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Room Document*: **2**

Methodology for SDG indicator 8.b.1 on youth employment

* This room document has not been formally edited

Proposed methodology for SDG Indicator 8.b.1: “Existence of a developed and operationalized national strategy for youth employment, as a distinct strategy or as part of a national employment strategy”

Contents

| | |
|--|---|
| 1. Background..... | 2 |
| 2. Building blocks of the methodology | 3 |
| 3. Development process | 4 |
| 4. Concepts and definitions | 4 |
| 5. Data collection and compilation | 5 |
| 6. Method of computation | 6 |
| 7. Issues of interpretation and limitations..... | 6 |
| 8. Data release | 7 |
| 9. Follow-up activities..... | 7 |
| 10. Proposed Resolution of the 20th ICLS..... | 7 |
| 11. References: | 8 |

1. Background

In September 2015, at the 70th Session of the UN General Assembly, world leaders adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which comprises 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets and is intended as a plan of action to be implemented by all countries and all stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development places full and productive employment and decent work for youth at the centre of the new development vision. It emphasizes the catalytic power of youth employment in poverty alleviation, economic growth, and peace and prosperity for all. Targets under Goal 8 in particular, as well as several other goals, recognize the importance of addressing challenges in youth employment and consistent action on decent jobs for youth and youth development overall.

Key youth-specific targets include:

- 4.4: “By 2030, increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship”;
- 4.6: “By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy”;
- 8.5: “By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value”;
- 8.6: “By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training”;
- 8.b: “By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization”; and
- 13.b: “Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities.”

The Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs), composed of member States and including regional and international agencies as observers, is responsible for developing and bringing to fruition the global indicator framework of the 2030 Agenda. The IAEG-SDGs has identified one or more “custodian agencies” for each of the 232 global SDG indicators. In the case of Tier III indicators¹, these agencies are expected to lead the development of indicators by also defining standardized methods for data collection and analysis, to establish mechanisms to compile data, and to maintain global databases which can be used for global SDG reporting.

The ILO has been proposed as custodian UN agency for youth-employment related indicators including 8.b.1., a Tier III Indicator and the subject of the present document which proposes a methodology for measurement and regular reporting. Indicator 8.b.1 refers to the “Existence of a developed and operationalized national strategy for youth employment, as a distinct strategy or as part of a national employment strategy”.

The proposed methodology is submitted for discussion and endorsement by the ICLS. The ICLS decision will be communicated to the IAEG-SDG to determine the possible revision of the tier classification of this indicator to Tier II.

¹ Tier I consists of global SDG indicators that already have a well-established methodology, agreed upon at the international level and for which data is regularly produced and widely available for at least half of the countries and half the population of the relevant regions. Tier II consists of global SDG indicators that already have a clearly defined and internationally-agreed methodology but for which data is available for a more limited number of countries or not for all regions and is not regularly produced. Tier III consists of global SDG indicators that still do not have a methodology in place, including clear definitions, concepts and classifications.

2. Building blocks of the methodology

The proposed methodology draws on:

- a. Global policy instruments, notably:
 - Resolution on *The youth employment crisis: A call for action*², adopted at the 101st session of the International Labour Conference (ILC) in June 2012. In calling for vigorous, collective action to address an aggravated youth employment crisis, this resolution advocates for a multi-pronged approach with policy measures that are context-specific and integrated, entailing strategies which bring together in a coherent manner a variety of instruments to increase the demand, enhance the supply and improve matching in youth labour markets.
 - *Recovering from the crisis: A Global Jobs Pact*³ adopted by the ILC at its June 2009 session. Based on the ILO's Decent Work Agenda, the Global Jobs Pact presents an integrated portfolio of policies that puts employment and social protection at the centre of crisis response, recognising the critical role of participation and social dialogue.
- b. ILO databases:
 - International monitoring of youth employment policies was carried out over the period 2010-2012 by the Youth Employment Network (YEN) – a partnership between the ILO, United Nations and World Bank – utilising a questionnaire sent to national authorities. This evolved into YouthPOL⁴, an inventory of youth employment policies and programmes maintained by the ILO (65 countries covered to date).
 - The ILO also maintains EmPol, a dataset of broader national employment policies (143 countries covered).
- c. ILO relevant expertise and experience:
 - The Department of Statistics (STATISTICS) works to provide relevant, timely and reliable labour statistics, to develop international standards for better measurement of labour issues and enhanced international comparability, and to help member States develop and improve their labour statistics.
 - The Employment Policy Department (EMPLOYMENT) is responsible for promoting full and productive employment by developing integrated employment, development and skills policies (ILO, 2012) that are inclusive, gender sensitive and sustainable. The department is mandated to coordinate ILO efforts to promote decent job opportunities for young women and men; over the years, it has supported the formulation, implementation and review of national youth employment strategies and action plans in different countries and regions (ILO, 2008; ILO, 2015). This type of targeted action and related achievements have been included in the ILO programming framework and performance system.
 - The ILO has extensive experience in supporting its constituents and other development stakeholders through knowledge and capacity building as well as through policy advocacy and advice. The list of references at the end of this note offers examples of recent major ILO contributions to knowledge building on youth employment and youth employment policy (ILO, 2017).

² Available online at: https://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/101stSession/texts-adopted/WCMS_185950/lang--en/index.htm

³ https://www.ilo.org/ilc/ILCSessions/98thSession/texts/WCMS_115076/lang--en/index.htm

⁴ <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/youthpol/en/f?p=30850:1001:0::NO::>

3. Development process

The following steps are followed in developing the indicator methodology:

1. Examination of relevant policy instruments, including the above-mentioned *Call for action* and *Global Jobs Pact*. Adopted by ILO tripartite constituents, these documents provide a sound framework for defining SDG indicator 8.b.1.
2. Review of ILO databases on employment and youth employment policies (EmPOL and YouthPOL), maintained by the Employment Policy Department.
3. A of methodology for defining, measuring and validating this indicator (the present document).
4. Development of a survey instrument (questionnaire) to collect national-level information on youth employment policies from national entities. The information will be used to determine if countries have developed and operationalized a national strategy for youth employment as a stand-alone strategy or as part of a national employment or sectoral strategy, in line with the above-mentioned ILC resolutions.
5. Technical guidelines for data providers and compilers, along with the above-mentioned questionnaire and detailed notes.
6. Pilot the methodology in selected countries.

Consultations with pertinent ministries and social partners' representatives will take place throughout the process.

4. Concepts and definitions

The following concepts and definitions are proposed for monitoring purposes:

- A **“developed national strategy”** – an officially adopted document that articulates a set of measures and provisions aimed at promoting youth employment within a defined timeframe. It explicitly mentions youth as a target. It may exist on its own or as part of a wider employment or development strategy. More specifically:
 - “Officially adopted” document – a text adopted by the responsible government entity or authority. The following types of documents can be considered:
 - Youth-specific:*
 - National Policy/Strategy/Action Plan for Youth Employment
 - Youth Employment Law/Act
 - Youth (Development/Empowerment) Policy/Strategy/Plan
 - Other documents:*
 - National Employment Policy/Strategy/Plan
 - National Development Policy/Strategy/Plan
 - “Set of measures” – a mix of policy measures that includes economic and/or fiscal policies which promote youth employment, labour market policies targeting young people, policies and programmes to enhance youth employability, to promote youth entrepreneurship, and/or to protect youth rights at work. The ILO’s Call for action details these policy areas and possible action therein.

- “Provisions” – arrangements foreseen to implement policy measures illustrated by the availability of an action plan with a list of foreseen activities, a monitoring framework, resources earmarked and institutional responsibilities clarified.
- An “**operationalized strategy**” – this means there is evidence (government statement, official technical/financial progress report, or other official documents) of implementation of some or all the measures and provisions in the strategy; for example, fiscal incentives are in place for the promotion of employment in specific sectors, or, an active labour market programme for young people is in operation.

5. Data collection and compilation

5.1. Data provider

National entities (ministries or other government agencies) responsible for development, employment and youth policies. The ILO will maintain a roster of national actors to be involved in the monitoring process.

5.2. Data compiler

The ILO will be responsible for compiling the information made available by national entities.

5.3. Modality

The latest available figure for each country will be reported annually. For doing so, the modalities are as follows:

- a. *Global survey for data collection*: Requesting responsible national entities to provide relevant information and support documents; a survey questionnaire is developed and administered by the ILO with biennial frequency to assess progress. This will be complemented by regular information and updates from ILO country offices on development, adoption and implementation of youth employment policies in countries covered by these offices, every year.
- b. *Data compilation*: by the ILO; disseminated through ILOSTAT, a new repository dedicated to Indicator 8.b.1 and the active use of YouthPOL, EmPol and other databases (e.g. NATLEX – the ILO database of national labour, social security and related human rights legislation), as appropriate.
- c. *Data validation*: Regular quality checks will be conducted on all data, in particular when: (i) an already available document has not been directly provided by the government itself; (ii) it is unclear if the strategy and related action plan have been officially adopted; or (iii) there are doubts regarding the implementation of the strategy.

5.4. Timeline

- Proposed methodology to the ICLS: October 2018
- Development of survey questionnaire and technical guidelines: October 2018)
- Testing: November 2018-February 2019
- Regular administration of the survey: as of early 2019

6. Method of computation

The information and documents provided by national authorities will be analysed by the ILO by making use of the grid hereafter.

| Value | Description |
|---------------|--|
| Missing value | No information available to assess the existence of a national strategy for youth employment. |
| 0 | The country has not developed any national strategy for youth employment or taken steps to develop or adopt one. |
| 1 | The country is in the process of developing a national strategy for youth employment. |
| 2 | The country has developed and adopted a national strategy for youth employment |
| 3 | The country has operationalised a national strategy for youth employment. |

In all cases, the grid refers to a national strategy for youth employment as a distinct strategy or as part of a national employment strategy.

Missing values (i.e. no response/unknown) should be noted as such. They should be omitted from the final global and regional breakdown: proportions should only be calculated on the basis of received responses. However, the global and regional response rates will be indicated.

The possible development of metadata notes complementing the grid is being considered. Among other aspects, these notes may refer to the measures and provisions in place, and would also consider the involvement of national constituents in the development and operationalization of the strategies.

The ILO may also envisage to conduct a more detailed analysis of selected country documents for purposes which go beyond the scope of SDG monitoring, in order to gather insights on institutional and operational matters in national efforts for youth employment.

7. Issues of interpretation and limitations

The purpose of SDG indicator 8.b.1 is to provide an indication of the progress of countries in addressing youth employment issues. In this respect, it is assumed that having officially adopted what can be recognised as a structured strategy for youth employment would mean larger attention given by a country to youth labour market challenges, compared to countries with no strategy. In fact, the development of such a strategy usually entails broad participation of and consultation/coordination among different stakeholders.

It should also be considered that governments may have *de facto* national strategies for youth employment, but lack an officially adopted *de jure* document. For SDG 8.b.1 monitoring purposes we'll only consider what emerges from *de jure* documents.

8. Data release

The information will be released annually through the appropriate reporting channels

9. Follow-up activities

The present document, if supported by the 20th ICLS, should provide the basis for the next steps towards the development and monitoring of Indicator SDG 8.b.1 in as many countries as possible.

To facilitate the process of testing the method in different national circumstances, the ILO envisages, through collaborative arrangements with national actors: (a) to prepare technical guidelines on practical methods for data collection, data processing, data analysis and data transmission on operationalised national youth employment strategies; and (b) to provide technical assistance through training and capacity building, as appropriate.

10. Proposed Resolution of the 20th ICLS

The 20th International Conference of Labour Statisticians,

Recognising the need to have an internationally agreed methodology to measure indicator SDG 8.b.1 on national youth employment strategies consistent with the Resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on Work of the Statistical Commission pertaining to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/71/313);

Having reviewed the proposed methodology presented by the ILO;

In view of the deliberations of the next session of the Inter-Agency Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goals (IAEG-SDG) pertaining to Tier III indicators, and indicator 8.b.1 more particularly;

Recommends that the Office:

(a) Adopts the reviewed methodology as amended for indicator 8.b.1 and communicates the endorsement of the ICLS to the IAEG-SDG for its consideration and action.

(b) Communicates on behalf of the ICLS the confirmation that the ILO should be the custodian agency for this indicator, given its mandate, thematic action and convening role in the youth employment area, also in relation to the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth, a global alliance to scale up action and impact on youth employment under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

(c) Makes the necessary internal arrangements to undertake the annual production and reporting of the indicator to the U.N.

11. References:

International Labour Office (ILO). 2008. *Guide for the preparation of National action Plans on Youth Employment*. (Geneva, ILO)

_. 2012. *Guide for the formulation of national employment policies*. (Geneva).

_. 2015. *Comparative Analysis of Policies for Youth Employment in Asia and the Pacific*. (Geneva).

_. 2017. *Global employment trends for youth 2017: paths to a better working future* (Geneva)

O'higgins, N. 2017. *Rising to the youth employment challenge: new evidence on key policy issues* (Geneva, ILO).