartita de expertos sobre la medición del trabajo decente* : Ginebra, 8-10 de septiembre de 2008 (ISBN: 9789223216412 (print); 9789223216429 (web pdf)).

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Printed by the International Labour Office, Geneva, Switzerland

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Part I

Introduction: Monitoring progress towards decent work

1. **Governing Body discussion and scope of the Tripartite Meeting of Experts**

1. Monitoring progress towards decent work is a long-standing concern for the ILO's constituents. Yet, the multifaceted nature of the Decent Work Agenda that combines access to full and productive employment with rights at work, social protection and the promotion of social dialogue means that measurement is a complex task. Constituents have debated the intricacies of finding a measurement framework that takes full account of the multidimensional nature of decent work on several occasions, most notably in the Governing Body.¹ In its March 2008 session, the Governing Body approved a Tripartite Meeting of Experts to provide further detailed advice on the viability of the options, and to provide guidance on the various possible ways of measuring the dimensions of decent work in order to prepare comprehensive recommendations for consideration by the Governing Body.
2. Adopted in June 2008, the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization reaffirmed the commitment of the ILO and its Members to the four strategic objectives of the Decent Work Agenda.² The Declaration highlights the importance of national and regional strategies towards decent work and emphasizes that member States may consider

... the establishment of appropriate indicators or statistics, if necessary with the assistance of the ILO, to monitor and evaluate progress made. (paragraph II.B.ii.)

With the ILO Governing Body beginning the development of a Strategic Policy Framework 2010–15 for the implementation of the Declaration, the Tripartite Meeting of Experts on the Measurement of Decent Work thus comes at a crucial time. It can make a vital contribution by providing guidance to the ILO's constituents on a global methodology to monitor progress towards decent work at the country level. A key issue is finding the right way to balance the desirable with the feasible within a perspective of a dynamic framework.

3. To inform the debate among constituents, the Office has undertaken a significant amount of research into methods of measuring the four dimensions of decent work. The General Report to the 17th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) in 2003

¹ ILO: *Report of the 17th International Conference of Labour Statisticians*, doc. GB.289/STM/6, 289th Session, Geneva, Mar. 2004; ILO: *Measuring decent work*, Report of the Director-General, doc. GB.300/20/5, 300th Session, Geneva, Nov. 2007; ILO: *Measuring decent work*, Report of the Director-General, doc. GB.301/17/6, 301st Session, Geneva, Mar. 2008.

² See ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, ILC, 97th Session, Geneva, June 2008; see also Resolution on strengthening the ILO's capacity to assist its Members' efforts to reach its objectives in the context of globalization, adopted at the 97th Session of the ILC, Geneva, June 2008.

contained a detailed section on measuring and monitoring decent work.³ Further, the Office has carried out tests of some of the proposed indicators in pilot countries, leading to a seminar on the use of labour force surveys for the collection of some indicators;⁴ undertaken several thematic and regional compilations of statistics and statistical indicators for measuring dimensions of decent work;⁵ carried out pilot experiments in measuring some of the qualitative aspects of decent work; established a task team, coordinated by the Bureau of Statistics, to consolidate the various proposals for relevant indicators into an integrated set; published a special issue of the *International Labour Review* in 2003 devoted to measuring decent work;⁶ collaborated with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat) and the European Foundation for the Improvement of Working and Living Conditions to develop measures of the quality of employment, which encompasses some of the dimensions of decent work;⁷ and discussed the possibility of a joint ILO–EC project on “monitoring and assessing progress on decent work in developing countries” to strengthen the capacity of member States to improve the collection and analysis of statistics on decent work.

4. The Governing Body discussion and a review of the research work suggests five considerations that could help guide thinking about how the ILO could develop a system for measuring progress towards decent work.
5. First, before embarking on a significant effort to draw together a variety of indicators for the multifaceted dimensions of decent work, it is important to have a clear goal in mind that reflects the needs of constituents as well as country circumstances. In this respect, the main value of measuring the dimensions of decent work would be to assist constituents in assessing progress at national level towards the goal of decent work against a set of indicators that are also available for other countries. By increasing transparency of information on decent work it would contribute to improved policy accountability. The measurement of the dimensions of decent work would be of particular value for assessing progress in countries with Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) alongside the more specific data related to programme targets and outcomes. This work would thus also

³ ILO: *General Report*, ICLS/17/2003/1, 17th ICLS, Geneva, Nov. 2003; see also R. Anker et al.: *Measuring decent work with statistical indicators*, Integration Working Paper No. 2 (Geneva, ILO, 2002).

⁴ ILO International Seminar on the Use of National Labour Force Surveys for Collecting Additional Labour-Related Statistics, Geneva, 24–26 October 2005.

⁵ ILO: *Key Indicators of the Labour Market* (fifth edition) (Geneva, 2008, Chs 1A and 1B); ILO: *Global Employment Trends* (Geneva, 2008); ILO: *Labour overview: Latin America and the Caribbean* (Lima, 2007); ILO: *Labour and social trends in Asia and the Pacific* (Bangkok, 2006); ILO: *Labour and social trends in ASEAN 2007. Integration, challenges and opportunities* (Bangkok, 2007); ILO: *Decent work indicators for Asia and the Pacific. A guidebook for policy-makers and researchers*, Bangkok (forthcoming); S. Lawrence and J. Ishikawa: *Social dialogue indicators: Trade union membership and collective bargaining coverage. Statistical concepts, methods and findings*, Dialogue Paper No. 10 (Geneva, ILO, 2005).

⁶ ILO: *International Labour Review*: Special issue: Measuring decent work (Geneva, 2003), Vol. 142, No. 2, Feb.

⁷ J.A. Ritter: *Patterns of job quality attributes in the European Union*, Integration Working Paper No. 51 (Geneva, ILO, 2005); see also Joint UNECE–ILO–Eurostat Seminar on Quality of Work, 18 April 2007.

contribute to results-based management and it could strengthen the knowledge base and analytical capacity of the Office.⁸

6. Second, ILO constituents and others appreciate comparative information which is often used as an important element in analysis and policy development. In so far as possible, country information should therefore be presented in a format and using methodologies that facilitate comparisons.
7. Third, the development of an aggregate composite index that ranks countries has little value for policy analysis as such indices fail to provide appropriate context and often require the use of restrictive assumptions in order to build a comparative database. Such an index does not therefore seem the best way for the ILO to proceed.
8. Fourth, given the nature of decent work as a multifaceted concept, progress towards its achievement cannot be assessed by standard numerical indicators alone. The use of such indicators to assess progress must take cognizance of the contextual environment in which such progress occurs. Furthermore, numerical indicators by themselves cannot adequately capture the wide-ranging and inherently qualitative nature of many aspects of decent work. Some, like employment, wages and incomes, working time and social security, lend themselves more easily to statistical measurement while other dimensions such as social dialogue, the functioning of labour markets and the application of international labour standards (ILS) require different methodologies to generate objective measures.
9. Fifth, demands for a more comprehensive picture of progress are likely to increase with the recognition accorded to the goal of decent work within the agreed international development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The new Target 1.B, “Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people”, will be monitored on the basis of four indicators, based on data collected and prepared by national statistical agencies and compiled by the ILO from national sources and international data repositories. These are the employment-to-population ratio; the proportion of employed people living below US\$1 purchasing power parity (PPP) per day; the proportion of own-account and contributing family workers in total employment; and the growth rate of gross domestic product (GDP) per person employed (i.e. labour productivity).⁹ Data on these dimensions are based on comparable estimates and are widely available at the country level. However, it would be desirable to supplement this initial set with further information and analysis on a broader range of the dimensions of decent work.

2. Outline for a global methodology

10. Based on these considerations, the development of a methodology to measure progress towards decent work might be conceived of as a process which could involve work on:
 - (i) the identification of a global template of qualitative and quantitative indicators that can be used to measure progress towards decent work at the country level;

⁸ See ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (2008), op. cit., and Resolution on strengthening the ILO’s capacity to assist its Members’ efforts to reach its objectives in the context of globalization (2008), op. cit.

⁹ See United Nations: *Official list of MDG indicators*, effective 15 Jan. 2008; for further discussion, see ILO: *Key Indicators of the Labour Market* (fifth edition), op. cit.

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- (ii) the collection of statistical data and qualitative information related to selected decent work indicators;
 - (iii) the presentation in country profiles of decent work indicators and statistics identifying both country-specific information as well as a global dynamic picture.

- 11. *Decent work indicators:*** Decent work indicators should capture all four dimensions of the concept of decent work, namely: (1) labour standards and fundamental principles and rights at work; (2) employment opportunities; (3) social protection; and (4) social dialogue. Beyond a common set of main indicators, decent work indicators should also reflect country-specific circumstances and priorities, as expressed in the DWCPs or other policy documents. Hence, it is proposed that the Tripartite Meeting of Experts take stock of indicators discussed in the existing literature and identify the most relevant indicators to capture all dimensions of decent work. The list of indicators could then be examined in a limited number of member States in the context of a tripartite dialogue. The objective would be to establish a template of international relevance that, nevertheless, is capable of adaptation to reflect national circumstances.
- 12. *Data collection:*** Countries would be encouraged to collect statistics related to the identified decent work indicators. National statistical offices could be encouraged to broaden or adjust their existing statistical instruments to measure the decent work indicators. Administrative data-collection efforts, such as databases from labour inspection services, for example, could also be used if necessary. For decent work indicators which are inherently qualitative (such as in the field of social dialogue), meaningful assessments of progress at the country level could be constructed through other methods such as textual analysis of authoritative reports, including reports submitted to and produced by the ILO supervisory system, local surveys or administrative data.¹⁰ Consideration could also be given to the construction of additional ways of assessing the quality of social dialogue institutions.
- 13. *Country profiles:*** To be useful for policy-making, trends need to be identified and the data must be interpreted to facilitate subsequent use in policy analysis and development. With a large number of qualitative and quantitative indicators this can be difficult. It is often highlighted that the most tangible added value of the concept of decent work is that “it encapsulates an integrated approach, ensuring that the strategic objectives are addressed together and as effectively as possible”.¹¹ This suggests that the measurement of decent work should go beyond the collection of a disparate set of labour market indicators. At the same time, it is unreasonable to expect aggregation of qualitative and quantitative indicators. It is, thus, suggested that the Office will intensify work on the development of methodologies to assess country-level progress over time towards decent work objectives. Such progress may be recorded in decent work country profiles using, in so far as possible, an agreed methodology and a standard list of indicators on which information would be compiled. These country profiles could be made available both in print form and through the Internet, which would make it possible to layer information and to provide readers with links to further information, including national and ILO statistical and legal databases or other sources of relevant and reliable information.

¹⁰ D. Kucera: *Measuring trade union rights: A country-level indicator constructed from coding violations recorded in textual sources*, Integration Working Paper No. 50 (Geneva, ILO, 2005).

¹¹ ILO: *Strengthening the ILO's capacity to assist its Members' efforts to reach its objectives in the context of globalization*, Report V, ILC, 96th Session, Geneva, June 2007. See also ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, op. cit.

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- 14.** Bearing these considerations in mind, it is suggested that the Tripartite Meeting of Experts provide guidance to the Office and the Governing Body on a conceptual framework to measure decent work at the country level. This includes advice on which kind of information should be collected; how and under which headings information should be organized; and which indicators should be prioritized in the short term. By standardizing the way that information on decent work is organized, comparison over time and between countries, and thus of progress, is facilitated. A robust framework that is based on sound measurement principles will also provide the flexibility for its adaptation as new challenges arise or new indicators become available. The framework should thus have the potential to evolve dynamically over the years.
 - 15.** This paper is organized as follows. Part II is devoted to an examination of measurement principles that follow from the comprehensive nature of the Decent Work Agenda. In Part III, it will then discuss some possibilities of how these general guiding principles can be applied in practice. This includes a parsimonious set of possible main indicators that could be complemented with additional indicators where data are available. Further, the scope for embedding statistical indicators with information on rights at work and the legal framework is explored. Part IV concludes and maps a possible way forward. The paper contains four appendix tables that provided additional information. The first one cross-references different proposals that have been made in the past for statistical indicators, and the second lists detailed comments on these indicators. The third table provides information on data availability for four indicators, and the fourth table contains proposals for a template on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work.

Part II

Key aspects of decent work and implications for its measurement¹

16. The Director-General's 1999 Report, *Decent work*, to the International Labour Conference described the primary objective of the ILO as "to promote opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity".² The 2005 World Summit of the United Nations General Assembly, attended by leaders from more than 150 countries, committed to the policy goal of productive employment and decent work for all as part of efforts to achieve the MDGs.³ Further, the Ministerial Declaration of the 2007 High-level Segment of ECOSOC resolved "to make the goals of full and productive employment and decent work for all, including for women and young people, a central objective of relevant national and international policies as well as national development strategies".⁴ The ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization summarizes the Decent Work Agenda as having four equally important strategic objectives: promoting employment; social protection; social dialogue and tripartism; and fundamental principles and rights at work; with gender equality and non-discrimination as cross-cutting issues.⁵
17. The interrelated character of the four strategic objectives of the Decent Work Agenda poses a number of challenges for assessing progress at the country level. In particular, a meaningful assessment of progress will need to be based on both statistical indicators and also information on the legal framework for decent work. Section 3 therefore outlines the implications for statistical indicators that arise from the decent work concept, and section 4 how statistical indicators could be embedded with information on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work. Section 5 discusses the issues involved in monitoring progress at the country level.

3. Key aspects of decent work and implications for statistical indicators

18. The following section addresses the multidimensional nature of the Decent Work Agenda; its concern for all workers and especially for the improvement of the situation of the most vulnerable; its concern for the living conditions of workers and their families; gender as a cross-cutting issue; and the importance of the economic and social context of decent work.

¹ This part draws extensively on a background paper commissioned by the Office. See R. Anker and P. Annycke: *Reporting on decent work in the world: Ways forward for the ILO* (Geneva, ILO, forthcoming).

² ILO: *Decent work*, Report of the Director-General, ILC, 87th Session, June 1999.

³ United Nations: *2005 World Summit Outcome*, resolution adopted at the 60th Session of the General Assembly, New York, 2005 (A/RES/60/1, para. 47).

⁴ United Nations: Report of the Economic and Social Council for the 2007 *Ministerial Declaration of the High-level Segment*, adopted at the 62nd Session of the General Assembly, New York, 10 July 2007 (A/62/3).

⁵ ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, op. cit., para. I.A.

Under each heading, it will summarize the implications that arise for the measurement of decent work.

3.1. The multidimensional nature of decent work

19. As the ILO Declaration for Social Justice for a Fair Globalization stresses, the four strategic objectives of the Decent Work Agenda “are inseparable, interrelated and mutually supportive. The failure to promote any one of them would harm progress towards the others”.⁶

Implication 1: *The comprehensive nature of decent work implies that its measurement needs to cover all aspects of decent work.* A compilation of indicators that covers only selected aspects – such as employment – would, thus, be insufficient to map progress towards decent work at the country level.

3.2. Concern for all workers

20. Decent work is relevant for, and a concern of, all workers. This includes women as well as men; workers in the formal economy as well as in the informal economy; and self-employed and unpaid family workers as well as wage employees and employers.

21. Most data on labour supply are collected through labour force surveys that cover all workers, regardless of their status in employment or the type of establishment they work in. Labour demand data and some data on labour supply are collected through establishments. However, the establishments that are covered tend to be limited in size or in the form of registration. It is therefore not always practical to have indicators that measure the situation for all workers. It is important to be aware of such cases. For example, fatal injuries data are typically collected on employees in registered enterprises through a notification system. Therefore, analysts need to always keep in mind that these types of data may exclude the self-employed and those who are employed in unregistered enterprises.

Implication 2: *Whenever possible, decent work indicators should be based on data that cover all workers (including women and men in the informal economy).* However, it is often useful to disaggregate data for different subsets of the employed population (for example by age, by gender or by status in employment).

22. Decent work is relevant for workers everywhere and therefore in countries at all stages of development.⁷ Decent work indicators should, thus, be conceptually relevant for developing and industrialized countries alike. The question of conceptual relevance should not be confused with current data availability. For example, poverty affects workers in both developing and industrialized countries and the concept of the “working poor” is thus relevant for countries at all stages of development. However, data on the working poor are currently predominantly available for developing countries, mainly for MDG indicator 1.6. that refers to the proportion of employed people living below US\$1 PPP per day.⁸ It is

⁶ *ibid.*, para. I.B.

⁷ ILO: *Decent work*, Report of the Director-General to the ILC, 87th Session, 1999, p. 3. See also Section V of the Declaration of Philadelphia, adopted by the General Conference of the ILO at the 26th Session, Philadelphia, 10 May 1944.

⁸ See United Nations: *Official list of MDG indicators*, *op. cit.* See also ILO, 2007: *Key Indicators of the Labour Market* (fifth edition), *op. cit.*, Ch. 9.

based on an *absolute definition* of poverty and an international poverty line that facilitates comparisons across countries.⁹ The drawback is that it does not capture poverty in industrialized countries and many upper-middle-income countries, where poverty is often defined as *relative poverty* (i.e. the working poor are poor relative to the standard of living in their own country). However, this does not render the concept of the working poor as irrelevant, rather, it implies that different national poverty lines (whether relative or absolute) could be used to reflect the different meaning of poverty in different countries.

Implication 3: Decent work indicators should have *conceptual relevance for countries at all stages of development* or be developed in a way that makes them relevant for all countries.

23. Since decent work is relevant for all countries, it is important that sufficient information and data on decent work be available for all regions. This need for data and information availability is taken into consideration in Part III, where core sets of decent work statistical indicators and legal framework information are discussed.

Implication 4: *National data and information on decent work should be available for countries at all stages of development, and in every region to facilitate comprehensive reporting on progress towards decent work.*

3.3. Concern for the improvement of the conditions of the most vulnerable

24. The ILO has, since its foundation, been especially concerned with improving conditions of workers most vulnerable to inhumane or abusive conditions of work, not least through its system of international labour standards (ILS). Moving out of such situations is thus an important aspect of the Decent Work Agenda. ILO Conventions and Recommendations provide reference points which, taking due account of relevant factors such as levels of development, can be used to focus in particular on the position of the most vulnerable workers.

Implication 5: Concern for the improvement of the conditions of the most vulnerable workers implies that whenever relevant and practical, *decent work statistical indicators should measure how many workers work under unacceptable conditions* with respect to the aspect of decent work that is measured. This will often mean that it is preferable to collect data on the tail of a distribution (or on the entire distribution), rather than only on the mean or the median.

25. For example, the Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, 1919 (No. 1), stipulates that working time should not exceed 48 hours per week. Therefore, it might be preferable to measure the percentage of workers who work hours in excess of 48 rather than to collect statistics only on average hours of work that can mask the polarization between very short and very long working hours. Similarly, rather than reporting only average wage rates, it is useful to measure how many workers have low incomes.

⁹ Critics do however point out that the choice of a single global poverty line masks differences in country situations which are not adequately accommodated by using PPP exchange rates in calculating the comparisons.

3.4. Concern for the living conditions of workers and their families

26. The Decent Work Agenda is concerned with the living conditions of workers and their families, not just with paid productive work and the workplace. This has deep roots in the ILO's history. In the Declaration of Philadelphia, constituents stated that "poverty anywhere constitutes a danger to prosperity everywhere" and mandated the ILO to promote programmes to raise living standards. Explicitly mentioned are, among others, the provision to provide basic incomes and comprehensive medical care to all in need; the provision of child welfare and maternity protection; the provision of adequate nutrition, housing and facilities for recreation and culture; and the assurance of equality of educational and vocational opportunity.¹⁰ More recently discussion has moved to consideration of how to measure more appropriately care work that is typically unpaid and often performed by women within the household and that sustains and "reproduces" families.¹¹

Implication 6: The concern for living conditions of workers and their families means that *indicators should go beyond statistics on work and the workplace* and could include, for example, aspects such as unpaid care work and reproductive work and access to health care and the incidence of working poverty.

3.5. Gender as a cross-cutting concern

27. Gender is a cross-cutting concern of the Decent Work Agenda, i.e. gender is relevant to all facets of decent work and not a topic that should be treated in isolation. In all countries, gender inequalities persist in a wide range of aspects, including access to employment opportunities, working conditions (including occupational health and safety), social security coverage and participation in social dialogue.¹²

Implication 7: In order to shed light on gender aspects of decent work, indicators should be *measured separately for women and men whenever possible*.

28. In addition, male and female workers often have different needs and constraints, including the extent of unpaid care work and reproductive work that is often undertaken by women and which acts as a serious gender barrier to their participation in the labour market. Some aspects of decent work can also have particular relevance for women workers. For example, maternity protection is relevant only for women, while parental leave affects both male and female workers.

Implication 8: Decent work indicators *should therefore reflect the different needs and constraints of women and men workers, including taking into account unpaid care work and reproductive work*.

¹⁰ Declaration of Philadelphia, op. cit., section III.

¹¹ See UNIFEM: *Progress of the world's women: Women, work and poverty*, New York, 2005, Ch. 2, "The totality of women's work", provides a review of the concepts of unpaid care work and reproductive work.

¹² ILO: *Decent work*, op. cit.

3.6. The social and economic context for decent work and sustainable enterprises

29. Decent work is not an isolated concern, but embedded in sustained economic and social progress: decent work in itself can be a productive factor that contributes to overall development.¹³ Conversely, adverse economic and social conditions can hinder progress towards productive employment and decent working conditions. Their impact can often be directly felt at the level of individual enterprises, with negative consequences for growth and employment. A social and economic environment that is conducive to sustainable enterprises is thus an important factor in attaining progress towards decent work. Such an environment includes sound and stable macroeconomic policy and good management of the economy, education, training and lifelong learning, and social justice and social inclusion.¹⁴

Implication 9: Decent work indicators should *be placed in the context of the social and economic situation in a country*, so that factors that hinder and promote progress towards decent work can be identified.

30. This implies the need for indicators that measure for example: growth in labour productivity (that is an important determinant for increases in wages), inflation (high inflation erodes the purchasing power of wages and can make enterprises unviable), education and skills development (skills and capabilities of workers are an important determinant of productivity), and income inequality (social justice as a prerequisite for stability, sustainable enterprise development and economic growth).

4. ***The need for systematic information on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work***

4.1. Complementarity of statistical indicators and information on the legal framework

31. The previous section discussed some desirable properties of statistical indicators to measure decent work. However, statistical indicators on work and working conditions alone are insufficient to monitor progress towards decent work – they need to be complemented with information on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work. The Decent Work Agenda emphasizes the rights of workers codified in ILS and it would therefore be useful to know how far national legislation protects such rights in practice. In addition, information on the legal framework is often necessary to interpret statistical indicators. Therefore, two types of information could be used to jointly describe and measure decent work: (i) statistical indicators; and (ii) information on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work.¹⁵

¹³ ILO: *Reducing the decent work deficit – A global challenge*, Report of the Director-General, ILC, 89th Session (Geneva, June 2001).

¹⁴ See conclusions concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises, *Provisional Record*, ILC, 96th Session (Geneva, June 2007).

¹⁵ Researchers have used different terminology for what is referred to as information on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work: Block uses “laws and legislation”; the National Research Council uses “legal framework and governance performance”; ILO–IFP–SES uses “input and process variables”; VERITE uses “laws and legal system”. For a review, see D. Kucera (ed.):

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32. The two types of information can complement each other, whereas one alone will often be insufficient to monitor progress towards decent work. A useful example to demonstrate this is social dialogue and workers' representation. Convention No. 87 states that

Workers and employers, without distinction whatsoever, shall have the right to establish and, subject only to the rules of the organisation concerned, to join organisations of their own choosing without previous authorisation (Convention No. 87, Article 2).

Further, the Convention states that public authorities shall refrain from any interference. Information on whether national law guarantees freedom of association that is laid down in Conventions Nos 87 and 98 and on whether trade unions are free from interference is hence important in itself, even when workers choose not to join trade unions. However, to voice their concerns effectively and to facilitate meaningful social dialogue, workers have to exercise their right and organize. Thus, it is useful to complement information on trade union rights with statistics on how many workers are union members. Conversely, unionization rates are meaningless unless one knows whether trade unions are free or not. To assess whether conditions for meaningful social dialogue exist, it is necessary to jointly interpret information on trade union rights and statistical indicators on unionization. The same applies to employers, whose right to associate freely is protected by the same Convention.

33. This is just one of many examples that could be made. It is indicative that ILO Conventions and Recommendations cover all aspects of the Decent Work Agenda, be it equality of opportunity and treatment; vocational guidance and training; employment security; wages; working time; occupational safety and health; or maternity protection, among others. International labour standards are not an isolated aspect of decent work. Rather, they are applicable to every aspect of decent work.

Implication 10: *Two types of information can be used to monitor progress towards decent work: (i) statistical indicators on work and working conditions; and (ii) information on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work, including the effective application of rights.*

4.2. Mapping rights at work and the legal framework for decent work at the country level

34. The legal framework for work in a country is complex. For example, mapping workers' right to organize and bargain collectively in a country is not as simple as knowing if a country has ratified ILO Conventions Nos 87 and 98. One would want to know for example whether there were restrictions on the right to organize; were trade unions free from state or management interference; had the ILO received complaints and representations with respect to Conventions Nos 87 and 98; and what the allegations brought forward in them were;¹⁶ whether the Committee on Freedom of Association (CFA) or the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) had made any recommendations; and whether it had later reported that progress had been made. In another example, knowing that a country has ratified an ILO Convention on maternity protection or even that there is a national paid maternity leave law does not indicate whether the situation in a country is advantageous

Qualitative indicators of labour standards: Comparative methods and applications, Social Indicators Research Series, Vol. 30 (Geneva, ILO, 2007), Ch. 1.

¹⁶ Note that the number of complaints and representations in itself need not be indicative of the severity of rights' violations. It is therefore essential to report their substance and the comments made by the ILO supervisory system.

for women workers as regards maternity leave. To meaningfully represent the situation in a country, one would want to know: how generous the law was in terms of weeks of absence and replacement pay; which types of workers the law covered (e.g. does the law cover agricultural or private domestic workers?); and how many workers received maternity leave in practice (e.g. does only a select group of women workers in the modern or in the public sector actually get paid maternity leave?).

- 35.** Given the complexity of legal issues, it is not surprising that legal experts are often reticent about the use of quantitative indicators to represent the legal framework. Jurisprudence at the national level allows for complexity, with each case judged on its own merits and circumstances. For example, the United States Supreme Court applies a common-law test to determine whether someone can be considered an employee, using the following criteria:

... the hiring party's right to control the manner and means by which the product is accomplished. ...; the skill required; the source of the instrumentalities and tools; the location of the work; the duration of the relationship between the parties; whether the hiring party has the right to assign additional projects to the hired party; the extent of the hired party's discretion over when and how long to work; the method of payment; the hired party's role in hiring and paying assistants; whether the work is part of the regular business of the hiring party; whether the hiring party is in business; the provision of employee benefits; and the tax treatment of the hired party.¹⁷

Moreover, the common-law test contains "no shorthand formula or magic phrase that can be applied to find the answer, but all of the incidents of the relationship must be assessed and weighed, with no one factor being decisive".¹⁸

- 36.** In contrast to lawyers, researchers and scholars interested in studying whether labour standards and rights affect national economic performance and/or international trade have used quantitative variables to measure the legal framework for work. The most common approach for international comparisons has been to rely on ratification by countries of ILO Conventions to measure labour laws and regulations. However, ratification of Conventions is not necessarily a good indicator of the actual implementation of labour standards, and constructing a numerical measure for respect for labour standards simply on the basis of the number of ratifications could introduce a significant measurement error.¹⁹ Nonetheless, such a measure has been accepted by researchers who do econometric cross-country analysis, on the grounds that errors in national values are random and unbiased across countries. This technique is however disputed by others.
- 37.** The ILO's International Labour Standards Department (NORMES) has also been engaged in a project on the economic dynamics of ILS, which has been discussed in the Governing

¹⁷ United States Supreme Court Cases and Opinions, *Commun. for Non-Violence v. Reid*, 490 US 730 (1989), p. 751.; footnotes omitted.

¹⁸ United States Supreme Court Cases and Opinions, *NLRB v. United Ins. Co. of America*, 390 US 254 (1968), p. 258.

¹⁹ S. Lee and D. McCann: "Measuring labour market institutions: Conceptual and methodological questions on 'working-hour rigidity'", in J. Berg and D. Kucera (eds), in *In defence of labour market institutions: Cultivating justice in the developing world* (London/Geneva, ILO and Palgrave MacMillan, 2008).

Body.²⁰ This has involved five interdisciplinary research teams, which undertook global reviews and critical analyses of current economics literature on the interaction of ILS and economic systems in five areas (social security; occupational safety and health; skills and vocational training; working time and equality; and non-discrimination). Each study evaluated the state of research from a wide range of perspectives, mapping out areas of consensus, areas of debate and areas where further research is warranted. A second phase of this project envisages the association of well-known economists from all regions to undertake an empirical and evidence-based study that would help with the development of indicators to better assess the economic impact of ILS.

- 38.** In seeking to monitor the legal aspects of progress towards decent work at the country level the Office has the advantage of gathering accurate legal information and reviewing it (as well as statistical indicators) with governments and social partners before publication to improve accuracy. In recent years, the Office has built databases that provide information on the legal framework for decent work in a substantial number of member States. First and foremost, the ILO's International Labour Standards Department (NORMES) now brings together information on national labour law and the application of ILS in one new portal, the NATLEX Country Profiles.²¹ It contains information on ratifications of ILS; comments of the ILO's supervisory bodies (the CEACR, the Conference Committee and the CFA); the basic laws of the country; and, where available, legislative profiles for occupational safety and health and migrant workers. In addition, the Conditions of Work and Employment Programme (TRAVAIL) has developed databases on national legislation on maternity leave, working time, and statutory minimum wages.²² Significant improvements to measuring the legal framework for work with numerical variables (usually ordinal variables) have also been spearheaded by the Office.²³

Implication 11: Information on the *legal framework for work should include information on laws, jurisprudence, coverage and effectiveness of implementation.*

Implication 12: Information on the legal framework for work, as well as statistical indicators, *should be transparent and verifiable; it needs to be regularly updated and errors systematically eliminated.*

- 39. Major point for debate and guidance: Should the ILO endeavour to offer legal and statistical information at the country level in an integrated framework?**

5. Monitoring progress towards decent work

- 40.** The previous two sections outlined that different types of information could be used to measure decent work. One purpose of this is to monitor progress towards decent work at the country level. This implies that the emphasis is on outcome indicators and their change

²⁰ See ILO: *Project on economic dynamics of international labour standards*, doc. GB.300/LILS/10, 300th Session, Geneva, Nov. 2007; see also ILO: *Report of the Committee on Legal Issues and International Labour Standards*, doc. GB.300/13(Rev.), 300th Session, Geneva, No. 2007.

²¹ The country profiles draw on the ILO's APPLIS, IOLEX, LIBSYND and NATLEX databases as well as other ILO sources. The database can be accessed online at http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/country_profiles.home?p_lang=en.

²² <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/condtrav/database/index.htm>.

²³ See D. Kucera, 2007, op. cit.

over time within countries, and that the data need to be analysed to ascertain whether a country has made progress with respect to a certain aspect of decent work. For some indicators, this is relatively straight-forward: If the share of workers who work excessive hours has fallen in a country, this would signal progress towards “decent hours”; if this reduction was sharp, it would be warranted to speak of substantial progress. Likewise, if the share of those who work excessive hours has remained high and unchanged, this would mark lack of progress. However, assessing outcomes is difficult for other indicators and therefore needs to be based on a careful consideration.

41. The current section will address several aspects that deserve particular attention, for example, the needs to be borne in mind when looking at change over time; the influence of changing demographic structure and the sectoral distribution on indicators; the legal changes and the progressive implementation of rights at work that need to be reflected; and why measuring progress towards decent work at the country level is distinct from developing a decent work index.

5.1. Change over time in decent work indicators

42. When analysing change over time in statistical indicators, four aspects in particular should be thought through carefully:

- (i) the size of change over one year and what this means for the time horizon of the assessment (e.g. what to do when change over one year in an indicator is small and gradual);
- (ii) measurement error that is large in relation to the size of annual change, erratic change over time, and what this means for indicating direction of change over a one-year period (e.g. what to do when annual change in an indicator is generally small relative to measurement error);
- (iii) the possibility that the direction of change is counter cyclical (e.g. what to do when an indicator moves in a generally undesirable direction as the economy improves, and vice versa);
- (iv) the size of change relative to the initial value and the maximum value possible, or the desirable value.

Each of these issues will be addressed in the following subsections.

Gradual change

43. Under normal circumstances, change will be gradual for most statistical indicators used to measure progress towards decent work.²⁴ For example, labour force participation rates, percentage of children at school, percentage of workers with a pension, and union density rates (using one obvious indicator from each of the ILO’s four pillars of decent work) normally change only gradually from year to year. However, these indicators are not static, and over the longer term meaningful progress can be detected. Thus, it is clear that values and information should be provided for more than just the last one or two years and

²⁴ However, change can be abrupt when a country faces a major economic crisis. See, for example, the discussion of unemployment rates in countries affected by financial crises in R. van der Hoeven and M. Luebker: “Financial openness and employment: The need for coherent international and national policies”, in J.A. Ocampo and K.S. Jomo (eds), in *Towards full and decent employment* (New York, United Nations, 2007).

include values and information for, say, the preceding ten years so that secular change over time can be discerned.

Implication 13: *Most statistical decent work indicators should present a time series that covers the recent past (such as the previous ten years) in addition to the value for recent years, so that it is possible to observe change over time as, generally, most aspects of decent work only change gradually from year to year.*

Measurement error and erratic change

44. Measurement error is large relative to observed annual change for some numerical indicators, and this needs to be taken into consideration when selecting, presenting, analysing and discussing decent work indicators. This problem is most likely to occur for indicators where change is small from year to year. A related problem for some decent work indicators is that change from one year to the next is sometimes erratic. Examples of this occur for occupational fatalities and strikes and lockouts. Annual fatality rates can be greatly affected in a particular year by a disaster such as a major mining accident, which could cause the fatality rate for a country to be unusually high in a particular year. Strike and lockout data are often greatly affected by periodic strikes by a major union. This would mean that the number of days lost per 100,000 workers due to strikes and lockouts is often “saw-toothed” in nature. Decisions on smoothing variables such as the fatal occupational injury rate and strikes and lockouts need to be considered on a case-by-case basis, because an unusual annual value can be as meaningful as smoothed longer run trend values.

Implication 14: *Since measurement error and erratic change from one year to the next can be large, annual values for some indicators could be smoothed out by using a running average calculated over several years such as the last three or five years. At the same time, annual values for some variables are also worth reporting even when they are erratic from year to year as they can also have meaning.*

Counter-cyclical indicators

45. The possibility of counter-cyclical decent work indicators is real. For example, the percentage of workers with more than one year tenure in their present work can be counter cyclical.²⁵ This percentage often decreases when an economy improves and employment expands, because newly hired employees have short job durations; the percentage can increase in an economic downturn, because workers with shorter tenure are typically laid off first and few new workers are hired. It can be appropriate to include counter-cyclical indicators in a core set of ILO decent work indicators if they are important. But at the same time, it is necessary to make sure that, when a decent work indicator is counter cyclical, discussion and analysis take this into account. For example, while it would be appropriate to look at secular change over ten to 30 years in the extent to which work security based on job tenure data has changed across countries, regions and the world, it would not be appropriate to discuss how work security based on job tenure data has changed in the last year.

Implication 15: *The analysis of decent work indicators should take into consideration whether decent work indicators are counter cyclical. When an indicator is counter cyclical, longer run secular changes could be discussed rather than annual change.*

²⁵ However, a recent ILO study found a pro-cyclical pattern in Central and Eastern Europe, confirming that this need not always be the case. See S. Cazes and A. Nesporova (eds): *Flexicurity: A relevant approach in Central and Eastern Europe* (Geneva, ILO, 2007).

46. While the statistical indicators will typically help towards gauging whether progress towards decent work has been made in a country, it will often be more difficult to assess how sizeable this progress has been. Such an assessment will have to take a number of factors into account, namely the initial value of the indicators, the maximum/minimum possible values, and what would constitute a desirable value. For example, a reduction of the unemployment rate by five percentage points could either be considered to be substantive progress or insufficient progress, depending on whether the initial unemployment rate was 7 per cent or 17 per cent. Also, once full employment has been achieved, a country can no longer make progress on this indicator. Further, while a low unemployment rate would be desirable under most circumstances,²⁶ it is not always clear what would constitute a “desirable” value for other indicators. For example, while decent work promotes access to employment opportunities for women and men, it does not imply that everyone of working age should work. Thus, since some people will prefer education over work or choose to remain economically inactive, it cannot be the goal of policy-makers to achieve an employment-to-population ratio of 100 per cent.

Implication 16: When selecting indicators, *attention should be paid to whether a generally desirable level for an indicator can be identified*, and whether change towards this level would indicate progress towards decent work.

Implication 17: An assessment of progress towards decent work at the country level needs to take into account the initial value of an indicator, and what would be a desirable range for this indicator.

5.2. Demographic and sectoral influences

47. National values of some decent work indicators are sensitive to the age distribution of the labour force and/or to the distribution of employment across sectors. This occurs when rates for an indicator differ greatly by age or sector. For example, the average number of years of job tenure is sensitive to the age distribution of the labour force, because young workers have much shorter tenure than other workers; and the occupational fatality rate in a country is sensitive to the distribution of production by sector, because some sectors (such as mining, agriculture, fishing and construction) have much higher fatality rates than other sectors.

Implication 18: Since changes in demographic structure and the sectoral distribution of employment will influence trends in some statistical indicators, contextual information needs to be provided and statistical indicators need to be interpreted in conjunction with data on demographic structure and the sectoral distribution of employment.

Implication 19: To neutralize the influence of demographic shifts and changes in the sectoral distribution of employment, some indicators could be restricted *to certain age groups* (e.g. age 25+ for tenure) *and/or to certain sectors* (e.g. the manufacturing sector for occupational fatality rate).

²⁶ An exception would be a counter-cyclical reduction in unemployment that can sometimes be witnessed in the context of economic crises.

5.3. Reflecting legal changes and monitoring the progressive implementation of rights at work

48. The legal framework for decent work in any given country is not static, but it evolves over time. Particular attention could be paid to the implementation of fundamental principles and rights at work that all Members have an obligation to respect, to promote and to realize, in good faith and in accordance with the Constitution. At the same time, many ILO Conventions and Recommendations allow for progressive implementation, depending on member States' level of development.

Implication 20: To monitor progress towards decent work, information on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work should reflect *changes that have been made by countries to develop their national legislation or the application of laws, or both, with reference to ILO standards.*

5.4. Drawbacks of indexing for the purpose of measuring progress towards decent work

49. Following the guidance by the Governing Body, the Tripartite Meeting of Experts is concerned with the measurement of decent work to monitor progress at the country level. This is distinct from the development of an index. The two differ fundamentally in many respects:

- (i) an index aims at aggregating information into a single index number; measuring decent work describes detailed information on all aspects of decent work;
- (ii) an index requires assigning a weight to different aspects of decent work; measuring decent work does not require such a judgement;
- (iii) an index lends itself to the ranking of countries and the comparison between countries; measuring decent work focuses on individual countries and the progress they have made over time;
- (iv) an index is blind to country-specific circumstances; measuring decent work takes them into account ;
- (v) an index would need to convert information on rights at work into a number; measuring decent work can provide detailed information on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work.

While this list could be expanded upon, it should suffice to demonstrate that the measurement of decent work poses requirements that are fundamentally different from the development of an index.

Implication 21: Monitoring progress towards decent work at the country level should not *be linked to an index.*

Part III

Statistical indicators and information on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work ¹

50. Based on the general principles developed in the previous sections, Part III is concerned with translating these into a practical template for monitoring progress towards decent work. Use of a global template as a guide for the compilation of country profiles would facilitate the comparison of country experiences without losing sight of the vital aspect of country context. In section 6, two alternative approaches to the thematic organization of information are contrasted. Section 7 then takes stock of previous compilations of decent work indicators, identifies candidates for inclusion into a consolidated list of decent work indicators and explores data availability in more detail for four selected indicators. Section 8 discusses and suggests a framework for information on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work, and section 9 discusses gender issues and measuring male–female differences.
51. The entire discussion is based on the premise that while a template needs to reflect the multidimensional and comprehensive nature of the Decent Work Agenda, it needs to remain parsimonious, and carefully balance ambition with a realistic appreciation of what is feasible at the country level.

6. **Approaches to organizing decent work indicators and legal framework information**

52. The discussion in Part II developed one important argument, namely that rights at work and a country's legal framework are relevant across the entire Decent Work Agenda. It was argued that detailed information on a country's legal framework should be presented in a way that complements statistical indicators. This has direct implications for the way indicators and legal framework information should be organized. In the past, two main approaches have been followed:
- (i) *Grouping of information under the four strategic objectives of the Decent Work Agenda:* Under this approach, one grouping of indicators has to capture labour standards and fundamental principles and rights at work. This has frequently prompted the inclusion of proxy measures of questionable meaningfulness, such as the number of Conventions ratified or the number of complaints made against a member country. Where this has been avoided, only indicators on child labour or non-discrimination (which can be more readily expressed in numerical terms) have been included under the heading of labour standards. However, this creates the misleading impression that the relevance of labour standards is limited to a few selected issues; it does not sufficiently highlight the importance of rights at work as an integral component of the Decent Work Agenda.
 - (ii) *Grouping of information under substantive elements of decent work:* This approach groups statistical indicators and information on the legal framework and the actual implementation of laws in a country under headings that reflect substantive elements of the Decent Work Agenda (such as decent hours or social dialogue and workers'

¹ This part draws extensively on a background paper commissioned by the Office; see R. Anker and P. Annycke, *op. cit.*

representation). As argued above, this is of great use as it allows, for example, union density rates in conjunction with information on legal restrictions on the right to organize or state interference in trade unions. Under such a framework, statistical indicators and information on the legal framework complement each other.

53. The second approach was previously used in the General Report submitted to the 17th ICLS in 2003.² The rationale for this was to capture decent work as an integrated and multidimensional concept while covering all four dimensions. Table 1 presents a slightly amended version of the groupings used in the report to the 17th ICLS and lists ten substantive elements of the Decent Work Agenda, namely access to employment opportunities; work that should be eliminated or abolished; adequate earnings and productive work; decent hours; stability and security of work; combining work and family life; equal opportunity and treatment in employment; safe work environment; social security; social dialogue and workers' representation. Under the headings of these substantive elements, two kinds of information would be provided:

- (i) relevant statistical indicators that permit the monitoring of progress made with regard to the substantive elements; and
- (ii) a description of relevant national legislation in relation to the substantive elements of the Decent Work Agenda; where relevant, information on the benefit level; evidence of implementation effectiveness and the coverage of workers in law and in practice; complaints and representations received by the ILO; observations by the ILO supervisory system and cases of progress; information on the ratification of relevant ILO Conventions.

54. This approach covers the four strategic pillars of the Decent Work Agenda in a comprehensive way and has at least *two main advantages*: Firstly, it highlights that rights at work are a cross-cutting concern and that ILS cover the entire spectrum of the Decent Work Agenda. Secondly, by grouping statistical indicators alongside information on rights at work, these two sources of information can be interpreted together. This is particularly relevant for the qualitative aspects of decent work where statistical indicators alone are insufficient to monitor progress. In table 1 all four strategic objectives are covered in a disaggregated manner with standards and their application a cross-cutting dimension (figures in brackets show under which strategic objectives the suggested substantive element mainly falls).

55. Major point for debate and guidance: Under which thematic headings of the substantive elements of the strategic objectives of the Decent Work Agenda should statistical indicators and information on rights at work and the legal framework be grouped?

² ICLS/17/2003/1, op. cit.

Table 1. Suggested organization of statistical indicators and information on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work

Substantive elements of the Decent Work Agenda	Statistical indicators	Information on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work
Employment opportunities (1 + 2) Work that should be abolished (1 + 3) Adequate earnings and productive work (1 + 3) Decent hours (1 + 3) Stability and security of work (1, 2 + 3) Combining work and family life (1 + 3) Equal opportunity and treatment in employment (1, 2 + 3) Safe work environment (1 + 3) Social security (1 + 3) Social dialogue and workers' representation (1 + 4)	Selection of relevant statistical indicators that allow monitoring progress made with regard to the substantive elements.	Description of relevant national legislation in relation to the substantive elements of the Decent Work Agenda; where relevant, information on the benefit level; evidence of implementation effectiveness and the coverage of workers in law and in practice; complaints and representations received by the ILO; observations by the ILO supervisory system and cases of progress; information on the ratification of relevant ILO Conventions (1, 2, 3 + 4)

Note: ILO strategic objectives: 1. Standards and fundamental principles and rights at work; 2. Employment; 3. Social protection; 4. Social dialogue.

Source: ILO compilation.

7. *Statistical indicators to monitor progress towards decent work*

7.1. Review of past proposals for decent work indicators

56. Before embarking on the discussion of individual statistical indicators, it is useful to take stock of existing lists of decent work indicators. This section will be devoted to this task and draw on existing lists of indicators:

- (i) The General Report to the 17th ICLS in 2003 presented a list of 29 core decent work indicators.³ This list was based on considerable thought, consultation and discussion and has since been used to compile information at the country or regional level so that some experience on its feasibility and potential shortcomings has been gained.⁴
- (ii) The ILO's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RO–Bangkok) has suggested a list of decent work indicators and produced a guidebook that provides a detailed overview of the individual decent work indicators.⁵ The Regional Office has also commissioned nine country studies on data availability, sources and definitions and compiled a preliminary database of national decent work indicators.
- (iii) The ILO's Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (RO–Lima) has developed a proposal for decent work indicators for use within the region.

³ ICLS/17/2003/1, *ibid.*

⁴ See Anker et al.: *op. cit.*; J.Y. Amankrah: *Ghana decent work statistical indicators: Fact-finding study* (Geneva, ILO, 2003); M.K. Mujeri: *Bangladesh decent work statistical indicators: Fact-finding study* (Geneva, ILO, 2004); S.K. Huang: *Job quality: Indicator developments and assessments at macro, enterprise and individual levels* (Seoul, Korea Labour Institute, 2007, published in Korean).

⁵ ILO: *Decent Work Indicators for Asia and the Pacific*, *op. cit.*

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- (iv) In preparation for the Eighth European Regional Meeting, to be held in January 2009, the Regional Office for Europe has compiled a range of decent work indicators.
- (v) At the ILO's headquarters, an intersectoral task force led by the Bureau of Statistics has collected suggestions for decent work indicators from all four sectors and evaluated their feasibility.⁶
- (vi) Effective in January 2008, the United Nations has adopted four indicators for the new MDG Target 1.B, "Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people".⁷
- (vii) A European joint task force set up by the UNECE, Eurostat and the ILO is currently compiling a list of statistical indicators to measure the quality of employment. Despite the fact that this task force aims to measure a different concept (quality of employment, rather than decent work), many of the indicators are similar to those used to measure decent work.
- 57.** Appendix table 1 lists all indicators that have been suggested in any of the above-named compilations,⁸ leading to a relatively long and complex list. However, there is considerable overlap between the different proposals. Many of the indicators are identical, and others are conceptually related. For example, the youth unemployment rate was included in three of the six compilations; two compilations also include the youth inactivity rate and one the share of youth not in education and not in employment. All three indicators have their own statistical definition, but aim to provide information on one phenomenon: the exclusion of youth from access to employment opportunities. The overview in appendix table 1 thus groups conceptually related indicators. Each group is given one indicator number (in the case of youth unemployment – No. 4), and variants are marked with a diamond symbol (♦) and given the same number and a letter suffix (for example – Nos 4a and 4b). In total, there are 34 different decent work indicators on the list, plus 21 variants (and seven context indicators, plus one variant).
- 58.** Common ground exists, in particular, between the first five compilations: two indicators (the employment-to-population ratio and the unemployment rate) are included in all five lists, and eight indicators appear on four of the five lists in identical form. The remaining two compilations differ from the other five in important respects: the list of indicators for MDG Target 1.B contains only four indicators⁹ and thus far fewer than the other compilations, and the proposal made by the European task force concentrates on the quality of employment and thus, unlike the Decent Work Agenda, does not cover access to employment opportunities.
- 59.** The considerable overlap between the different proposals is a welcome finding. It offers the prospect that the expert meeting can identify a common core set of statistical indicators that incorporates previous work done by the Office, and to suggest this for use at headquarters and across the ILO's field structure.

⁶ Only the suggestions received from the four sectors are included in table 2; suggestions made by the RO–Bangkok and the RO–Lima are reported in the respective columns.

⁷ See the United Nations official list of MDG indicators, effective 15 Jan. 2008.

⁸ Indicators that were included only on the list drawn up by the European Task Force, but not included on any of the other lists, were excluded from the comparison.

⁹ In addition, MDG Indicator 3.2 is listed.

7.2. Identifying a consolidated set of main and additional decent work indicators

60. While the Tripartite Meeting of Experts need not restrict itself to indicators that have previously been identified, the overview presented in the previous section nonetheless provides a useful basis for the meeting's deliberations. Appendix table 2 therefore lists all indicators that have been previously suggested, and discusses merits and shortcomings of individual indicators and constraints in terms of data availability.¹⁰ The length of the list calls for a significant reduction in the number of indicators to arrive at a parsimonious set of indicators. The table therefore contains suggestions for the experts' consideration in the form of the following letter codes:

- M – the indicator has the potential to be included as a *main indicator*;
- A – the indicator could be included as an *additional indicator* that can be used by technical departments and regional and country offices where they feel this is appropriate, and where data are available;
- C – the indicator could be included as a *context indicator* for the economic and social context of decent work;
- F – the indicator is a *candidate for future inclusion*, as data is expected to become available more widely;
- L – the information is of a complex *legal nature* and could be included in textual form under “rights at work and the legal framework for decent work”, rather than as a numerical indicator;
- E – the indicator is a *candidate for exclusion* from a core list of decent work indicators.

61. Apart from the previously identified indicators, appendix table 2 also highlights which aspects are missing from the list (marked: “Others: Not measured”) and contains a few additional indicators where data have recently been compiled (e.g. an indicator for health-care expenditure) or where data collection efforts are under way that could make the inclusion of an indicator feasible in the future (hazardous and other worst forms of child labour; and forced labour). While the existing compilations establish no precedent, experts might want to pay special attention to those indicators that have been selected by the United Nations as MDG indicators for Targets 1.B. and 3.A. The comments in appendix table 2 therefore again highlight which of the indicators are used for MDG monitoring.

62. As mentioned previously, the first list of decent work indicators in the General Report to the 17th ICLS in 2003 initiated debate on measuring decent work.¹¹ Some of the suggestions made in that report have not been taken up by the ILO intersectoral task force or regional offices other than that for Europe, primarily due to poor data availability in developing countries. This is the case for the following indicators: employees with recent job training; tenure less than one year; temporary work; employment rate for women with children under compulsory school age; public expenditure on needs-based cash income support; beneficiaries of cash income support as a percentage of the poor; and average monthly pension. All seven indicators are candidates for exclusion from the decent work

¹⁰ For ease of reference, the indicator numbers previously used in table 2 are repeated.

¹¹ ICLS/17/2003/1, op. cit.

indicator list. Poor data availability, as well as conceptual considerations, might also lead the experts to consider the exclusion of other variables (that have equally been marked as candidates for exclusion in appendix table 2).

- 63.** Based on the discussion in the appendix, table 2 below summarizes one possible approach of a three-tier structure towards measuring decent work through statistical indicators:
- (i) The first set of indicators is used by the United Nations in monitoring progress towards MDG Target 1.B “Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all including women and young children”, and the related MDG Indicator 3.2. under Goal 3 “Promote gender equality and empower women”. It is an extremely parsimonious set of indicators that is compiled by the Office for a large number of countries.¹² However, as outlined above, measuring decent work would need to go beyond this to reflect all dimensions of the Decent Work Agenda in a more comprehensive way.
 - (ii) Table 2 identifies 18 indicators that are strong candidates to serve this purpose as main indicators. Such a main set of decent work indicators would be parsimonious enough to remain manageable, while covering a wide range of elements of the Decent Work Agenda: five indicators are concerned with employment opportunities, three with social security, three with social dialogue and workers’ representation, two with adequate earnings, two with equal opportunity and treatment in employment and one each with work that should be abolished, decent hours, and a safe work environment. There is an overlap with the MDG indicators, so that no additional data collection is required for these; other indicators (such as on health-care expenditure) are compiled by other international organizations. Where data gaps exist, national statistical offices would be encouraged to prioritize their efforts to collect data on these main indicators.
 - (iii) The table also identifies some 16 additional indicators that could be included in country-level or regional analyses where data are available and where their use appears informative. Many of these are already used by the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, in particular, and it would seem inappropriate to curtail the laudable progress made there.
- 64.** Note, however, that the proposals in table 2 have some shortcomings: no main indicator was identified as a candidate for stability and security of work. However, the indicator “informal employment” captures how many workers lack the stability and security that are associated with formal job-holding. Further, equally due to data limitations, no indicator was identified for combining work and family life. Other shortcomings are that workers’ representation is only partially captured by trade union membership and there is the added problem of the need to take into consideration situations where unions are not free; and that social dialogue is (at best) only partially measured by the collective bargaining coverage rate. Statistical indicators for discrimination are limited to gender, whereas Convention No. 111 refers to “any distinction, exclusion or preference made on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin, which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation” (Article 1.1.a). The proposals also fail to address equality of opportunity and treatment for disabled men and women workers, and their access to vocational rehabilitation and employment (compare Convention No. 159). In some countries, further indicators for these issues are available and can be included under the relevant thematic headings.

¹² See also ILO: Global Employment Trends, 2008, op. cit.

Table 2. MDG indicators and candidates for consideration as statistical decent work indicators

MDG targets 1.B and 3.A	Main decent work indicators (candidates for consideration)	Additional decent work indicators (candidates for consideration)
Employment opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Employment-to-population ratio (MDG indicator 1.5) ■ Proportion of own-account and contributing family workers in total employment (MDG indicator 1.7) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Unemployment by level of education (S) (3a) ■ Youth not in education and not in employment (S) (4b) ■ Employment by status in employment (S) (5) ■ Share of wage employment in non-agricultural employment (S) (5a) ■ Number and wages of casual/daily workers (S) (6b) ■ Hazardous child labour (S) (n.a.)
Work that should be abolished	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Children in wage employment or self-employment (S) (8) 	
Adequate earnings and productive work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Working poor (S) (9) ■ Low pay rate (S) (10) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Average earnings in selected occupations (S) (12a) ■ Number and wages of casual/daily workers (S) (12b) ■ Manufacturing wage index (12c)
Decent hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Excessive hours (S) (14) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Usual hours worked (standardized hour bands) (S) (14a) ■ Annual hours worked per person (S) (14b) ■ Time-related underemployment rate (S) (15)
Stability and security of work	[No statistical indicators suggested]	
Combining work and family life	[No statistical indicators suggested]	
Equal opportunity and treatment in employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector (MDG indicator 3.2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Measure of dispersion for sectoral distribution of migrant workers (20)

MDG targets 1.B and 3.A	Main decent work indicators (candidates for consideration)	Additional decent work indicators (candidates for consideration)
Safe work environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Occupational injury rate, fatal (21) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Occupational injury rate, non-fatal (21a)
Social security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Public social security expenditure (24) ■ Share of population aged 65 and above benefiting from a pension (S) (25) ■ Health-care expenditures not financed out of pocket by private households (n.a.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Social security coverage (pension and/or health (S) (25a)
Social dialogue and workers' representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Union density rate (S) (26) ■ Number of enterprises belonging to employer organization (27) ■ Collective wage bargaining coverage rate (S) (28) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Strikes and lockouts/rates of days not worked (29)
Economic and social context for decent work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Growth rate of GDP per person employed [labour productivity] (MDG indicator 1.4) ■ Children not in school (% by age) (S) (7) ■ Estimated % of working-age population who are HIV positive (31) ■ Labour productivity (GDP per employed person, level and growth rate) (E1) ■ Income inequality (ratio top 10% to bottom 10%, income or consumption) (E3) ■ Inflation rate (CPI) (E4) ■ Employment by branch of economic activity/industry (agriculture, industry, services/SIC tabulation category) (E5) ■ Education of adult population (adult literacy rate, adult secondary-school graduation rate) (S) (E6) ■ Labour share in GDP (E7) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Real per capita "earnings" [GNI] (from national accounts) (E2) ■ Female share of employment by industry (SIC tabulation category) (E5a)

Notes: S indicates usefulness of separate female and male values expressed as female-to-male ratio and/or female-male difference as appropriate. Limited data availability for separate female and male rates is likely to be a problem for several core indicators. Numbers in brackets refer to reference numbers used in appendix tables 1 and 2. Please see appendix table 2 for a full discussion of all indicators that have been suggested in the past.

Source: ILO compilation.

65. The two sets of main and additional indicators do not preclude further indicators, but serve to prioritize data collection and compilation. In many respects, they are a compromise between what would be desirable and what is feasible in the short run. Even so, the list of main indicators will present challenges in terms of data compilation. Nonetheless, identifying the gaps will help to prioritize these for collaboration with national statistical offices, and to direct resources to improved data collection. The set of decent work indicators should remain open to amendments and the inclusion of better indicators. Two indicators, in particular, are promising candidates for inclusion in the near future: hazardous and worst forms of child labour, and forced labour. Here, data collection efforts are under way and data should become more widely available in a few years. Some of the shortcomings of the statistical indicators can also be compensated by providing information on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work, as discussed in section 8.

66. It is worthwhile to briefly highlight the role of the proposed indicators for the economic and social context for decent work. They describe the background against which progress towards decent work is being made in a country, and include issues such as education and macroeconomic stability that are the primary focus of the work of other international organizations.¹³ The context indicators are not listed as main or additional indicators since they are ill-suited in monitoring progress towards decent work. For example, low inflation is an important aspect of a stable macroeconomic environment that allows enterprises to create employment on a sustainable basis. Nonetheless, a fall in the inflation rate does not, in itself, signal that work has become more decent. Similarly, the sectoral distribution of employment is important to understand the challenges a country faces, but for example a shift from industry to services does not automatically imply that working conditions have improved. Further, while rising labour productivity is historically a main factor behind rising wages, wages do not necessarily increase in line with productivity in the short run. Therefore, it is suggested that these and similar indicators are included in the special category of context indicators. The selection draws on the existing compilations, but experts are invited to present proposals that go beyond this, in particular with reference to sustainable enterprises and on environmental sustainability.

67. Major point for debate and guidance: Which decent work indicators does the tripartite meeting of experts recommend for inclusion as (i) main indicators; (ii) additional indicators; (iii) context indicators; and (iv) for inclusion in the future as data become available?

7.3. Data availability

68. Because the rationale behind the development of a common set of statistical indicators is to monitor progress towards decent work at the country level in the near future (i.e. deliver an assessment within a few years), it is important to look into the extent to which national data are available by region. Data availability was investigated in greater detail for four indicators that have been ranked prominently in previous compilations and are strong candidates for inclusion into a consolidated list. They are drawn from different major aspects of decent work:

- (i) union density rate;

¹³ Through the Policy Coherence Initiative, the Office works with other international organizations to achieve greater coherence within the multilateral system and at the country level in these policy areas.

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- (ii) fatal occupational injury rate;
 - (iii) public social security expenditure (percentage of GDP);
 - (iv) employment-to-population ratio.
- 69.** No effort was made to ascertain data quality. Results of this investigation are reported in appendix table 3 for the global total as well as for six country groups. Indicated are number of countries with data, how many these are as a share of all countries in the group, and for how many of the years from 1999 to 2006 countries with data have observations (expressed as a percentage of possible yearly observations). To simplify this exercise, generally only one or two data sources were consulted, and data sets with estimates for all countries were excluded; the main data sources are noted at the bottom of each column in appendix table 3.
- 70.** As expected, data are available for all four indicators for almost all countries in the developed economies. Interestingly, data are also widely available for non-EU countries in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), especially for larger countries in this region. Data were available for 50–78 per cent of the countries in this region. In terms of availability of annual data, it was found that data tended to be available most years except for union density, which was available on average about every other year for developed economies and every fifth year for non-EU countries in Central and Eastern Europe and CIS countries.
- 71.** Data availability was more limited for the four developing country regions, especially for sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East and North Africa. This points to the urgency of building capacity at the national level to collect reliable and timely statistics, particularly in Africa where statistical systems are generally weakest and where many countries do not conduct regular labour force surveys. Although, as expected, data availability is a problem in developing countries for the four indicators investigated, it is important to realize that data were available in each developing country region for a sizable number of countries. The combined number of countries in these four regions with data ranged from 30 for the fatal occupational injury rate, to 39 for union density, to 50 for social security expenditures, and to 79 for the employment-to-population ratio. Despite the limitations of the current investigation that drew upon only a few data sources, it seems that data are available for a sufficient number and range of countries to be acceptable for at least the four indicators.

8. *Information on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work*

8.1. A template for legal framework information

- 72.** A good legal framework for work is essential for decent work; it helps protect workers, working conditions, and workers' rights. The Decent Work Agenda emphasizes the rights of workers, including those codified in ILS that have been a central part of the ILO's mandate and activities since its inception. As was argued in section 4 above, to assess progress towards decent work at the country level, it is therefore necessary to know how far national legislation protects workers' rights, and how far these are respected in practice. Information on the legal framework is often necessary to interpret statistical indicators and it can fill information gaps for aspects of decent work that do not lend themselves to statistical measurement. This would provide a rationale for embedding the statistical indicators discussed in the previous section in a standard template on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work.

73. This section suggests an approach where important aspects of the legal framework for work are identified, relevant information for these is systematically consolidated, and this information is reported in a tabular format. The aim would be to provide information that allows the reader to understand key aspects of the legal framework in a country. Information of a legal nature and on institutional mechanisms is already being compiled by various departments throughout the Office. In the current context, the following databases are of particular importance:

- (i) The International Labour Standards Department (NORMES) has built extensive databases on national labour law and the ratification and application of ILS, and in particular, comments made by ILO supervisory bodies. Since 2007, the NATLEX country profiles provide a single portal through which this information can be accessed.¹⁴
- (ii) The Conditions of Work and Employment Programme (TRAVAIL) has compiled an extensive database on minimum wage legislation, legal working time limits and maternity protection laws.¹⁵
- (iii) The Social Security Department (SECSOC) provides information on social security programmes and mechanisms related to sickness, maternity, old age, invalidity, survivors, family allowances, work injury and unemployment.¹⁶
- (iv) The International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) collects information on national legislation on minimum age for access to employment and work.
- (v) The Social Dialogue, Labour Law and Labour Administration Department (DIALOGUE) and the Bureau of Statistics (STAT) gather information on trade unions and collective bargaining that goes far beyond the statistical indicators discussed in the previous section.
- (vi) The Bureau for Gender Equality, the Bureau of Library and Information Services, the Employment Sector, and NORMES, are collaborating on a portal (e.quality@work) providing access to legal information and institutional policies on gender equality in the workplace. The portal covers national labour laws, constitutions, ILS and other international instruments, and governmental and company policies.¹⁷

74. Existing sources within the ILO thus cover many substantive aspects of the Decent Work Agenda. These sources can be complemented with information from national sources and be used for decent work country profiles. It will be of particular importance that these profiles do not only provide information on the legislative framework in a country, but also on how far workers' rights are effective in actual practice.

¹⁴ http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/country_profiles.byCountry?p_lang=en.

¹⁵ <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/condtrav/database/index.htm>.

¹⁶ The Social Security Database draws on data compiled by the International Social Security Association (ISSA) on the basis of original textual information from the US Social Security Administration. See <http://www.issa.int/aiss/Observatory/Social-Security-Databases> and <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/sesame/IFPSES.SocialDatabase>.

¹⁷ <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/gems/eo/index.htm>.

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75. In this respect, the information gathered by the ILO's supervisory system is a particularly valuable source. A main source of information could be the reports on law and practice under article 19 (non-ratified Conventions and Recommendations) and article 22 (ratified Conventions) of the ILO's Constitution, and observations of the social partners in application of article 23. Further, the CEACR, the Governing Body, the CFA, ad hoc tripartite Governing Body committees on article 24 representations, article 26 Commissions of Inquiry and the Conference Committee on the Application of Standards review, consider and analyse governments' reports, information emanating from the social partners and complaints and representations on alleged violations of workers' rights and violations of workers' and employers' freedom of association. Their comments provide authoritative assessments of the actual situation in a country that could be summarized in a way that is accessible to the non-specialist, and linked to the full source. Since 1964, the Committee of Experts has regularly reported on cases of progress (more than 2,300 to date) where member States have made changes in law and practice which improved the application of ratified Conventions. Such cases provide a clear indication that progress has been made on the relevant aspect of decent work. It must be stressed that the suggested approach does not rely on counting the number of cases brought to the ILO's supervisory system, since this can be a poor gauge to determine the violation of rights. The suggested approach therefore relies on summarizing the substance of complaints and representations and subsequent comments made by the supervisory system.
76. A possible template to organize information on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work is provided in appendix table 4. The table has eight columns: column 1 lists the substantive aspects of the Decent Work Agenda; columns 2–6 are concerned with national level information for each substantive element. One suggestion would be to report on the existence and scope of national laws and, where applicable, policies or institutions (column 2); on the benefit levels and thresholds under national law (column 3); evidence on the effective implementation of rights at work (column 4); and the coverage of workers in terms of the types of workers covered along with a rough approximation of the percentage of workers covered in law (column 5); and in actual practice (column 6). Column 7 is concerned with ratification of relevant ILO Conventions,¹⁸ and column 8 lists main data sources.
77. Columns 5 and 6 require some explanation, because estimation of worker coverage in percentage terms is not straight-forward and is impossible for most countries to do with a reasonably high degree of accuracy. The suggestion to estimate approximate percentage coverage is made with full cognizance that the information needed does not exist for most countries at present, especially developing countries. This suggestion is based on two considerations. First, it is felt that differences in benefits of national laws in different countries is meaningless (and can often be misleading) without some idea about how many workers are covered. Second, it should be possible to make very rough estimates of coverage if broad percentage ranges are used, such as: few (<10 per cent), some (10–32 per cent), about half (33–66 per cent), most (67–89 per cent), virtually all or all (90+ per cent).
78. To produce these rough estimates, a standard estimation routine would need to be developed that combines the information on covered and excluded groups with available data on the distribution of employment (according to sector, employment status, size of establishment, etc.). Therefore, groups of workers covered or excluded in the law would need to be identified under column 2, on which the estimate of the percentage of workers covered in law and in practice can be based (columns 5 and 6). For example, if a minimum-wage law applied to employees outside of the agricultural sector, this fact would

¹⁸ Note that all eight fundamental Conventions and all four priority Conventions are covered.

be indicated under the scope of the law in column 2. The percentage of workers theoretically covered by such a minimum wage law would then be estimated using information on the size of the non-agricultural labour force and employment by status in employment in the non-agricultural sector. The resulting rough estimate of coverage would then place the country in one of the broad ranges.

79. It is worthwhile noting that information on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work tends to be complementary with the statistical indicators presented in table 2: where statistical indicators are less complete, legal framework variables tend to be more complete (and vice versa). For example, whereas statistical indicators on social dialogue and workers' representation in table 2 leave much to be desired, essential information on social dialogue and workers' representation can be provided in the template outlined in appendix table 4. Whereas there are no suggested statistical indicators for combining work and family life, more complex information on maternity leave entitlements can be provided under the legal framework information. As indicated in column 8, a large share of this information can be drawn from existing sources within the Office.
80. In conclusion, appendix table 4 provides suggestions on how to present information on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work. It suggests that *several pieces of information be reported without creating quantitative indicators* by drawing on existing data sources, including information gathered by the ILO's supervisory system. The relevance and practical feasibility of the suggested template for decent work country profiles will have to be tested, and the template further refined on the basis of the experience gained. What appears as important, however, is that a systematic effort is made to adequately reflect the importance of rights at work by including this type of information.
- 81. Major point for debate and guidance: Is the template presented in appendix table 4 suitable to reflect the importance of rights at work and the legal framework for decent work?**

8.2. Possibilities to measure progress on the implementation of fundamental principles and rights at work

82. For the four fundamental principles and rights at work (FPRWs), it may merit discussion to consider whether the template on rights at work and the legal framework should be complemented by additional indicators. Though they may also be based on textual sources, these indicators could also identify the extent to which a country's laws are in accord with the corresponding ILO Conventions and Recommendations, as well as the actual implementation of such legislation. Indicators would be developed for member countries for a base year, with subsequent changes recorded in periodic updating of the indicators. The aim would be to show both the situation in relation to the FPRWs, and the efforts and progress made in relation to the specific country's state of affairs. For each of the four FPRWs, these different aspects could make up different components of an overall indicator of compliance.
83. Given the different nature of the four FPRWs and the distinct substance of the underlying Conventions and Recommendations, the components of the indicator for each of the four FPRWs would generally have varying evaluation criteria. These evaluation criteria would need to be clear and sufficiently detailed in order to facilitate countries' endeavours to improve their compliance. Legislative and judicial texts would serve as the basic source for an evaluation of the legal situation.
84. As for actual implementation, different types of information would be used. As discussed elsewhere in this document, some aspects of actual implementation of FPRWs can be readily addressed with conventional statistics, such as the extent of child or forced labour as well as differences in earnings for different workers. Other aspects of actual

implementation may draw more on textual information from the various ILO supervisory mechanisms. In this way, these additional indicators of FPRWs would make use of much of the information discussed elsewhere in this document. One consideration is that this information would need to be consistently compiled according to the evaluation criteria that would define compliance. Moreover, reviewing the changes of a country's indicator over time would require a clear sense of what constitutes sufficient change with respect to the different sets of evaluation criteria for the different components of each FPRW indicator.

9. Taking the gender dimension of decent work into account

- 85.** As discussed in section 3.5 above, gender is a cross-cutting concern of the Decent Work Agenda and therefore relevant to all facets of decent work and is critical to achieving decent work. Indeed, the ILO definition of decent work explicitly refers to “opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity”.¹⁹ When monitoring progress towards decent work at the country level, it is thus necessary to measure in how far this progress has been achieved for women and men alike. Moreover, women and men have different opportunities, needs and constraints. Two conclusions were drawn from this insight in the previous discussion: First, that decent work indicators should be measured separately for women and men (implication 7). Second, that the different needs and constraints of women and men workers should be adequately reflected, including the extent of unpaid care work and reproductive work, which is predominately carried out by women and which acts as an important barrier to their participation in the labour market.
- 86.** Based on the first conclusion, almost all statistical indicators discussed in table 2 were marked with an “S” to indicate that they should be reported separately for men and women in addition to the total for all workers.²⁰ This is useful to detect gender differences in access to decent work that are persistent in all countries. To bridge these gaps, the ILO has long placed particular emphasis on the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation. Two of the fundamental Conventions have established the principles of equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value (Convention No. 100) and of equality of opportunity and treatment in respect of employment and occupation (Convention No. 111). Reporting occupational earnings by sex can give an indication of gender gaps in pay (see indicator 12a); equality of opportunity can be proxied by two different indicators: occupational segregation by sex (indicator 19) or the exclusion of women from high-status occupations (indicator 19a). Finally, there are as yet little data on the distribution of unpaid care work between the two sexes. Women's ability to enter the labour market is contingent on their domestic care responsibilities, and in every aspect of decent work this limits their choices.²¹

¹⁹ ILO: *Decent work*, 1999, op. cit.

²⁰ Unfortunately, however, data availability will limit the extent to which male-female differences can be measured and analysed in practice. The fatal injury indicator provides an example of limited data on female-male differences. Only four developing countries have data on female and male fatality rates in LABORSTA. Even in industrialized countries, only 54 per cent of countries that report a fatal injury rate do so separately for women and men. Countries should therefore be firmly encouraged to develop statistics that are disaggregated by sex.

²¹ Time use surveys are one possible tool to measure the distribution of unpaid work between the two sexes.

87. In the template on rights at work and the legal framework for work (see appendix table 4), two aspects have a particular relevance for gender: (i) anti-discrimination laws based on the sex of workers reflect how far national legislation and legal practice eliminate gender discrimination in respect of employment and occupation; and (ii) provisions for paid maternity leave that meet a special need of women workers. The inclusion of a similar indicator for paternity leave (and parental leave that can be taken by both women and men) was considered, but the idea was discarded due to the rudimentary nature of the available data.²² It is also noteworthy that the suggested template does not contain any information about childcare arrangements that facilitate women's employment. Also missing, for example, are national laws that affect women's opportunity for entrepreneurship, such as laws that restrict women's access to credit and restrictions on women's rights to own land, businesses and bank accounts. This probably implies that further thought is required on how better to reflect gender issues. It is also open to debate how feasible it would be to provide separate estimates for the coverage of female and male workers, both in law and in practice.

88. Major point for debate and guidance: How gender sensitive are the suggested statistical indicators and the template on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work, and how can the proposals be further improved?

²² TRAVAIL is expanding data collection on paternity and parental leave, which should make the inclusion of the indicator feasible in the future.

Part IV

Conclusions and a way forward

- 89.** This paper has been concerned with the measurement of decent work and, more specifically, how progress towards decent work can be monitored at the country level. It began by discussing which implications could be drawn from the nature of the Decent Work Agenda for the measurement of decent work, and emphasized that rights at work are relevant to all aspects of the Decent Work Agenda. On the basis of this discussion, it concluded that two types of information are needed to monitor progress towards decent work at the country level: statistical indicators and information on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work.
- 90.** The paper proceeded by taking stock of several existing suggestions for decent work indicators, and discussed different indicators for the consideration of the Tripartite Meeting of Experts. Furthermore, a possible template for information on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work was presented. The suggestions were driven by the goal to keep the framework parsimonious, and yet reflect the full spectrum of the Decent Work Agenda. They can be seen as a compromise between ambition and what is feasible in the short run.
- 91.** The recommendations made by the Tripartite Meeting of Experts will be conveyed to the 18th ICLS (Geneva, 24 November–5 December 2008). The Office will also use them to amend the set of statistical decent work indicators and refine the template for information on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work. The revised framework will then be used to compile decent work country profiles for at least two pilot countries in order to gain insights into the practical feasibility and meaningfulness of the measurement framework. The draft country profiles will be reviewed by constituents.
- 92.** The Office will report to the Governing Body in November 2008 on the Experts' meeting and, following country testing, will review progress made and request guidance on the future work of the Office in November 2009.
- 93.** At this stage, three aspects appear to be of particular importance.
- (i) First, how the Office should proceed with the compilation of decent work country profiles, and what goals it should set itself in terms of country coverage and the updating of country profiles. One goal could be to cover all member States by 2015 with intermediate objectives of say 60 per cent by 2011 and 80 per cent by 2013.
 - (ii) Second, how the Office can bridge the measurement gaps identified in this paper through a systematic investment into better data compilation and into indicator development.
 - (iii) Third, how the Office can assist member States to build capacity at the national level to strengthen national statistical systems and to reinforce analytical capacity to translate statistics into quality analysis that is relevant for, and supportive of, the policy dialogue. The compilation of Decent Work Country Profiles is likely to highlight gaps in information and provoke demands for ILO assistance to help fill the gaps. In a dynamic process in which the ILO identifies the desirable and endeavours to set in motion a process to move from the currently feasible towards the desirable, it will be necessary to establish a means of expanding data collection.¹

¹ This is particularly relevant for least developed countries, many of which are in Africa.

94. Such a focus on the measurement of decent work could make a significant contribution towards the implementation of the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization through the Strategic Policy Framework 2010–15. It would enable the ILO’s constituents and the Office to:

- (i) better benchmark, monitor and evaluate progress towards decent work;
- (ii) identify cases of best practice and to extract policy lessons; and
- (iii) critically evaluate the ILO’s contribution to the attainment of decent work for women and men around the world.

Appendix table 1. Overview of previous compilations of statistical decent work indicators

Substantive element of the Decent Work Agenda and indicator (♦ denotes conceptually related indicator)		Compilations of decent work indicators and related indicator lists						
		1. Report to the 17th ICLS	2. RO Asia and the Pacific	3. RO Latin America and the Caribbean	4. RO Europe	5. ILO task force (c)	6. MDG indicators	7. European task force
Employment opportunities								
1	Labour force participation rate (S)	Yes	Yes, also gap by sex	Yes	Yes	No	No	(No) (a)
2	Employment-to-population ratio (S)	Yes	Yes	Yes, also for youth	Yes	Yes	Yes	(No) (a)
3	Unemployment rate (total) (S)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	(No) (a)
3a	♦ Unemployment by level of education (S)	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	(No) (a)
4	Youth unemployment rate (S)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	(No) (a)
4a	♦ Youth inactivity rate (S)	No	Yes	Yes, similar	No	No	No	(No) (a)
4b	♦ Youth not in education and not in employment (S)	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	(No) (a)
5	Employment by status in employment (S)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes, and by type of contract	Yes	No	(No) (a)
5a	♦ Share of wage employment in non-agricultural employment (S)	Yes	No	No	Yes, similar	No	Yes	(No) (a)
5b	♦ Proportion of own-account and contributing family workers in total employment (S)	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	(No) (a)
6	Informal employment (% of total employment and percentage of non-agricultural employment)	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	(No) (a)
6a	♦ Employment in the informal sector (S)	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	(No) (a)
6b	♦ Number and wages of casual/daily workers (S)	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	(No) (a)
Work that should be abolished								
7	Children not in school (percentage by age) (S)	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Inclusion under consideration
8	Children [aged 10–14] in wage employment or self-employment (percentage by age) (S)	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Inclusion under consideration

Substantive element of the Decent Work Agenda and indicator (♦ denotes conceptually related indicator)		Compilations of decent work indicators and related indicator lists						
		1. Report to the 17th ICLS	2. RO Asia and the Pacific	3. RO Latin America and the Caribbean	4. RO Europe	5. ILO task force (c)	6. MDG indicators	7. European task force
Adequate earnings and productive work								
9	Working poor (S)	No	Yes	No	No (but poverty)	Yes	Yes	No
10	Low pay rate (percentage of employed below one half of median hourly earnings, or absolute minimum, whichever is greater, by status in employment) (S)	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Inclusion under consideration
10a	♦ Rate of inadequate employment due to insufficient income (S)	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
11	Real minimum wage	No	No	Yes	Yes, as ratio to average wages	No	No	No
12	Average real wages (S)	No	No	No	Yes, also growth rate and by gender	Yes	No	No
12a	♦ Average earnings in selected occupations (S)	Yes	No	No	No (but wage differentiation)	No	No	No
12b	♦ Number and wages of casual/daily workers (S)	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
12c	♦ Manufacturing wage index	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
13	Employees with recent job training (S)	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
Decent hours								
14	Excessive hours (percentage of employed with >48 usual hours per week and with >60 usual hours per week) (S)	Yes	No (but hour bands)	No	Yes	No (but hour bands)	No	Inclusion under consideration
14a	♦ Usual hours of work (standardized hour bands) (S)	No	Yes	No	No (but average hours)	Yes	No	No
14b	♦ Annual hours worked per person (S)	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
15	Time-related underemployment rate (S)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No

Substantive element of the Decent Work Agenda and indicator (♦ denotes conceptually related indicator)		Compilations of decent work indicators and related indicator lists						
		1. Report to the 17th ICLS	2. RO Asia and the Pacific	3. RO Latin America and the Caribbean	4. RO Europe	5. ILO task force (c)	6. MDG indicators	7. European task force
Stability and security of work								
16	Tenure less than one year (percentage of employed) (S)	Yes	No	No	Yes, also >10 years	No	No	Yes
17	Temporary work (percentage of employees) (S)	Yes	No	No	No, but by type of contract	No	No	Yes
Combining work and family life								
18	Employment rate for women with children under compulsory school age, as ratio to employment rate for all women aged 20–49	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes, similar
Equal opportunity and treatment in employment								
19	Occupational segregation by sex (index and percentage of non-agricultural wage employment in male-dominated and female-dominated occupations)	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Inclusion under consideration
19a	♦ Female share of employment in managerial and administrative occupations (percentage and ratio relative to female share of non-agricultural employment)	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
19b	♦ Female share in employment	No	Yes, by ISCO classification	No	Yes, by ISCO classification	Yes	No	No
20	Measure of dispersion for sectoral distribution of migrant workers	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
Safe work environment								
21	Occupational injury rate, fatal	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
21a	Occupational injury rate, non-fatal	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes
22	Labour inspection (inspectors per 100,000 employees and per 100,000 covered employees)	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Inclusion under consideration
23	Occupational injury insurance coverage (percentage of employees covered by insurance)	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Inclusion under consideration

Compilations of decent work indicators and related indicator lists							
Substantive element of the Decent Work Agenda and indicator (♦ denotes conceptually related indicator)	1. Report to the 17th ICLS	2. RO Asia and the Pacific	3. RO Latin America and the Caribbean	4. RO Europe	5. ILO task force (c)	6. MDG indicators	7. European task force
Social security							
24 Public social security expenditure (percentage of GDP and percentage of government expenditure)	Yes	Yes	No	Yes, also for health care	Yes (% GDP)	No	Inclusion under consideration
24a ♦ Public expenditure on needs-based cash income support (percentage of GDP)	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
24b ♦ Beneficiaries of cash income support (percentage of poor) (S)	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
25 Share of population aged 65 and above benefiting from a pension (S)	Yes	No (see below)	No	Yes	No	No	No
25a ♦ Social security coverage (pension and/or health) (S)	No	Yes, wage and salary earners	Yes, urban population	No	No	No	Inclusion under consideration
25b ♦ Share of economically active population contributing to a pension fund (S)	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Inclusion under consideration
25c ♦ Average monthly pension (as percentage of median/minimum earnings)	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Similar under consideration
Social dialogue and workers' representation							
26 Union density rate (S)	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
27 Number of enterprises belonging to employers' organization	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
28 Collective wage bargaining coverage rate	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
29 Strikes and lockouts/rates of days not worked	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Inclusion under consideration
30 Freedom of association (ratification C.87, observations by ILO supervisory mechanism; number and contents of complaints; restrictions on FoA)	No	No	No	No	Yes, with reservations	No	No

Substantive element of the Decent Work Agenda and indicator (♦ denotes conceptually related indicator)							
Compilations of decent work indicators and related indicator lists							
	1. Report to the 17th ICLS	2. RO Asia and the Pacific	3. RO Latin America and the Caribbean	4. RO Europe	5. ILO task force (c)	6. MDG indicators	7. European task force
Unclassified indicators							
31	Estimated percentage of working-age population who are HIV positive	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
32	Ratification of ILO core labour standards	No	Yes, similar	No	Yes	No	No
33	Observations by the Committee of Experts	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
34	Complaints/cases brought to labour courts or ILO	No	No	No	Yes, to ILO	No	No
Economic and social context for decent work							
E1	Labour productivity (GDP per employed person, level and growth rate)	Yes (b)	No	Yes	No	Yes, growth	No
E2	Real per capita "earnings" (GNI) (from national accounts)	No	No	Yes, similar (GDP per capita)	No	No	No
E3	Income inequality (ratio top 10 per cent to bottom 10 per cent, income or consumption)	Yes (b)	No	Yes	No	No	No
E4	Inflation rate (CPI)	Yes (b)	No	Yes	No	No	No
E5	Employment by branch of economic activity/industry (agriculture, industry, services/ISIC tabulation category)	Yes (b)	No	No	No	No	No
E5a	♦ Female share of employment by industry (ISIC tabulation category)	No (but branch by sex)	No	No	No	No	No
E6	Education of adult population (adult literacy rate, adult secondary school graduation rate (S))	Yes (b)	No	Yes	No	No	Inclusion under consideration
E7	Labour share in GDP	No	No	Yes	No	No	No

Notes: An (S) indicates that an indicator should be reported separately for men and women in addition to the total. Numbers 1–34 and E1–E7 are reference numbers also used in table 2 and Appendix table 2. (a) Joint Task Force by the UNECE, Eurostat and the ILO on the Measurement of the Quality of Employment; the scope of measurement thus excludes access to employment opportunities and differs from the measurement of decent work. (b) Indicator included in the longer version, published in Anker et al. (2002), op. cit. (c) Suggestions for priority indicators made by the four sectors during the work of the task force; suggestions by the RO–Bangkok and the RO–Lima are listed in columns 2 and 3.

Appendix table 2. Discussion of statistical indicators and suggestions for inclusion as main and additional decent work indicators

Reference number ^(a)	Possible decent work indicator (S if indicator should be measured by sex) ^(b)	Comments
Employment opportunities		
1 – E	Labour force participation rate (by age) (S)	<p>(a) The labour force participation rate (LFPR) is an overall indicator of the level of labour market activity, and its breakdown by sex and age group gives a profile of gender and age differences.</p> <p>(b) An increase in the LFPR shows that more people have entered the labour force. A country's labour force consists of two groups: the employed and the unemployed. An increase in the labour force can thus be driven by more employed persons (generally signals successful access to employment opportunities), by more unemployed persons (generally signals denied access to employment opportunities), or by a combination thereof. It is thus difficult to monitor progress towards decent work on the basis of changes in the LFPR.</p> <p>(c) The LFPR can be calculated from the employment-to-population ratio and the unemployment rate; it does not add any new information if the other two indicators are included.</p> <p>(d) Data are widely available. The gap measure suggested by the Regional Office for Asia and Pacific could be calculated if data are reported separately for men and women.</p>
2 – M	Employment-to-population ratio (ages 15–24, 25–54 and 55–64, or ages 15+) (S)	<p>(a) The employment-to-population ratio measures the proportion of the working age population that is employed. It is an MDG indicator for Target 1.B. and generally signals successful access to employment opportunities.</p> <p>(b) However, a higher value does not necessarily indicate an expansion of employment opportunities, but can also be driven by supply factors (e.g. greater economic hardship can force people to accept inadequate employment opportunities that they would have previously turned down). The indicator contains no information about the quality of employment opportunities, and therefore needs to be read in conjunction with other decent work indicators.</p> <p>(c) It is difficult to determine what a "desirable" level of the indicator would be. The Decent Work Agenda does not imply that all people of working age should work, but merely that those who want to work should have access to employment opportunities. Since some people will choose not to work, it cannot be the target of policy to reach an employment-to-population ratio of 100 per cent. Beyond a certain threshold, a further increase need not signal progress towards decent work.</p> <p>(d) The use of a common age group increases comparability.</p> <p>(e) Data are widely available from national statistical offices, LABORSTA, the OECD and the Global Employment Trends Estimation Model.</p>

Reference number ^(a)	Possible decent work indicator (S if indicator should be measured by sex) ^(b)	Comments
3 – M	Unemployment rate (total) (S)	<p>(a) The unemployment rate measures the number of unemployed as a percentage of the labour force, unemployed being persons without work, not even for one hour during the reference period, currently available for work and actively seeking work. It measures denied access to employment opportunities, and thus a decline in the unemployment rate generally signals progress towards decent work.</p> <p>(b) In most industrialized countries, the unemployment rate is regarded as an important indicator of labour market performance. In low- and middle-income countries, however, the significance and meaning of the unemployment rate is much more limited, as the majority of workers – in the absence of unemployment insurance or other public relief schemes – cannot survive lengthy spells of unemployment and must engage in some form of economic activity, however insignificant or inadequate. Paradoxically, a decline in the unemployment rate can be caused by a worsening of the socio-economic environment, forcing more people to take up inadequate employment opportunities. The indicator therefore needs to be read in conjunction with other decent work indicators and with context indicators. Possible new measures of labour underutilization could in due course provide a new way of better measuring labour market performance.</p> <p>(c) Data widely available from national statistical offices and sources; comparability issues.</p> <p>(d) If no data with national coverage are available, unemployment in urban areas can serve as a substitute.</p>
3a – A	Unemployment by level of education (S)	<p>(a) Indicator can identify which groups are particularly affected by unemployment, and be used for policy formulation (especially for skills policies).</p> <p>(b) Comparing unemployment between women and men of the same level of educational attainment can help to identify systematic gender discrimination.</p> <p>(c) It is not clear which change in the distribution of unemployment by level of education would signal progress towards decent work.</p>
4 – M	Youth unemployment rate (ages 15–24) (S)	<p>(a) The youth unemployment rate measures the number of unemployed as a percentage of the labour force in the age category 15–24 years. It is a targeted indicator for denied access to employment opportunities, as youth who enter the labour market for the first time often face a particular risk of unemployment.</p> <p>(b) If no data with national coverage are available, youth unemployment in urban areas can serve as a substitute.</p>
4a – E	Youth inactivity rate (S)	<p>(a) The youth inactivity rate measures how many persons aged 15–24 years are outside the labour force; it can be calculated as 1 minus LFPR for youth. Inactive youth contains, for example, discouraged workers (who have given up looking for a job and are thus no longer considered unemployed and those in education (but not in employment)).</p> <p>(b) Unemployed youth are not part of inactive youth, but belong to the labour force. The indicator is therefore ill-suited to monitor denied access to employment opportunities.</p> <p>(c) It is unclear what a change in the inactivity rate implies for progress towards decent work: if it is driven by a greater number of discouraged workers, a rise would be negative; if it is due to increased school or university attendance, it would almost always be positive as it improves human capital.</p>

Reference number ^(a)	Possible decent work indicator (S if indicator should be measured by sex) ^(b)	Comments
4b – A	Youth not in education and not in employment (S)	(a) This indicator captures two groups: (i) youth who are economically inactive for reasons other than participation in education; and (ii) unemployed youth. Compared to the youth inactivity rate, it is a better indicator for the proportion of youth that remains “idle”, and better proxies denied access to employment opportunities.
5 – A	Employment by status in employment (S)	(a) Provides information about the distribution of employment under the International Classification by Status in Employment (ICSE). Systematic differences between industrialized countries (with a high share of employees (and developing countries (with a high share of own-account workers and contributing family workers are well documented)). (b) To conclude whether a given change in the distribution of employment by status in employment signals progress towards decent work, assumptions about systematic differences in job quality need to be made. These can be problematic, as a given category can contain jobs of very different quality. For example, the category “employees” contains both paid employees with a secure job-holding and day labourers and casual workers, who are often among the most vulnerable workers. (c) Data widely available.
5a – A	Share of wage employment in non-agricultural employment (S)	(a) MDG indicator for Goal 3 (Promote gender equality and empower women) uses a variant of this indicator, namely “Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector”. (b) The indicator was suggested in the General Report to the 17th ICLS ^(c) ; the rationale was that non-agricultural wage or salary employment is the type of employment that many workers seek. (c) The use of wage employment as a proxy for desirable employment opportunities is questionable: wage employment includes casual/daily workers, who are one of the most vulnerable groups, and excludes employers, who often have “good” jobs. (d) Reference group is total non-agricultural employment; the exclusion of workers in agriculture from the calculation of the indicator contradicts the principle that decent work indicators should be based on data for all workers.
5b – M	Proportion of own-account and contributing family workers in total employment (S)	(a) MDG indicator 1.7: can be calculated from indicator No. 5 above. (b) Has been suggested as a proxy measure for “vulnerable employment”. However, it excludes a particularly vulnerable group of workers, namely day labourers and casual workers (who are grouped as employees).

Reference number ^(a)	Possible decent work indicator (S if indicator should be measured by sex) ^(b)	Comments
6 – M	Informal employment (percentage of total employment and percentage of non-agricultural employment) (S)	<p>(a) The job-based concept of informality uses characteristics of the job-holding to classify workers into informal and formal workers (see ICLS, 2003) ^(c).</p> <p>(b) Informal workers are those who lack the rights and the protection that are associated with a formal employment relationship (regardless of whether they work in a formal sector enterprise or in an informal sector enterprise). The concept is applicable to developing and industrialized countries; it can be used to monitor increasing informalization of employment relationships in industrialized countries.</p> <p>(c) The focus on the situation of the individual worker makes it particularly suitable as a decent work indicator; a decline in informal employment as a share of total employment is a necessary (though not sufficient) condition for progress towards decent work.</p> <p>(d) In the short-to-medium term, the consistent collection of data based on the job-based concept of informality (ICLS, 2003) ^(c) needs to be expanded through collaboration between the ILO and national statistical offices. Where data are not yet available, other national statistics (that are often based on different definitions of the informal sector) can be used as an interim measure to compare changes over time.</p>
6a – E	◆ Employment in the informal sector (S)	<p>(a) Enterprise-based concept of informality; uses characteristics of the production unit to group workers into three categories (formal sector enterprises, informal sector enterprises and household production units).</p> <p>(b) The indicator does not capture the informalization of employment relationships. This shortcoming is particularly relevant for industrialized countries where the vast majority of employment is in formal sector enterprises.</p> <p>(c) Comparability problems arise from the treatment of agriculture that is sometimes excluded from the informal sector, and sometimes included. This has a substantial impact in developing countries with a large agricultural sector.</p> <p>(d) The focus on the production unit, rather than on the situation of workers, makes it less suitable to monitor progress towards decent work than the job-based concept.</p>
6b – A	◆ Number and wages of casual/daily workers (S)	<p>(a) Casual/daily workers are usually a subgroup of informal workers as they normally lack at least one of the following: (i) employer-funded contributions to a pension fund; (ii) paid annual leave; or (iii) paid sick leave.</p>
Others: Not measured	Long-term unemployment; involuntary part-time work; extent of part-time work.	<p>(a) Additional indicators that could be used to measure employment opportunities; data availability issues.</p>
Work that should be abolished		
7 – C or E	Children not in school (percentage by age) (S)	<p>(a) Data widely available; frequently used as a proxy for the extent of child labour. However, the indicator is a poor proxy of child labour as many children combine work with school attendance, and many children who do not attend school are not in employment. Moreover, patterns vary between regions. As data on child labour have improved, the use of the proxy measure “children not in school” has become dispensable.</p>

Reference number ^(a)	Possible decent work indicator (S if indicator should be measured by sex) ^(b)	Comments
8 – M	Children in wage employment or self-employment (S)	<p>(b) The percentage of children not attending school can also be used as an indicator in its own right. It captures an important aspect of child welfare (a goal entrusted to the ILO in the Declaration of Philadelphia and human capital formation for a country's future labour force. As this, it could be included as a context indicator.</p> <p>(a) Data on children in wage employment or self-employment are increasingly available from national statistical offices and from the ILO's Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC); data collection is being expanded.</p> <p>(b) Use of a common age group increases comparability; suggestions are 5–14 years (covered by child labour surveys) and 10–14 years (also covered by some child labour modules in labour force surveys).</p> <p>(c) Wage employment or self-employment covers all forms of employment and indicator name could be simplified to "children in employment". However, the term employment is often misunderstood to cover only wage employment and therefore the explicit reference to self-employment may be warranted.</p>
Others: A	Hazardous child labour (S)	<p>(a) Hazardous child labour and other worst forms of child labour are the focus of ILO C.182. Regional and world estimates are available; data collection is being expanded.</p> <p>(b) For labour statistics purposes, a distinction can be drawn between "Hazardous child labour" and "Other worst forms of child labour", based on the prevailing situation in regard to data collection and classification;</p> <p>(c) "Hazardous child labour" can be used as an additional indicator since it relates to children in the 5–17 years range and the data may be collected and classified with reasonable robustness.</p>
Others: F	Other worst forms of child labour (S)	<p>(a) See comment above; "other worst forms of child labour" is a candidate for future inclusion when better national-level estimation methodologies become available.</p>
Others: F	Forced labour (S)	<p>(a) Only regional and world estimates of reported cases available, but no reliable national data. However, data collection techniques are currently under development, which may make the inclusion of the indicator feasible in the future. A particular problem will be to construct reliable time series to distinguish changes in the indicator that result from the improvement of measurement techniques from those due to changes in the actual extent of forced labour.</p>

Reference number ^(a)	Possible decent work indicator (S if indicator should be measured by sex) ^(b)	Comments
Adequate earnings and productive work		
9 – M	Working poor (S)	<p>(a) MDG indicator for Target 1.B. The current indicator is based on absolute poverty (poverty line 1 and 2 PPP US\$ per day) and data are only available for developing countries. Coverage could be expanded to industrialized countries by including relative poverty (i.e. relative to the standard of living in a country).</p> <p>(b) In the short term, the data gap for industrialized countries can be mitigated by including low pay incidence as an indicator (here, data are widely available for industrialized countries).</p> <p>(c) The way that the ILO estimates the number of working poor in a country causes the percentage of workers who are working poor to be almost perfectly correlated with the World Bank poverty rate. Nonetheless, the working poor is a useful concept for focusing public attention on the importance of low earnings in low-income and lower middle-income countries.</p>
10 – M	Low pay rate (percentage of employed below one half of median hourly earnings, or absolute minimum, whichever is greater, by status in employment) (S)	<p>(a) For many people, the most important characteristic of work is pay, and the principle of an “adequate living wage” is mentioned in the Preamble to the ILO Constitution. In the present context, low pay rate is defined as the percentage of the employed population whose average hourly earnings is below half of the median of the distribution or an absolute minimum, whichever is greater.</p> <p>(b) In many developing countries, the threshold of one half of median hourly earnings to determine “low pay” would be misleading; it is thus necessary to include the “absolute minimum” as a further criterion to determine whether pay is low. A methodology to estimate living wages is found in Anker (2005) ^(e); currently not enough data points.</p> <p>(c) Data on low pay (hourly earnings below one half of median) are currently widely available for industrialized countries; it is a common threshold to identify wages that are low relative to typical wages in industrialized countries. In the short term, the indicator is useful to complement the indicator “working poor” where data are missing for industrialized countries.</p> <p>(d) The definition of “low” as below one half of median hourly wages is, however, often below the absolute minimum in developing countries. It would thus be misleading to use this threshold, and the ILO has therefore undertaken some efforts to develop a methodology for measuring living wages that are comparable across countries. Although country coverage is still low and further work will be needed, this opens up the possibility of measuring the number of workers in a country with unacceptably low pay in a consistent way.</p>
10a – E	◆ Rate of inadequate employment due to insufficient income (S)	<p>(a) The rate of income-related inadequate employment includes “all persons in employment who ... wanted or sought to change their current work situation in order to increase income and were available to do so.” In addition, an income threshold may apply (ICLS, 1998) ^(e).</p> <p>(b) The concept is therefore more restrictive than low pay since it excludes certain groups with low pay from the scope of its definition. Therefore, the conceptually related indicator above is better suited to measure adequate earnings.</p>

Reference number ^(a)	Possible decent work indicator (S if indicator should be measured by sex) ^(b)	Comments
11 – L	Real minimum wage	(a) The existence of multiple minimum wage levels and the exclusion of certain groups make the real minimum wage too complex for a statistical indicator; it can be included under the legal framework information.
12 – E	Average real wages (S)	(a) Available data often cover employees only since real incomes are difficult to estimate for own-account workers.
12a – A	◆ Average earnings in selected occupations (S)	(b) Data availability poor for many developing countries. (a) Occupational earnings are useful for comparing wage trends, and wage differentials between different categories of workers, e.g. between men and women in the same occupations, between workers with different skill-level occupations, or between occupations with different degrees of exposure to pressures of international trade. Decision on representative occupational groups needs to be made.
12b – A	◆ Number and wages of casual/daily workers (S)	(b) Data are available from the ILO's October Inquiry for many countries; data quality issues. (a) Covers only a subgroup of all workers; contradicts the principle that decent work indicators should be based on data for all workers. However, casual/daily workers are among the most vulnerable workers and therefore the inclusion of the indicator could be warranted.
12c – A	◆ Manufacturing wage index	(a) Data availability for wages in manufacturing is usually better than for other branches of the economy. (b) Covers a subgroup of workers (namely, employees in manufacturing) that is very small in some countries. Wage trends in manufacturing need not be indicative of overall wage trends in an economy.
13 – F	Employees with recent job training (S)	(c) For countries with a significant manufacturing sector (and poor statistics on overall wage trends), the manufacturing wage index can still provide useful insights on wage trends. It could therefore be included as an additional indicator. (a) Limited data availability; candidate for inclusion when better data become available.
Decent hours		
14 – M	Excessive hours (percentage of employed with >48 and percentage with >60 hours per week) (S)	(a) Excessive and atypical hours of work are a threat to physical and mental health, interfere with the balance between work and family life, and often signal an inadequate hourly pay. Excessive hours of work also reduce productivity. In line with ILO Convention No. 1 which specifies that hours of work per week should not exceed 48, the excessive hours indicator is defined here as the percentage of employed persons whose usual hours of work in all jobs are more than 48 hours per week carried out for economic reasons. (b) The qualifier "economic reasons" is intended to separate this phenomenon from long hours of work for voluntary reasons such as ambition or passion for work, or involuntary reasons such as nature of work, corporate norms, or exceptional circumstances. However, while conceptually valid, the exclusion of those who work excessive hour for non-economic reasons is often unfeasible.

Reference number ^(a)	Possible decent work indicator (S if indicator should be measured by sex) ^(b)	Comments
14a – A	Usual hours worked (standardized hour bands) (S)	(c) Hours of work should be measured in terms of usual hours of work. The TRAVAIL-STAT database exists for years ca., 1995, ca., 2000 and ca., 2005. (d) A decline in the proportion of workers who work excessive hours signals progress towards decent work. (e) Can be matched with legal framework information on maximum working hours legislation.
14b – A	Annual hours worked per person (S)	(a) Data on the proportion who work excessive hours can be complemented with data for the entire distribution, using standardized hour bands.
15 – A	Time-related underemployment rate (S)	(a) Data reliability issues. (a) For virtually all workers, earnings are adequate only if a sufficient number of hours can be worked. Working fewer hours than desired is termed "time-related underemployment" and is defined in terms of persons in employment who are "working less than a threshold period", and are "willing" and "available" to work additional hours (see ICLS, 1998) ^(e) . Time-related underemployment rate is the ratio of the number of persons in time-related underemployment to the total number of persons employed. (b) Limited data availability; KILM includes data on time-related underemployment for only 12 developing countries. (a) Limited data; irregular hours can be favourable when voluntary.
Others: not measured	Irregular and/or asocial hours that conflict with family responsibilities.	
Stability and security of work		
16 – E	Tenure less than one year (percentage of employed) (S)	(a) Job tenure was initially suggested as a proxy for job security, given the difficulty of measuring a probability to lose one's job rather than an actual event. It is an indicator of past employment stability, defined as the percentage of employed persons who have held their main job/work for less than one year. (b) The indicator is counter cyclical; the value rises with economic upturn as more new workers are hired. It is therefore difficult to assess progress towards decent work on the basis of the indicator. (c) Could be reported by age or only for workers aged 25 years and above because values are much higher for younger workers. (d) Limited data availability for developing countries.
17 – E	Temporary work (percentage of employees) (S)	(a) For employees, a permanent or indefinite job is usually more secure than an explicitly temporary job. The percentage of employees who have temporary jobs is therefore proposed as a second indicator of job security. (b) Comparability problems to measure temporary positions. Counter cyclical; value rises with economic upturn as newer workers hired. Data may be limited.

Reference number ^(a)	Possible decent work indicator (S if indicator should be measured by sex) ^(b)	Comments
Combining work and family life		
18 – E	Employment rate for women with children under compulsory school age, as ratio to employment rate for all women aged 20–49	<p>(a) The indicator was initially proposed as an indirect measure for the degree to which workplaces are accommodating to family needs. A higher value can reflect how far institutional arrangements enable women to combine work and family responsibilities. However, a high employment rate of mothers can also be due to economic hardship that forces women to carry a double burden of family responsibilities and employment. Therefore, a higher value does not necessarily indicate progress towards decent work.</p> <p>(b) It is problematic to frame the issue of combining work and family life as a problem that affects women only. However, in reality it is often women's access to employment that suffers as a result of the uneven distribution of childcare responsibilities.</p> <p>(c) Limited data availability.</p>
Others: L	Maternity leave.	(a) Detailed information of length of maternity leave, amount of maternity leave and source of maternity leave benefits can be included under legal framework information.
Others: not measured	Labour force participation rate (LFPR) for women in main reproductive ages.	(a) See comments under No. 1 and under No. 18.
Others: not measured	Childcare arrangements	(a) Too complex for a statistical indicator; limited data availability.
Equal opportunity and treatment in employment		
19 – M	Occupational segregation by sex (index and percentage of non-agricultural wage employment in male-dominated and female-dominated occupations)	<p>(a) Occupational sex segregation (or horizontal segregation) is a commonly used proxy indicator for equality of opportunity in employment and occupation. The index of dissimilarity measures the tendency of labour markets to be segmented on the basis of gender. More direct indicators measure the extent to which labour markets are separated into "male" and "female" occupations, e.g. the percentage of female (or male) non-agricultural employment in a female-dominated (or male-dominated) occupation, or to the total non-agricultural employment in a gender dominated occupation.</p> <p>(b) The indicator reflects direct and indirect discrimination in access to employment opportunities prior to and outside the labour market (i.e. in education and training, perceived suitability of jobs to female roles), at entry and within the labour market (i.e. recruitment, on-the-job training opportunities, promotion, job change during upgrading). Crowding of women in occupations with low wages explains a big part of differences in earnings between men and women. The indicator can also reflect differences in occupational preferences between genders.</p> <p>(c) Comparability problems associated with different levels of detail in national occupational classifications need to be taken into account.</p>

Reference number ^(a)	Possible decent work indicator (S if indicator should be measured by sex) ^(b)	Comments
19a – M	◆ Female share of employment in managerial and administrative occupations (percentage and ratio relative to female share of non-agricultural employment)	<p>(a) This indicator was initially suggested to measure the extent to which women are excluded from positions of authority and decision-making, and thus of vertical gender segregation in labour markets.</p> <p>(b) Interpretation issues with respect to “ratio relative to female share of non-agricultural employment”: The ratio rises when women are excluded from non-agricultural employment in general, and not only from managerial and administrative occupations. However, this would not signal progress towards decent work.</p> <p>(c) Scope of “managerial and administrative occupations” is ambivalent. Could be restricted to female share in the sum of ISCO–88 group 11 (legislators and senior officials) and group 12 (corporate managers).</p> <p>(d) Female share in these high-status occupations is a concept that can be understood easily by the lay person, and is more intuitive than an index of dissimilarity (indicator 19).</p>
19b – E (see 2 and 5a)	◆ Female share in employment	(a) Employment-to-population ratio would be reported separately for men and women; reporting the female share in employment adds little extra information.
20 – A	Measure of dispersion for sectoral distribution of migrant workers	(a) Data available for approximately 30 countries from the OECD; coverage incomplete.
See 5a	Female share of non-agricultural wage employment	[Grouped under employment opportunities.]
See 12a	Female-to-male pay ratio for selected occupations	[Grouped under adequate earnings.]
Others: not measured	Female professional and technical workers	(a) Female share of professional and technical workers not included because women are mainly in only two such occupations, nurses and teachers.
Others: not measured	Discrimination on the basis of race, colour, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin.	(a) Included in the scope of Convention No. 111; data availability problems.
Others: not measured	Equality of opportunity and treatment for disabled men and women workers.	(a) Focus of Convention No. 159; data availability problems.
Safe work environment		
21 – M	Occupational injury rate, fatal	<p>(a) The fatal injury rate is proposed as a safe work indicator rather than the non-fatal injuries rate, because the reporting of fatalities is believed to be more complete and has fewer definitional problems compared to non-fatal injuries (i.e. a fatal injury can be relatively easily identified as such).</p> <p>(b) Data normally cover the formal sector only; administrative records are often an inadequate data source; data quality issues due to under-reporting.</p>
21a – A	Occupational injury rate, non-fatal	(a) Data normally cover the formal sector only; administrative records are often an inadequate data source; data quality issues due to under-reporting normally even more severe than for fatal occupational injury rate.

Reference number ^(a)	Possible decent work indicator (S if indicator should be measured by sex) ^(b)	Comments
22 – E or L	Labour inspection (inspectors per 100,000 employees and per 100,000 covered employees)	<p>(a) The number of labour inspectors per 100,000 employees or covered employees was suggested as an indicator of the State's capacity to enforce safe work principles, laws and regulations, hence a proxy measure of prevention efforts.</p> <p>(b) Limited data availability. Data do not indicate effectiveness of labour inspections, and a higher number of labour inspectors per 100,000 employees does not necessarily indicate progress towards decent work.</p>
23 – L	Occupational injury insurance coverage (% of employees covered by insurance)	<p>(c) Reference category is employees, rather than all workers as would be desirable for Decent Work Indicators.</p> <p>(d) Available information can be included under legal framework.</p>
Others: not measured	Work stress, sickness and invalidity.	<p>(a) Data only refer to a subgroup of workers (employees).</p> <p>(b) Available information can be included under legal framework.</p>
Social security		<p>(a) Often perceived as a growing problem and linked to work intensification. Data collection currently inadequate.</p>
24 – M	Public social security expenditure (percentage of GDP and percentage of government expenditures)	<p>(a) Data available for over 100 countries from Eurostat, OECD and the ILO Social Security Inquiry, and estimates based on IMF and WHO data.</p> <p>(b) Data can be reported either as a total, or disaggregated into health and non-health social security expenditure.</p> <p>(c) Public social security benefit expenditure could be presented not only as a percentage of GDP, but also as a ratio to the total general government expenditure to reflect the situation in countries with relatively "small" governments (in terms of public finances). Nominators and denominators should preferably be expressed in national currency units, current prices.</p> <p>(d) Expenditure data can serve as a useful proxy for social security coverage, but data need to be interpreted with care. For example, higher unemployment will put upward pressure on spending while this does not necessarily signal progress towards meeting the Decent Work Agenda.</p>
24a – E	♦ Public expenditure on needs-based cash income support (percentage of GDP)	<p>(a) Limited data availability.</p>
24b – E	♦ Beneficiaries of cash income support (percentage of poor) (S)	<p>(a) Limited data availability.</p>
25 – M	Share of population aged 65 and above benefiting from a pension (S)	<p>(a) Data available for approximately 30 developing countries in new ILO Social Security Inquiry and from a pilot project that allows estimates for developed countries; data collection is being expanded by SECSOC.</p> <p>(b) Use of common age range increases international comparability.</p>

Reference number ^(a)	Possible decent work indicator (S if indicator should be measured by sex) ^(b)	Comments
25a – A	◆ Social security coverage (pension and/or health) (S)	<p>(a) Suggested coverage is “wage and salary earners” (RO–Bangkok, indicator 15b) or “urban population” (RO–Lima); could be expanded to total population (additional data availability problems).</p> <p>(b) Data partly overlaps with the indicator above; restricting indicator to pension simplifies data presentation.</p> <p>(c) Definition of coverage in terms of actual beneficiaries (as in indicator 25) or prospective/potential coverage (indicator 25b) needs to be clarified.</p>
25b – F	◆ Share of economically active population contributing to a pension fund (S)	<p>(a) Data on active contributors (and/ or affiliated) to a pension scheme are currently available for around 20 countries, but data collection through the ILO Social Security Inquiry is being expanded. Candidate for inclusion when data are more widely available.</p>
25c – E	◆ Average monthly pension (as % of median/minimum earnings)	<p>(a) Data on average monthly pensions are currently available for around 20 countries, but data collection through the ILO Social Security Inquiry is being expanded. Prerequisite is better data collection by national statistical offices that could be expanded within the framework of Decent Work Country Programmes. Candidate for inclusion when data are more widely available.</p>
Others: M	Health-care expenditures not financed out of pocket by private households (percentage of health-care expenditures and percentage of GDP)	<p>(a) Suggested by ILO’s Social Security Department as a proxy of affordable access to health protection.</p> <p>(b) Utilizes available WHO data that refer to the percentage of total (public and private) health-care expenditure covered either by general government or by prepaid private insurance, by employers or NGOs.</p>
Social dialogue and workers’ representation		
26 – M	Union density rate (S)	<p>(a) Needs to be read in conjunction with information on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work to take into consideration whether unions are free of state interference.</p> <p>(b) Major data collection effort under way by DIALOGUE and STAT to collect available data from labour ministries and statistical offices.</p> <p>(c) Adjusted Density Rate (ADR) suggested by DIALOGUE: ADR = (membership – retired, student and unemployed members)/(wage and salaried employees – ineligible groups).</p>
27 – M	Number of enterprises belonging to employer organization	<p>(a) Does not consider number of workers covered. However, the indicator can still provide information of the associational strength of employers’ organizations and of their subsequent role in labour market governance.</p>
28 – M	Collective wage bargaining coverage rate (S)	<p>(a) Major data collection effort under way by DIALOGUE and STAT to collect available data from labour ministries and statistical offices.</p> <p>(b) Adjusted Coverage Rate (ACR) suggested by DIALOGUE: ACR = covered employees/(wage and salaried employees – ineligible groups). The category “covered employees” includes those who are covered by extension.</p>

Reference number ^(a)	Possible decent work indicator (S if indicator should be measured by sex) ^(b)	Comments
29 – A	Strikes and lockouts/rates of days not worked	<p>(a) Interpretation issues: a low strike rate can either mean that the social dialogue process works so well that disputes are resolved without recurrence to strikes or that the government severely represses trade unions. It is thus difficult to determine what a “desirable” level for the indicator would be from the standpoint of the Decent Work Agenda, and whether a decline would signal progress towards decent work.</p> <p>(b) Limited data for developing countries; comparability issues.</p>
30 – L	Freedom of association (ratification Convention No. 87, observations by ILO supervisory mechanism; number and contents of complaints; restrictions on FoA).	<p>(a) Problematic as a statistical indicator, include under legal framework information.</p>
Unclassified indicators		
31 – C	Estimated percentage of working-age population who are HIV positive	<p>(a) While a low HIV prevalence rate is desirable, a decline in the HIV prevalence rate need not signal progress. It can be driven by denied access to antiretroviral drugs, leading to a high mortality rate among those who are HIV positive. This problem could be mitigated by restricting the indicator to youth (as in MDG indicator 6.1).</p> <p>(b) Alternative indicators to monitor progress could either measure the success of prevention (e.g. rate of new infections) or health-care coverage for those living with HIV/AIDS (e.g. access to antiretroviral drugs).</p> <p>(c) Could be included as an indicator for the economic and social context of decent work.</p> <p>(d) Data widely available; estimation issues.</p>
32 – L	Ratification of ILO core labour standards	<p>(a) Problematic as a statistical indicator; include under legal framework information.</p>
33 – L	Observations by the Committee of Experts	<p>(a) Problematic as a statistical indicator; include under legal framework information.</p>
34 – L	Complaints/cases brought to labour courts or ILO	<p>(a) Problematic as a statistical indicator; include under legal framework information.</p>
Economic and social context for decent work		
E1 – C	Labour productivity (GDP per employed person, level and growth rate)	<p>(a) MDG indicator.</p> <p>(b) In the long run, wage increases are unsustainable when labour productivity does not increase.</p>
E2 – C, additional	Real per capita “earnings” [GNI] (from national accounts)	<p>(a) The use of “earnings” for GNI by ROAP makes the indicator vulnerable to misunderstandings: GNI is total factor income (i.e. labour and capital income), but earnings have been defined by the ICLS (1973) as “remuneration in cash and in kind paid to employees” (i.e. labour income).</p> <p>(b) Consider using GDP instead, to align indicator to MDG indicator above.</p>
E3 – C	Income inequality (ratio top 10 per cent to bottom 10 per cent, income or consumption)	<p>(a) Inequality is a focus of the Declaration of Philadelphia and, more recently, the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization. Inequality is also seen as incompatible with sustainable enterprise development. This provides a strong rationale to include a measure for inequality as a context indicator.</p>

Reference number ^(a)	Possible decent work indicator (S if indicator should be measured by sex) ^(b)	Comments
E4 – C	Inflation rate (CPI)	(a) High inflation can erode the purchasing power of wages and can make enterprises unsustainable. This provides a strong rationale to include inflation as a context indicator.
E5 – C	Employment by branch of economic activity/industry (agriculture, industry, services/SIC tabulation category)	(a) Changes in the sectoral distribution of employment are no clear indicator for progress towards decent work (work can be decent and non-decent in all economic sectors), and thus ill-suited as a Decent Work indicator. (b) However, the sectoral distribution of employment can provide important information for the challenges faced by a country in achieving decent work, and could thus be included as a context indicator.
E5a – C, additional	◆ Female share of employment by industry (SIC tabulation category)	(a) See comments under E5. (b) However, the distribution of female workers across industries (or the crowding in a few industries) can often provide important information about gender inequalities.
E6 – C	Education of adult population (adult literacy rate, adult secondary-school graduation rate) (S)	(a) If reported separately for women and men, the indicator provides information on the equality of educational opportunity (concern of the Declaration of Philadelphia). (b) Provides important information about the human capital endowment of a country's working-age population.
E7 – C	Labour share in GDP	(a) Decent work less sustainable when labour share is low. Also affects inequality, the focus of the Declaration of Philadelphia and, more recently, the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization.

Notes: Based on the various compilations of decent work indicators presented in appendix table 1. ^(a) The following symbols were used: M = candidate for inclusion as main indicator, A = candidate for inclusion as additional indicator; C = candidate for inclusion as context indicator; E = candidate for exclusion from indicator list; F = candidate for inclusion in the future. ^(b) S indicates usefulness of separate female and male values expressed as female-to-male ratio and/or as female-male difference as appropriate. Limited data availability for separate female and male rates is likely to be a problem for several core indicators. ^(c) 17th ICLS, Geneva, 24 November–3 December 2003. ^(d) R. Anker: *A new methodology for estimating internationally comparable poverty lines and living wage rates*, Integration Working Paper No. 72 (Geneva, ILO, 2005). ^(e) 16th ICLS, Geneva, 6–15 October 1998.

Appendix table 3. Data availability by region of selected suggested main decent work indicators

Region	Decent work statistical indicator of working conditions			
	Union density rate	Fatal occupational injury rate	Social security expenditure (% GDP)	Employment-to-population ratio
Developed economies				
Number of countries with data	35	32	36	36
As percentage of countries in the region	97%	92%	100%	100%
Percentage of years with data (countries with data)	52%	84%	80%	97%
Central and Eastern Europe (non-EU) and CIS				
Number of countries with data	14	9	13	14
As percentage of countries in region	78%	50%	72%	78%
Percentage of years with data (countries with data)	17%	89%	59%	48%
Asia and the Pacific				
Number of countries with data	13	8	18	19
As percentage of countries in region	38%	24%	53%	56%
Percentage of years with data (countries with data)	33%	81%	39%	55%
Latin America and the Caribbean				
Number of countries with data	7	10	13	29
As percentage of countries in region	20%	29%	37%	83%
Percentage of years with data (countries with data)	14%	67%	60%	58%
Sub-Saharan Africa				
Number of countries with data	15	7	10	20
As percentage of countries in region	32%	15%	21%	43%
Percentage of years with data (countries with data)	19%	35%	47%	28%
Middle East and Northern Africa				
Number of countries with data	4	5	9	11
As percentage of countries in region	21%	26%	47%	58%
Percentage of years with data (countries with data)	14%	83%	52%	39%

Region	Decent work statistical indicator of working conditions			
	Union density rate	Fatal occupational injury rate	Social security expenditure (% GDP)	Employment-to-population ratio
World				
Number of countries with data	88	72	99	129
As percentage of countries in the world	47%	38%	52%	68%
Percentage of years with data (countries with data)	33%	77%	68%	61%
Sources				
Main source	ILO IFP-SES and LABORSTA	LABORSTA	IMF	LABORSTA
Second source	EU	See note (a)	OECD	OECD
Third source	OECD		EUROSTAT	LMIL
			ILO Social Security Inquiry	See note (b)

Notes: Percentages are rounded to the nearest percentage. (a) Note that the number of fatalities is estimated for all countries in ILO Introductory Report: Decent Work – SafeWork (Geneva, 2005). (b) Note that employment-to-population rates are estimated for all countries in ILO, KILM, fifth edition (Geneva, 2008).

Appendix table 4. Template for information on rights at work and the legal framework for decent work

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Substantive element of the Decent Work Agenda	National level			International level		Main data sources	
	Law, policy or institutions	Benefit levels and thresholds	Evidence of implementation effectiveness	Coverage of workers			Ratification of ILO Conventions
				In law ^(e)	In practice ^(e)		
Employment opportunities							
Government commitment to full employment	Existence and scope of national law or stated government policy?	nr	Did full employment committee meet last year? Reports under articles 19 and 22.	nr	nr	C.122	National sources; NATLEX Country Profiles
Unemployment insurance	Existence and scope of national law.	Number of weeks, replacement level.		Rough percentage of workers	Rough percentage of workers	C.102	SECSOC database ^(f)
Work that should be abolished							
Child labour	Existence and scope of national minimum age law.	Minimum age by type of work.	Reports under articles 19 and 22; complaints and representations received by the ILO ^(g) ; observations by ILO supervisory system and cases of progress.	See statistical indicators		C.138; C.182	IPEC database; NATLEX Country Profiles
Forced labour			Existence of national action plan that signal government commitment. Reports under articles 19 and 22; complaints and representations received by the ILO ^(g) ; observations by ILO supervisory system and cases of progress.	nr	nr	C.29; C.105	DECLARATION; NATLEX Country Profiles

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Substantive element of the Decent Work Agenda	National level			Coverage of workers		International level	Main data sources
	Law, policy or institutions	Benefit levels and thresholds	Evidence of implementation effectiveness	In law ^(e)		Ratification of ILO Conventions	
				In law ^(e)	In practice ^(e)		
Adequate earnings and productive work							
Statutory minimum wage.	Existence and scope of national law: minimum-wage fixing mechanism; minimum wage fixing level (national, etc.); excluded categories of workers.	Level of monthly minimum wage (in local currency and US\$; possibly also as percentage of median wage). ^(d)	Evidence of implementation effectiveness	Rough percentage of wage and salary earners/or of all workers?	Rough percentage of wage and salary earners/or of all workers?	C.131	TRAVAIL database; NATLEX Country Profiles
Decent hours							
Maximum hours of work	Existence and scope of national law.	Maximum weekly hours limit (including overtime); alternatively: normal weekly hours limit.	Evidence of implementation effectiveness	Rough percentage of workers	See statistical indicators	C.1	TRAVAIL database; NATLEX Country Profiles
Social security							
Pension	Existence and scope of national law and pension system.	Replacement rate; normal retirement age at full pension (female and male, if different legal retirement age).	Evidence of implementation effectiveness	Rough percentage of workers	See statistical indicators	C.102	SECSOC database ^(f) ; NATLEX Country Profiles

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Substantive element of the Decent Work Agenda	National level			Coverage of workers		International level	Main data sources
	Law, policy or institutions	Benefit levels and thresholds	Evidence of implementation effectiveness	In law ^(e)	In practice ^(e)	Ratification of ILO Conventions	
Incapacity for work due to sickness	Existence and scope of national law.	Legal replacement rate (cash benefits as percentage of earnings); duration.	Reports under articles 19 and 22; complaints and representations received by the ILO ^(c) ; observations by ILO supervisory system and cases of progress.	Rough percentage of workers	Rough percentage of workers	C.102	SECSOC database ⁽ⁱ⁾ ; NATLEX Country Profiles
Incapacity for work due to invalidity	Existence and scope of national law.	Minimum level of (permanent) incapacity for work to be eligible; duration and level of benefits.	Reports under articles 19 and 22; complaints and representations received by the ILO ^(c) ; observations by ILO supervisory system and cases of progress.	Rough percentage of workers	Rough percentage of workers	C.102	SECSOC database ⁽ⁱ⁾ ; NATLEX Country Profiles
Equal opportunity and treatment in employment ^(e)							
Anti-discrimination law based on sex of worker	Existence and scope of national law.	nr	Court cases in country/national mechanisms. Complaints and representations received by the ILO ^(c) ; observations by ILO supervisory system and cases of progress.	nr	nr	C.100, C.111	NATLEX Country Profiles; NORMES files on C.100 and C.111
Anti-discrimination law based on race, ethnicity, religion or national origin	Existence and scope of national law.	nr	Court cases in country/national mechanisms. Reports under articles 19 and 22; complaints and representations received by the ILO ^(c) ; observations by ILO supervisory system and cases of progress.	nr	nr	C.100, C.111	NATLEX Country Profiles; NORMES files on C.100 and C.111

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Substantive element of the Decent Work Agenda	National level			Coverage of workers		International level	Main data sources
	Law, policy or institutions	Benefit levels and thresholds	Evidence of implementation effectiveness	In law ^(e)		Ratification of ILO Conventions	
				In law ^(e)	In practice ^(e)		
Combining work and family life							
Maternity leave	Existence and scope of maternity protection law.	Length of maternity leave; level of maternity leave benefits ^(b) ; source of maternity leave benefits		Rough percentage of women workers	Rough percentage of women workers	C. 183	TRAVAIL database; NATLEX Country Profiles
Safe work environment							
Occupational safety and health insurance	Existence and scope of national OSH insurance system.	Minimum level of permanent incapacity giving entitlement to compensation (%); cash benefits for permanent incapacity (%) (maximum calculation rate for benefits, usually earnings-related); cash benefits for temporary incapacity (%) (maximum calculation rate for benefits, usually earnings-related)	Existence and effectiveness of OSH Board. Reports under articles 19 and 22; complaints and representations received by the ILO ^(c) ; observations by ILO supervisory system and cases of progress	Rough percentage of workers	Rough percentage of workers	C. 155, C. 102	National sources; NATLEX Country Profiles; SECSOC database ^(f)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Substantive element of the Decent Work Agenda	National level			Coverage of workers		International level	Main data sources
	Law, policy or institutions	Benefit levels and thresholds	Evidence of implementation effectiveness	In law ^(e)	In practice ^(e)	Ratification of ILO Conventions	
Labour inspection	Existence and scope of national labour inspection system.	nr	Difficult to assess effectiveness. If available, information on number of labour inspectors per 100,000 workers and on number of inspections carried out.	Rough percentage of workers	Rough percentage of workers	C.81, C.129	SAFEWORK; national sources; NATLEX Country Profiles
Stability and security of work							
Proxied by informal employment (no indicator suggested)							
Social dialogue and workers' representation							
Freedom of association and right to organize	National law limiting right to freedom of association? Excluded groups, requirement of prior authorization, etc.	nr	Limitations on type of union allowed; interference by public authorities. Reports under articles 19 and 22; complaints and representations received by the ILO ^(e) ; observations by ILO supervisory system and cases of progress.	Rough percentage of workers who are eligible to join trade unions	See statistical indicator	C.87	DIALOGUE database; NATLEX Country Profiles
Collective bargaining right	Existence and scope of national law; excluded groups. Institutions for collective bargaining (level of collective bargaining; degree of coordination); extension of CB agreements.	nr	Support for collective bargaining (e.g. dispute resolution services). Reports under articles 19 and 22; complaints and representations received by the ILO ^(e) ; observations by ILO supervisory system and cases of progress.	Rough percentage of workers who are eligible to bargain collectively	See statistical indicator	C.98	DIALOGUE database; NATLEX Country Profiles

