

Tripartite Technical Workshop on the Impact of the Food Price Crisis on Decent Work

(Geneva, 5-6 March 2009)

ROOM NOTE

Drawing on the unanimously adopted conclusions of the 2008 ILC committee on Rural Employment for Poverty Reduction and the presentations of participating UN agencies (and ILO constituents), the technical workshop recommends the following:

1. Sustainable agricultural practices, the protection of the biosphere, improving productivity, increasing the production of staple food crops to meet rising demand, the growth of sustainable enterprises, and decent work are essential and interdependent components of achieving global food security. The ILO has a range of expertise in the world of work in areas such as employment creation, occupational safety and health, entrepreneurship, child labour and gender issues which will clearly contribute to improved food security. The ILO should identify areas where its unique mandate and specific expertise can strengthen existing UN efforts in this area. In order to ensure the most balanced contribution is achieved the ILO should duly consult with its tripartite constituents in designing its activities. It should also take due note of the impacts of the global economic crisis and its aftermath on food security.
2. The meeting recommended that the Governing Body request the Director General to formalize interaction between the ILO and the United Nations High Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis (HLTF). The ILO should make inputs based on its particular expertise. These could include but not be limited to inputs to Comprehensive Framework for Action outcomes on effective social protection (Obj 2.1), strengthening global information and monitoring systems (Obj 3.1) and developing an international biofuels consensus (Obj 2.4). On biofuels the ILO should contribute on enterprise and employment implications of biofuel production.
3. The meeting recommended interagency cooperation to gather and review comprehensive statistical data on the rural workforce, rural labour markets and rural enterprises to assist in shaping national and international policies for food security. In line with its mandate, the ILO should carry out a study on the impact of the food crisis on employment, livelihoods and fundamental principles and rights at work.
4. The HLTF and national authorities working on food security are encouraged to make use of the networks of employers' and workers' organizations at international and national level in policy development and in ensuring delivery of policy outcomes. National authorities are encouraged to involve employers' and workers' organizations, supported by the ILO field structure, in the development and delivery of national plans to ensure food security.
5. The ILO should also contribute to the work of the Global Partnership on Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition particularly in the areas of employment, fundamental principles and rights at work, social protection and the elimination of child labour in agriculture.