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Committee on Employment and Social Policy

ESP

FOR DEBATE AND GUIDANCE

FIRST ITEM ON THE AGENDA

Unleashing rural development through productive employment and decent work: Building on 40 years of ILO work in rural areas

Overview

Issues covered

Pointing to an opportunity for stronger ILO work in rural areas, this paper reviews the main elements and lessons from the ILO's considerable work on rural development in the past 40 years, including its identification of important gaps in coverage and barriers to ratification and implementation of labour standards. Based on this and on the 2008 ILC conclusions on promoting rural employment for poverty reduction, it proposes a strategy that combines shared responsibility for rural work Organization-wide, and mechanisms to facilitate coordination and synergies.

Policy implications

To systematically incorporate rural dimensions and rural actors in ILO work, as well as increasing communication and collaboration Organization-wide, the Governing Body would need to acknowledge rural work as a priority area for the ILO.

Legal implications

None.

Financial implications

Additional resources for the implementation of the proposed strategy to be sought through resource mobilization efforts.

Action required

Committee guidance requested in paragraph 95 for follow-up action by the Office.

References to other Governing Body documents and ILO instruments

GB.306/LILS/6(&Corr.); GB.297/PFA/2/2.

2008 ILC resolution concerning promotion of rural employment for poverty reduction.

ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization.

ILO Conventions and Recommendations as listed in the notes to the paper.

Executive summary

This paper highlights the opportunity for a stronger ILO role in rural development to achieve the goals of poverty reduction, employment-rich growth, equity and social inclusion through decent work. The potential of rural areas to drive the economy, create productive jobs, improve food security, address environmental and climate change concerns, act as a buffer during crises and generally to promote sustainable and balanced growth, is now widely recognized. The ILO can make an important contribution to addressing the persistent decent work deficits in rural areas that impede the realization of that potential.

The paper first reviews the main elements and lessons of ILO work on rural development in the past 40 years, providing a foundation for future initiatives. The 1970s and 1980s are characterized as the “heyday” of ILO rural work. That work was voluminous and innovative, and achieved considerable impact. Its important legacy of concepts and approaches, as well as valuable lessons on work methods and organization in particular, remain valid.

Labour standards receive specific attention. A substantial set of ILO legal instruments is relevant for rural areas – over 30 directly target agriculture alone. The paper points to important gaps in coverage and barriers to ratification and implementation of international labour standards in such areas as freedom of association, collective bargaining, forced labour, child labour, equality of opportunity and treatment, employment policy promotion, labour inspection, wages, occupational safety and health, social security, indigenous and tribal peoples, plantations and fisheries.

The conclusions on promoting rural employment for poverty reduction, adopted by the International Labour Conference at its 97th Session (2008), represent a turning point. They set a mandate for greater ILO involvement in rural development, as well as a plan of action for the Office spanning all four strategic pillars and guidelines for ILO constituents. Highlights of the Office follow-up to those conclusions are provided, indicating significant work at ILO headquarters as well as in the field on most commitments.

Finally, as requested by the 2008 ILC conclusions, the paper proposes a strategy for strengthening ILO work in rural areas, particularly its coherence and impact. This strategy rests on the ILO’s comparative advantages, experience and lessons learned, as well as the directions and priorities established in the conclusions. Its main features are a shared responsibility for rural work Organization-wide, combined with mechanisms to facilitate communication, mutual support and synergies across the Office and the Organization, as well as external partnerships. Key tasks such as maintaining momentum, prompting action, facilitating coordination and delivery Office-wide, external partnerships and resource mobilization are to be carried out by a core team.

The proposed strategy calls for specific attention to technical areas such as rural entrepreneurship and enterprises – essential for economic growth – and jobs and wealth creation, including cooperatives; employment-intensive works; appropriate skills development; social security coverage; occupational safety and health; and the systematic inclusion of rural dimensions and actors when developing and implementing employment and social protection policies. This is to be complemented by: work on labour standards to monitor and address ratification and implementation gaps, while achieving synergies with other technical areas; devising practical means to organize and empower rural employers and workers, including small farmers and informal economy actors; and enriching the now scanty rural data, indispensable for all rural work. The paper also calls for a special focus on youth (including the link to child labour) and women.

Lastly, eight thematic clusters are proposed in the strategy: rural-friendly agribusiness value chains; career guidance and relevant skills acquisition; rural tourism; food security; the social protection floor; a culture of rural occupational safety and health; labour standards rural coverage, with a focus on labour inspection; and reaching and giving a voice to rural employers and workers.

I. Introduction

Background and objectives

1. The ILO's goal of reducing poverty¹ cannot be achieved unless directly tackled at rural level, where it remains deepest and most widespread. Rural areas are home to some 75 per cent of the world's poor and are characterized by several decent work deficits: higher rates of un- and underemployment, especially among youth and women; limited social protection; 60 per cent of child labour, concentrated in agriculture; a prevalence of bonded labour in certain contexts; a mere 10 per cent of unionization; widespread informal activities; temporary or casual labour; poor working conditions; exclusion from the scope of labour laws either by law or in fact, due to ratification and implementation gaps and non-existent or weak labour inspection.² Disadvantaged groups (such as women, migrant workers, indigenous peoples, lower castes) are particularly susceptible to abuse.
2. Rural areas also hold considerable potential for economic growth, high returns and productive, good jobs and livelihoods. Many display important "missed opportunities", such as large shares of agricultural produce wasted for lack of local processing, storage, marketing and transportation.
3. The Millenium Development Goals (MDGs), environmental concerns, and the food security and economic crises now give a sense of urgency to seeking innovative paths and mustering the necessary political and economic will and resources for action and collaboration. The ILO is strategically positioned for this in many thematic areas and approaches.
4. Discussions at the 97th Session, 2008 of the International Labour Conference (ILC) on the promotion of rural employment for poverty reduction resulted in governments, employers and workers unanimously soliciting the ILO to engage more decisively in rural areas, mobilizing its whole Decent Work Agenda and Office structure in an integrated way, as well as tripartite national constituents and relevant external partners. A priority request was "... to inform future workplans, provide to its Governing Body a comprehensive report analysing the impact of prior activities focused on rural employment and gaps in coverage and barriers to ratification and implementation of international labour standards in rural areas".³ Another was that the ILO "... develop a strategy and a programme of work for rural employment".⁴
5. It is not the objective of this paper to elicit a broad policy debate, as this was done at the Conference in 2008. Instead, it has four main purposes: first, to summarize the main elements and lessons from the considerable rural development work of the ILO since the

¹ Set out in the ILO Declaration of Philadelphia (1944).

² ILO: *Promotion of rural employment for poverty reduction*, Report IV, International Labour Conference, 97th Session, Geneva, 2008.

³ ILO: *Conclusions on promoting rural employment for poverty reduction*, International Labour Conference, 97th Session, Geneva, 2008 (2008 ILC conclusions), para. 77. "Inform" is here taken to mean "propose direction".

⁴ *ibid.*, para. 74.

1970s (section II);⁵ second, to synthesize gaps in coverage and implementation of international labour standards (section III); third, to briefly report on the implementation so far of the 2008 ILC conclusions on promoting rural employment for poverty reduction (section IV); and finally, to propose an ILO strategy for the 2010s, to sharpen implementation of those conclusions (section V).

II. Taking stock of the ILO's past work in rural areas

6. Rural areas captured the ILO's attention at its inception,⁶ led first by concerns over labour standards, working conditions, workers' and employers' representation and social dialogue. This attention was retained in a crescendo that included employment dimensions from the 1950s onwards and peaked in the 1970s–1980s, when all ILO technical areas were involved. Attention declined in the following decade, but picked up in the 2000s at an accelerated pace. Since its early days the ILO has adopted over 30 instruments laying down basic minimum social standards to protect agricultural workers specifically, along with various other ILO standards which include rural workers in their scope.

The heyday of ILO attention to rural concerns (1970s–1980s)

7. ILO action in regard to rural communities preceded the Second UN Development Decade of the 1970s, which shifted emphasis from industrial to rural concerns among agencies and donors, making rural development a universal theme and priority.
8. ILO attention to rural matters was sparked off at the 44th Session (1960) of the International Labour Conference through the resolution concerning the contribution of the International Labour Organisation to the raising of incomes and living conditions in rural communities, with particular reference to countries in process of development. The resolution reflected the concerns of the many newly independent ILO member States, whose mainly agrarian economies experienced persistent poverty and joblessness despite solid growth rates. This resulted in an ILO Rural Development Programme composed of units focusing on rural employment, training, institutions and conditions of life and work. The ILO's World Employment Programme (WEP), launched in 1969, then called for a focus on agriculture, rural enterprises and rural settings in general, as those areas with

⁵ A more extensive stocktaking, based on a comprehensive review of publications and archive documents, and on surveys and structured interviews with ILO officials Office-wide, including some 20 privileged informants holding senior and management positions in the 1970s–80s, complements this report. See L. de Luca, M. Fernando, E. Crunel and L. Smith: *Unleashing rural development potential through decent work: Building on the ILO rural work legacy, 1970–2010*, available at www.ilo.org/rural.

⁶ The 1921 International Labour Conference is known as the “Agricultural Session”, given its adoption of numerous agriculture-related instruments on unemployment, rights of association, living conditions, and night work of women, children and youth. A year later, the Permanent Court of International Justice declared in an advisory opinion that the competence of the ILO covers international regulation of the conditions of work of agriculture as well as industry workers, and shortly afterwards the ILO established an “Agricultural Division” (Permanent Court of International Justice, Advisory Opinion No. 2 concerning the competence of the International Labour Organisation in regard to international regulation of the conditions of labour of persons employed in agriculture, in ILO: *Official Bulletin*, Vol. VI, No. 10 (6 Sep. 1922), pp. 339–351).

greatest potential to generate labour-absorbing growth in developing countries.⁷ Meanwhile, complementary instruments strengthened the ILO's rural mandate and sharpened its focus.⁸

9. The ILO's approach rested on an assumption of shared responsibility for rural issues within the Organization,⁹ facilitated by the Rural Employment Policies Research Branch (EMP/RU), set up in 1973, and mechanisms for coordination. It resulted in voluminous and pioneering research work,¹⁰ then complemented by operational interventions¹¹ and policy advice, including some ten major multidisciplinary, multi-agency country employment missions, each gathering 20–30 specialists.
10. EMP/RU spearheaded various approaches such as the Participatory Organization of the Rural Poor (PORP). Its rural women programme was particularly innovative. It enriched the scanty knowledge base and operational work on rural women, pioneering findings on intra-household division of labour, unpaid work, home work, female headship and poverty, and laying the ground for the new vision on women in development and gender equality in the world of work. EMP/RU also emphasized workers' rights, workers' organization and education, and community participation, which yielded fruitful synergies with the ILO's Standards Department and Workers' Relations Branch (REL/TRAV).

⁷ See for example the Report of the Director-General introducing the WEP: ILO: *The World Employment Programme* (Geneva, 1969).

⁸ Particularly the resolution concerning rural development (International Labour Conference, 60th Session, 1975), the Rural Workers' Organisations Convention, 1975 (No. 141), and Recommendation (No. 149); the Labour Administration Convention, 1978 (No. 150), and the Declaration of Principles and Action adopted by the 1976 World Employment Conference.

⁹ By the 1980s the ILO had over 14 units at headquarters engaged in rural development work: Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP), Workers' Relations (REL/TRAV), Work and Life Conditions (CONDI/T), Cooperatives (COOP), Workers' Education (EDUC), Emergency Employment Schemes (EMP/URG), Rural Employment Policies Research (EMP/RU), Appropriate Technology and Employment (EMP/TEC), Employment Planning and Population-related Activities (E/POPLAN), Management Training (F/MAN), Training for Rural Workers (F/PROF/RU), Hotel and Tourism (HOTOUR), Industrial Activities (INDUSTR), Safety and Hygiene at Work (SEC/HYG). Some 80 per cent of the Employment Department's work, including that of its Regional Employment Teams (according to various officials interviewed) and nearly 70 per cent of the ILO's technical cooperation were dedicated to rural development. See P. Egger and P. Peek: "ILO projects for rural development: Some preliminary evidence on their impact", Annual Meeting of the Interdepartmental Committee on Rural Development (ICRD), 1989.

¹⁰ Considerable research was undertaken on a variety of rural employment facets, at macro as well as micro level, from agriculture in development strategies, agrarian structures and land reform to patterns of rural development and their impact on employment and incomes; basic needs; the magnitude, structure and trends of poverty and rural employment; rural labour markets and institutions; participatory organizations of the rural poor; working children and other disadvantaged groups such as youth, indigenous populations and the disabled. ILO work also covered items related to working conditions, occupational safety and health, labour inspection, social security, wages, precarious work and informal activities. Other valuable areas of focus were specific agricultural activities, specific crops and their processing, storage and marketing, agricultural innovation and non-farm activities, mainly to support employment-friendly technological choices and improved working conditions.

¹¹ Between 1960 and 1988 the ILO's annual volume of new projects grew from US\$3 million to over US\$127 million, of which 60–65 per cent was for rural activities (mainly income generation, training and employment creation). See Egger and Peek, *op. cit.*

- 11.** The Workers' Education Programme (EDUC) aimed to build up rural workers' capacity to organize and have a proper voice. It studied and tested methods and materials for different rural worker categories; strengthened management, activities and services of rural workers' organizations; and contributed regularly to ILO reports and inter-agency groups.
- 12.** A labour-intensive works programme was set up, at first to address emergency situations, that rapidly grew to reach up to 50 per cent of ILO technical cooperation (TC) funds and developed a strong network of mutual support including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Food Programme (WFP), the World Bank and national donors.
- 13.** Work on rural enterprises also grew significantly. It was carried out by the Programme on Appropriate Technologies and Employment (EMP/TEC), that included a specific focus on small rural industries; the Management Development Programme, focused on assisting small enterprises on productivity, enterprise expansion and employment creation issues; and through entrepreneurship capacity building, introducing in the 1980s the Improve Your Business (IYB) tool. In launching it, the then Director-General drew attention to rural areas "that had up to that time benefited too little from industrialization", and to the fact that support for SMEs, which created large numbers of jobs, could benefit local populations.¹²
- 14.** Cooperatives were also prominent, with a dedicated branch, six regional advisers, over 100 technical field experts at any given time, and reaching some 50 countries. The food crisis of the 1970s forced aid strategies to address food security and job creation simultaneously, and cooperatives' natural linkage between food production and employment was ideal for relieving poverty- and hunger-stricken rural areas, while strengthening agriculture and rural areas' capacity as an economic "shock absorber". The Cooperative and Organizational Support to Grassroots Initiatives (ACOPAM) programme (1978–99), for example assisted grass-roots cooperatives in five Sahelian countries to increase agricultural production, improve transportation and food storage, marketing and finance, and was for many years the ILO's largest TC initiative.
- 15.** Numerous capacity-building products were also developed, such as the Materials and Techniques for Cooperative Management Training (MATCOM), consisting of over 40 trainers' manuals and 60 learning elements targeting different types of cooperatives, economic sectors, target groups and management levels, some of which were translated into over 40 languages. Other training materials covered vocational training, vocational rehabilitation in rural areas, income generation and cash crop agriculture, transportation, irrigation, rural public works, rural electrification and its socio-economic consequences, choice of technology, biotechnology, environment protection, energy and renewable energy technologies, rural non-farm skills such as food storage, farm equipment needs, youth, forestry training, smallholder agriculture, land reforms, food security, survival strategies after famine and other crises, agricultural credit and banking for the rural poor, strengthening of rural workers' organizations, and the role of NGOs in rural development.
- 16.** Coordination mechanisms comprised the Advisory Committee on Rural Development (ACRD) at Governing Body level, and the Interdepartmental Committee on Rural Development (ICRD), at Office level. The ACRD, composed of workers', employers' and government representatives knowledgeable in rural matters, advised the Governing Body on ILO rural work, as well as initiatives with other UN agencies, NGOs and donors. Its 11 sessions (between 1974 and 1990) discussed reports about specific rural challenges and

¹² ILO: Director-General's speech at the Niamey (Niger) seminar to launch the IYB tool, December 1982, pp. 3–4, in Archives TF 18-01-2-B-1-1-4-1 Jacket 2.

reviewed ILO rural work every two to five years. Exchanges included topical and controversial issues such as land reform. It was acknowledged as a good platform for debate at high technical levels, and its reviews of past ILO work were constructive, although its impact in terms of guiding future ILO rural strategy and work is less evident.

17. The ILO's standards-related activities also flourished, with the adoption of the Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129), the Rural Workers' Organisations Convention, 1975 (No. 141), and Recommendation, 1975 (No. 149), the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), as well as references to rural areas and agricultural undertakings in other instruments, including the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138).
18. As for the ICRD, it comprised seven units, met annually between 1976 and 1992 and was an excellent forum for exchange of information and ideas, but was less successful in its function as an evaluative mechanism to monitor the impact of the rapidly expanding rural-related programmes, extract lessons and propose changes in rural development focus. The ICRD also fell short of promoting joint work, so while ILO rural work was voluminous, it was scattered and dominated by EMP/RU and WEP in general. In the late 1970s, the WEP counted over 90 professionals, two-thirds with PhDs, which created a highly energetic and productive atmosphere that put the ILO in the limelight; attracted resources and global talents such as Nobel Prize winners Arthur Lewis, Wassily Leontief, Amartya Sen and Jan Tinbergen; and allowed international visibility and impact. However, some rigidity in vision and some isolation from the rest of the Organization led to tensions that endangered sustainability and viability of even successful approaches.
19. External relations and collaboration were major elements of the ILO's rural work. Its strong and prolific engagement made the ILO a reference and a leader in rural development. The ILO worked mainly through the UN Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) Task Force on Rural Development (operating from 1975 to 1986), which made poverty-oriented rural development a unifying concept and objective of the UN system.¹³ ILO ties with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the WFP, as well as with UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Bank, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), and partnerships with NGOs such as the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA), were strong. The ILO had a major impact on the international debate on rural poverty and development.¹⁴
20. Although rigorous evaluations and impact assessments were limited (in number and scope), existing evidence and hindsight indicate that the ILO was successful at the micro level, with new approaches and actors such as employment-intensive works and cooperatives. Impact at institutional level was achieved, for instance through several highly recognized training centres, some still existing. It generally reached less easily the national policy level, but was particularly incisive on the international policy debate on rural policy through highly innovative concepts and approaches (see table 1). Most ILO pioneering concepts, approaches and lessons remain relevant.¹⁵

¹³ The ACC was later renamed the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB).

¹⁴ de Luca et al., *op. cit.*, section II.2.4.6.

¹⁵ *ibid.*, section II.3.

Table 1. Legacy and lessons for today's work

ILO pioneering concepts and approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Growth with equity ■ Rural development central to growth and development ■ Poverty, and poverty eradication at the core of rural development ■ Human resource-based rural work ■ Focus on labour absorption, rather than merely on production ■ Appropriate (employment-friendly) technology and employment-intensive works ■ Informality ■ Small enterprises ■ Microfinance ■ Basic needs ¹ ■ Enabling approach towards disadvantaged groups ■ Entitlement ■ Right to land and land reform ■ Minimum wages and working conditions, for growth with equity ■ Self-empowerment of rural populations ■ Participatory approaches ■ Workers' mobilization ■ Women's mobilization ■ Gender division of labour
Lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Organization-wide backing of a rural agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – ILO constituents' commitment to set rural dimensions high on the ILO's agenda – Joint vision and responsibility for rural work – Active networking, open communication, joint work, integration, and coordination indispensable; avoid isolation, false sense of "self-sufficiency" and competition among units, which leads to waste, sub-optimal impact and uncertain sustainability – Active promotion by top management of coordination mechanisms – ILO constituent commitment to enter rural areas ■ Strong human resource capacity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Critical mass of human resources (in number, skill type, "know-how" and drive), befitting work required – Adequate human resources at country level to ensure quality "presence" for rural work – Balance between independent thinking, innovation and sense of political viability ■ Reaching policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Translating policy advice into programmes and operational work, and vice versa – Tight links between projects and policy from the start – Integrating programmes, their approaches and tools into the ILO's tripartite structure (to impact it and obtain support from it) – Lengthy projects to build up national capacity and interest and ensure policy integration – Project tracking and follow-up to ensure sustainability and policy integration – Focusing, to allow time and resources to mainstream approaches into national policy ■ Integrated approaches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Lengthier and more complex, but more effective and sustainable given the multidisciplinary nature and interconnectedness of rural challenges and potentialities – Mutually supporting links to be established at earliest stage – Combined efforts with labour ministries and other institutions and stakeholders, nationally and locally ■ Broad participatory approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Projects and programmes to involve beneficiaries from conception to follow-up – Building technical, organizational and participatory capacity of disadvantaged groups and institutions – Importance of resource pooling (e.g. through cooperatives) – Key role of employers and workers in organizing rural groups and developing their voice – Post-project guidance and mentoring essential ■ National ownership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Commitment of national and local authorities, direct involvement, and ownership – Match absorption capacity of national institutions, and build it up ■ Partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Vital role of partnerships with international agencies and NGOs complementary to ILO – Vital role of partnerships with donors, ensuring continuous, mutually beneficial dialogue in field and at headquarters

- **Follow-up**

- Mechanisms to track project continuity, upscaling and replication, essential for maximum impact
- Systematic impact reviews essential to extract lessons and strengthen approaches

¹ Defined as specific requirements of families and communities in food, shelter, clothing, health, water, sanitation, transportation and education. Although waning in the 1980s, the concept of basic needs inspired the UNDP's Human Development Index and the MDG approach, and appears closely linked to the CEB's ongoing Social Protection Floor Initiative.

Source: de Luca et al., op. cit., section II.3.

From rural “marginalization” (1990s) to “rediscovery” (2000s)

21. The 1990s saw a widespread decline in interest in rural issues. Structural adjustment programmes emphasized cuts and a reduced state, resulting in serious investment reductions in physical and social infrastructure and in support for agriculture – the foundations of rural development. Policy emphasis was on urban development and commercial agriculture, coupled with increased international capital flows towards rapidly modernizing economies and sectors. The period was also characterized by decreases in commodity prices and growing barriers towards accessing developed countries' markets. These factors rendered investment in agriculture less attractive than in industry and services, which were also considered more “modern” and promising sectors. Agricultural policy aimed less at rural income generation and poverty alleviation, and more at securing cheap food and labour for urban areas. The share of official development assistance (ODA) for agriculture fell continuously from a peak of 17 per cent in 1989 to 3.6 per cent in the early 2000s, before reversing.¹⁶
22. ILO work mirrored this trend. By the early 1990s it felt it had done “enough” and needed to move on to other more prominent areas on the international scene and among constituents and donors.¹⁷ The most obvious consequence was a dismantling of rural structures throughout the Office. The ACRD and ICRD ceased to function, EMP/RU was dismantled – which was particularly damaging as rural work lost its main engine and advocate – and rural dimensions disappeared from the programme and budget after 1994–95, somewhat replaced by “informality”.
23. Waning interest in rural issues affected all technical units, including EDUC, which saw its rural post abolished in 1992, then was discontinued altogether; the labour-intensive works unit, which suffered sharp reductions in staffing and financial resources leading it to work through decentralized structures in Africa and Asia to tackle increasing demand; COOP, faced with significant cutbacks despite growing requests and increasingly diversified activities, to which it partly responded by launching the externally financed Programme of Cooperative Development in Rural Areas. The latter originated various subprogrammes¹⁸

¹⁶ OECD–DAC: *Measuring aid to agriculture* (Paris, Apr. 2010).

¹⁷ ICRD discussions and interviews with ILO managers of that period, in de Luca et al., op. cit., section III.

¹⁸ COOPREFORM to help create an enabling environment for autonomous and economically viable cooperatives; COOPNET to strengthen cooperative management and networking among cooperative training institutions across countries and regions; INDISCO to promote business opportunities among indigenous and tribal peoples, based on self-reliance and traditional livelihoods; SYNDICOOP for unprotected informal economy workers through trade union–cooperative joint action; and COOPAIDS for cooperative members with HIV/AIDS and their families.

and led to the adoption of the Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193).

24. Notable exceptions to the steady decline in ILO rural work were the emergence of local economic development (LED) initiatives, three-quarters of which were rural-based; the Work Improvement in Neighbourhood Development (WIND) approach, helping small rural businesses develop safer and healthier working and living conditions cost-effectively and with broad local participation, along with continued work on occupational health and safety and working conditions; the Strategies and Tools against Social Exclusion and Poverty Programme (STEP), extending social protection to the unprotected in over 40 countries worldwide within a few years; community-based training programmes leading to the Training for Rural Economic Employment Programme (TREE); and the continued sectoral work in agriculture, fisheries and forestry. The ILO also developed a wide array of entrepreneurship tools (particularly Know about Business (KAB), Start and Improve your Business (SIYB), and Women's Entrepreneurship Development and Gender Equality (WEDGE)) addressing various entrepreneurship stages, enterprise sizes, target groups and trades, all adapted or adaptable to rural settings.
25. The 2000s witnessed renewed interest in rural areas in the international development community,¹⁹ resulting from the failure of commercial agriculture and trade liberalization to deliver sufficiently in terms of growth and employment creation, and leaving pockets of persistent poverty and extreme poverty in rural areas. Key milestones of this renewed commitment are the MDGs derived from the 2000 Millennium Declaration²⁰ and the 2005 World Summit for Social Development, reaffirming that "... rural and agricultural development must be adequately and urgently addressed and ... should be an integral part of national and international development policies",²¹ and urging the international community to make productive employment and decent work essential objectives of development strategies.²² Climate and environmental concerns, as well as the food security and global financial and economic crises, further accelerated interest.
26. This trend coincided with the resumption of standard-setting activities particularly relevant to rural contexts, notably the adoption of the Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184), and Recommendation, 2001 (No. 192), the Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193), and the Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188), and Recommendation 2007 (No. 199).

The International Training Centre of the ILO, and regional trends

27. The International Training Centre of the ILO in Turin (ITC-ILO) roughly mirrors trends at ILO headquarters, with 18 different rural-specific courses in the 1970s, over 57 in the

¹⁹ See for example World Bank: *World Development Report 2008: Agriculture for development* (Washington, DC, 2007).

²⁰ UN General Assembly: Resolution 55/2: United Nations Millennium Declaration, New York, 2000 (Doc. A/RES/55/2) and Report of the UN Secretary-General: *Road map towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration*, New York, 2001 (Doc. A/56/326), annex.

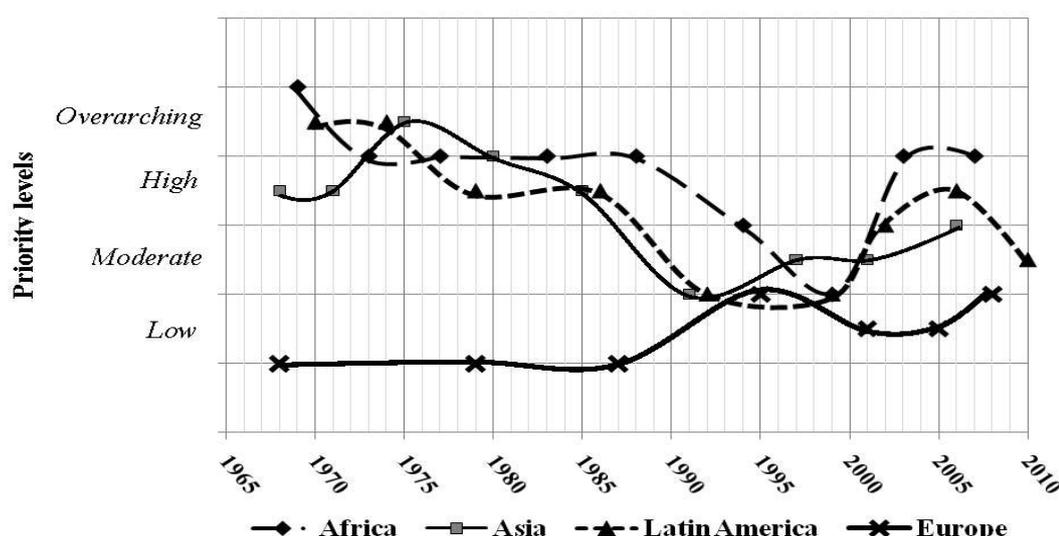
²¹ UN General Assembly: Resolution 60/1: 2005 World Summit Outcome, New York, 2005 (Doc. A/RES/60/1), para. 46.

²² *ibid.*, para. 47.

1980s, 39 in the 1990s, and 20 in the 2000s. From 1981 to 1993, “Rural Development” was one of its eight or ten sectors of activity. Starting from 1993, however, community development, the informal economy, and particularly local economic development (LED) were first combined with rural development activities and then replaced them altogether.

28. A similar trend occurred at regional level, although attention to rural contexts overall remained higher in the field, particularly in Africa (see figure 1).

Figure 1. Priority of rural issues in ILO Regional Conferences



Note: *Overarching*: Rural issues are the dominant subject of two or more reports and a central focus of the Regional Conference; *High*: Rural is included in the title of one or more documents and is an important issue at the Conference; *Moderate*: Rural issues are mentioned as a subsection or chapter within reports on other issues; *Low*: Rural issues are mentioned infrequently or not at all.

Sources: Reports to and from ILO Regional Conferences.

III. Gaps in coverage and barriers to ratification and implementation of international labour standards

29. While there is general agreement that international labour standards are essential to guiding national legislation and policy in addressing rural labour protection, effective protection still suffers from significant gaps in coverage and barriers to ratification and implementation, as noted by the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR).

30. **Freedom of association.**²³ Difficulties arise from the fact that rural small enterprises with relatively few employees predominate, self-employment is widespread, and wage employment is often temporary or seasonal. While on large commercial farms and plantations it is more common for workers to be represented by trade unions and be covered by collective agreements, restrictions are reported on the right to organize of temporary workers or those employed by out-growers. Furthermore, there is evidence of government interference restricting the exercise of this basic right, the most common legal

²³ Right of Association (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 11); Rural Workers' Organisations Convention, 1975 (No. 141); Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87).

obstacle being the full or partial exclusion of agricultural workers from the legislation guaranteeing this right. Excessive requirements regarding minimum numbers of members as a condition for trade union recognition are a further obstacle. In past years, the ILO supervisory bodies have examined serious cases of violation, including mass dismissal, anti-union discrimination and refusal to grant union recognition, but also violence, including death.

- 31. Collective bargaining.** ²⁴ Its role in wage setting is particularly crucial since many countries exclude agricultural workers from minimum wages protection, yet the number of rural workers covered by collective agreements remains low. In practice, collective agreements in agriculture are in most cases tailored to the conditions of employment in specific crops or subsectors. Agreements between a single employer or company and a trade union are common, but there are also cases where agricultural employers' organizations of a particular subsector conclude agreements with trade unions that are applicable to all their members. A related problem is to ensure that such agreements are effectively applied, especially in the absence of effective rural labour inspection systems.
- 32. Forced labour.** ²⁵ This abuse remains prevalent in many rural areas, especially among migrant agricultural workers and victims of trafficking. The CEACR has drawn attention to situations where slavery-like conditions are transmitted at birth to individuals who are compelled to work without pay. On several occasions it has addressed the issue of bonded labour among plantation workers and other agricultural and rural workers, including indigenous workers (particularly in Asia and Latin America), in its comments made under Convention No. 29. In some cases the CEACR has noted situations where non-respect of rights concerning payment of wages and working time has led to imposing forced labour practices, such as the obligation to do overtime work under the threat of a penalty. In some countries, national laws provide for the possibility of imposing work in agriculture, for example compulsory cultivation.
- 33. Child labour.** ²⁶ In several countries a minimum age for children working in agriculture is not legislated at all. Around the world, children become farm labourers, sometimes as young as 5 or 6 years old. In many countries, the highest rate of children working below the minimum age is in the agricultural sector. This often results in missed education opportunities. Many working children below the age of 18 in rural areas are in hazardous work, including the preparation and use of pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers, work involving the care of sick animals, handling farm machinery and work in difficult crops such as cotton or tobacco. The CEACR has encouraged governments to update their list of hazardous types of work to reflect the dangerous nature of these activities and protect children accordingly. Nonetheless, even when legislation exists, enforcement is often insufficient, due to limited inspection mechanisms in rural areas both in developed and developing countries. A less frequent yet important problem is forced child labour. The CEACR has noted cases where it has been used in agriculture, such as where school-aged children are obliged to participate in harvesting rather than attend school, or are trafficked to neighbouring states or internally to work on plantations.

²⁴ Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)

²⁵ Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29); Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105).

²⁶ Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138); Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182).

- 34. Equality of opportunity and treatment.**²⁷ The CEACR has frequently drawn attention to the absence of legislation providing equality of treatment and equal remuneration for agricultural workers, with particularly adverse effects for women and other disadvantaged groups. Even where there is legislation in force, women, indigenous workers, migrant workers and lower caste workers in particular may face abusive or insalubrious working conditions, and are often paid lower wages. Further, women entrepreneurs may face particular gender-specific difficulties, for instance in accessing land and financial capital.
- 35. Employment policy and promotion.**²⁸ In its 2010 General Survey on employment instruments²⁹ the CEACR, based on responses from 108 countries, highlighted gaps and barriers to ratification linked to the negative impact on employment of the ongoing economic downturn, and emphasized the need to give particular priority to active rural employment policies, highlighting various successful examples worldwide.
- 36. Labour inspection.**³⁰ In most developing countries the main obstacle noted by the CEACR to the application of Conventions Nos 81 and 129 is lack of resources. A tendency in English-speaking Africa is to tackle diminishing public resources by decentralizing the labour inspection service, which often further impedes its functioning. Another acute problem is lack of transport facilities for inspection visits, as worksites are often scattered and inaccessible. The CEACR has stressed, though, that the increase in ILO technical cooperation and assistance in labour inspection and other international initiatives have raised collective awareness of the need to develop labour inspection systems and have substantially expanded rural labour inspectors' duties, powers and prerogatives and their field of intervention in some countries.
- 37. Wages.**³¹ The CEACR has raised a number of issues, including non-payment or deferred payment of wages; exclusion of agricultural workers from national legislation; non-respect of periodic readjustment of minimum wage rates; lack of adequate sanctions to deter abuse of the minimum wage system, where it exists; and lack of statistics on workers covered by minimum wages. The CEACR has also commented for many years on the debt bondage of tens of thousands of indigenous agricultural workers resulting from systems of advances on wages; stores located in camps charging excessive prices; compulsory deductions from wages for savings schemes; payments in kind; and deferred payments.

²⁷ Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111); Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100).

²⁸ Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122), and Employment Policy Recommendation, 1964 (No. 122); Employment Policy (Supplementary Provisions) Recommendation, 1984 (No. 169); Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142), and Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195); Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159); Job Creation in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Recommendation, 1998 (No. 189).

²⁹ *General Survey concerning employment instruments in light of the 2008 Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization*, Report III (Part 1B), International Labour Conference, 99th Session, 2010.

³⁰ Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81); Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129).

³¹ Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery (Agriculture) Convention, 1951 (No. 99), and Recommendation, 1951 (No. 89); Minimum Wage-Fixing Machinery Convention, 1928 (No. 26); Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131); Protection of Wages Convention, 1949 (No. 95).

- 38. Occupational safety and health (OSH).**³² The CEACR has dealt with numerous aspects of national OSH policies, including: the elaboration of risk assessments; adequate and appropriate inspection systems; situations causing immediate and serious danger; right of workers to select safety and health representatives; minimum age requirements; ensuring that information is conveyed and understood; sound management of chemicals; biological risks; appropriate training; temporary and seasonal workers; and the reproductive health of women agricultural workers.
- 39. Social security.**³³ The ILO is actively involved in promoting the establishment of a basic social floor for rural populations that are not covered by existing social security systems, mainly those working in agriculture and in the informal economy, and their families. This includes: (1) access to a nationally defined set of essential health-care services; (2) income security for children through family or child benefits aimed at facilitating access to nutrition, health and education; (3) income security combined with employment guarantees and employability-enhancing policies for those in active age groups who are unable to earn sufficient income; and (4) income security for all residents in old age and with disabilities through specific pensions. The 2011 General Survey on social security instruments reviewed the extension of coverage for rural populations, including self-employed farmers and agricultural, seasonal and informal economy workers.³⁴
- 40. Indigenous and tribal peoples.**³⁵ Many indigenous peoples work in agriculture. If they earn their livelihood as subsistence farmers, their main problems frequently arise from unequal access to land with respect to land title and ownership rights, credit, marketing facilities and resources. If they work for others, they often face discrimination in terms of employment conditions. They are also often subject to forced dispossession of land for the creation of agricultural undertakings as well as of logging and mining activities. In all such cases, legislation and policies should include measures allowing indigenous people to access resources and other means of earning their living.
- 41. Plantations.**³⁶ The working and living conditions of plantation workers have been a continued source of concern. Fundamental rights violations such as child labour and prevention of workers' unionization are the most recurrent, but compulsory pregnancy testing and debt bondage are also reported, as well as health risks linked for instance to the widespread use of pesticides, and abuses regarding regular payment of wages or the payment of the established minimum wage, especially among migrants. Labour inspection visits and transparency of inspection results are problematic; for example, private security forces prevent unwelcome visitors from entering some plantations.

³² Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155); Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184) and Recommendation, 1951 (No. 192).

³³ Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102); Employment Injury Benefits Convention, 1964 [Schedule I amended in 1980] (No. 121); Invalidity, Old-Age and Survivors' Benefits Convention, 1967 (No. 128); Medical Care and Sickness Benefits Convention, 1969 (No. 130); Employment Promotion and Protection against Unemployment Convention, 1988 (No. 168).

³⁴ *Social security and the rule of law: General Survey concerning social security instruments in the light of the 2008 Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization*, Report III (Part 1B), International Labour Conference, 100th Session, 2011.

³⁵ Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169).

³⁶ Plantations Convention, 1958 (No. 110).

42. **Fisheries.**³⁷ Convention No. 188 (intended to cover all fishing operations except subsistence and recreational fishing) has not yet entered into force. Ratification appears to be hampered by its comprehensive nature. Some countries have suggested excluding all small-scale fishing or artisanal fishing. However, that may represent in some countries up to 80 per cent of all fishing activities, and the Convention does not allow for such exception.

IV. Implementation of the 2008 ILC conclusions on promoting rural employment for poverty reduction

43. The 2008 ILC conclusions on promoting rural employment for poverty reduction constitute a major turning point. They set a clear mandate and guidelines for future ILO rural work. Appendix I(a) summarizes the plan of action for the Office outlined in the conclusions and indicates which items have been delivered and where work is ongoing or foreseen in 2011, as well as links to rural-related indicators in the Programme and Budget for 2010–11.³⁸ This plan of action identifies priorities spanning all four ILO strategic objectives and calls for mutually reinforcing combinations of analytical, technical cooperation, policy advice, capacity-building and advocacy work; selected practical interventions in ILO comparative advantage areas; and coordination Office-wide and externally. It is complemented by recommendations for governments, employers and workers (synthesized in Appendix I(b)) to share responsibility by keeping the debate alive in the ILO and national forums, strengthening their presence and making the voices of rural populations heard in national and international decision-making.
44. The ILO's current rural work is also solidly based on the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (2008), calling for policy coherence and integrated action among ILO technical fields as well as with outside actors, for countries to be in the driving seat of development, and to make capacity building a pivotal component of initiatives.
45. Most recently, in its 2010 General Survey on employment instruments,³⁹ the CEACR highlighted the importance of rural employment when preparing and implementing national employment plans and poverty reduction strategies. It pointed to three policy options for reducing unemployment: increasing labour intensity of economic growth; increasing attention to rural employment promotion; and encouraging entrepreneurship among youth and women.
46. Likewise, Governments, Workers and Employers at the 2010 ILC Committee for the Recurrent Discussion on Employment repeatedly called for increased ILO support to work in rural areas.⁴⁰
47. Following the 2008 ILC conclusions, the ILO's work in rural areas stepped up markedly. The Director-General identified rural work as an "emerging area" in the Programme and

³⁷ Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (No. 188).

³⁸ ILO: *Programme and Budget for the biennium 2010–11* (Geneva, 2009).

³⁹ ILO: *General Survey concerning employment instruments in light of the 2008 Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization*, op. cit.

⁴⁰ ILO: "Report of the Committee for the Recurrent Discussion on Employment", *Provisional Record* No. 18, International Labour Conference, 99th Session, 2010.

Budget for 2010–11.⁴¹ The Office established a post and allocated seed resources to launch activities. That allowed better Office-wide coordination; the launching of a few new initiatives; the development of basic communication on rural issues through the setting up of a network of some 60 rural focal points Office-wide; and the creation of new mechanisms to ensure monitoring and systematic follow-up of the conclusions, such as documents recording implementation status by commitment (Appendix I(a)); recording rural initiatives by commitment; keeping track of rural presence in DWCPs, and in technical cooperation projects; and developing external partnerships.⁴²

48. Office-wide work includes the Africa region's placement of rural employment promotion as a priority in the Programme and Budget for 2010–11,⁴³ and rural aspects featuring in a number of indicators (see Appendix I(a)).
49. Implementation has included major meetings such as the Tripartite Technical Workshop on the Global Food Price Crisis and its Impact on Decent Work (5–6 March 2009), enriched by the participation of various agencies, the manager of the UN High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis (HLTF), and scholars.⁴⁴ Two tripartite meetings in 2009 and 2010 allowed the development and adoption of a code of practice on safety and health in agriculture, to be submitted to the Governing Body for endorsement in March 2011. A third type of meeting was an international conference, held in Kyrgyzstan in October 2008, to exchange experiences among WIND programmes in Africa, Asia, Central Asia and Latin America. It recommended, in particular, expanding and replicating the WIND methodology, and the development of a "WIND Plus" concept additionally incorporating SIYB, microfinance, cooperative development, vocational training, youth employment support, job creation for potential migrants, social security, and child labour in a coherent package for rural development and employment. In April 2010, a workshop on child labour in fisheries and aquaculture organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the ILO, allowed an outline of a joint FAO–ILO strategy in those sectors. Most recently, an inter-agency technical meeting between the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the ILO, held in November–December 2010 on Building Employment and Decent Work into Sustainable Recovery and Development, included sessions on rural initiatives, particularly targeting youth, by the FAO, IFAD and the ILO.
50. In 2009 the ILO became a member of the HLTF and in early 2010 contributed proactively to include employment and other decent work issues in the revised version of the Comprehensive Framework for Action prepared in early 2010. Specific country-level work will start in 2011.
51. The last two years have also seen ILO finalize valuable rural tools, in particular *Rural skills training: A generic manual on training for rural economic empowerment (TREE)*, and the launching of projects using it in Benin, Burkina Faso, Liberia, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe. Other tools include a guide entitled *Value chain development for decent work*; a practical manual on ergonomic checkpoints in agriculture; two modules on labour

⁴¹ ILO: *Programme and Budget for the biennium*, op. cit., p. 4, para. 22.

⁴² See www.ilo.org/rural.

⁴³ *ibid.*, p. 13, para. 82.

⁴⁴ Participants included Dr David Nabarro, UN Coordinator of the HLTF, Dr Olivier de Schutter, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, and representatives of FAO, OCHA, UNCTAD, UNEP, UNHCR, UNICEF, World Bank, WFP, WTO and ITC. See ILO: *Report on the Tripartite Technical Workshop on the Global Food Price Crisis and its Impact on Decent Work* (Geneva, 2009)

inspection in rural areas; a tool enhancing constituents' capacity to promote freedom of association and collective bargaining in rural areas, including a review of gaps in law and practice in those fundamental rights; and another on freedom of association and collective bargaining rights for women workers in rural areas. There is also an ongoing review of entrepreneurship tools to check their adaptation to and impact in rural contexts. A set of some 20 fact sheets targeting rural-relevant technical areas, target groups and specific sectors is also in preparation, covering the main issues (potentialities and challenges) in each topic, and sketching appropriate policies, the ILO work approach, main initiatives and tools, and illustrations of good practice. Finally, a package of information sheets synthesizing the main characteristics of some 40 key ILO rural-relevant tools is near finalization and should help constituents, practitioners, ILO partners and ILO officials themselves to grasp the vast array of instruments available.

- 52.** Knowledge development activities have seen, among others, a compilation of available rural data; an FAO–ECLAC–ILO study on labour market policies and rural poverty in Latin America, realized in 2010; and an ongoing analysis of the employment and enterprise impact of biofuels. An FAO–IFAD–ILO research-based workshop in March–April 2009 on gender in rural areas, that mobilized ILO officials from a variety of departments, the field and ITC–ILO, was followed by the production of a comprehensive analytical publication examining status, trends and knowledge gaps, along with seven policy briefs to guide decision-makers in selected technical areas of relevance to rural women.⁴⁵
- 53.** Recent external partnership efforts include integrating rural areas into the Global Jobs Pact and Social Protection Floor Initiatives. The strengthening of partnerships with FAO and IFAD is advancing particularly fast, namely in terms of an ever richer FAO–ILO website; the FAO–IFAD–ILO abovementioned workshop; an IFAD–ILO initiative launched in 2010 to review youth rural programmes through the lens of decent work; and an ILO-supported FAO tool, *Guidance on how to address rural employment and decent work concerns in FAO country activities*, that will help expand FAO–ILO cooperation in the field. UN-wide joint work in rural areas has also progressed within the framework of the MDG Spanish Fund initiative launched in 2008, particularly projects related to gender equality and women's empowerment, youth, heritage sites, post-conflict work and economic development.
- 54.** At country level, the need for rural intervention is readily apparent and especially urgent in Africa and Asia. This has led to 60 per cent of the ILO's DWCPs currently featuring rural dimensions and over 60 technical cooperation projects wholly or partially targeting rural areas.⁴⁶ They support in particular entrepreneurship and cooperatives, skills development, employment-intensive works, local economic development, youth and women's employment, occupational safety and health, child labour and, more recently freedom of association. They typically involve one main ILO technical area and a few complementary ones.
- 55.** Rural components also appear in policy advisory work, for instance when supporting employment policy development and implementation; employment-intensive investment methodologies in public works and community-based infrastructure programmes; policies

⁴⁵ See FAO–IFAD–ILO: *Gender dimensions of agriculture and rural employment: Differentiated pathways out of poverty* (Rome, FAO, 2010). The seven policy briefs cover gender and decent work, women in employment-intensive works, women's entrepreneurship, women in value chains, women's skills acquisition, child labour, and migration.

⁴⁶ See www.ilo.org/rural.

and programmes related to occupational safety and health; extension of social security; and child labour.

56. An informal meeting was held during the 99th Session (2010) of the International Labour Conference, gathering representatives of governments, employers and workers, representatives of regional groups and ILO rural focal points from all four sectors and available regional offices, to review the implementation of the plan of action for the Office two years after its adoption.
57. Follow-up work has thus been meaningful but it could be strengthened by a more specific strategy, as suggested in the following section.

V. An Organization-wide strategy for rural work

58. The legacy of experiences, approaches and lessons from the ILO's past rural work, combined with the 2008 ILC conclusions on promoting rural employment for poverty reduction, enable the proposal of thematic and institutional elements forming a profile of a more coherent ILO rural strategy for the 2010s, based on the ILO's comparative advantages.

Strategy

59. An ILO rural strategy should first view rural women, men and communities as engines of growth and resilience. Investing in them to counter decent work and other structural gaps, and empowering them to fulfil their potential, is not only morally but also economically sound.
60. The equating of rural areas with backwardness and unattractiveness needs to change. Developed countries are increasingly associating the notion "rural" with positive connotations, linking it with ecology, culture, leisure, healthy food, and an alternative to stressful urban living. Rural technological breakthroughs, high productivity, creativity and appreciation for rural activities are also emerging in developing countries. This is partly as a result of significant rural modernization and investment in some areas, and also of innovative initiatives.⁴⁷ It is encouraging that in October 2010 the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) launched the Rural Futures programme to promote rural transformation across Africa, based on understanding "rural activities as a motor to human well-being, national development and global sustainability", and indicating that "greater attention to opportunity might help to minimize pessimism and create affirmative prospects for [rural] development".⁴⁸
61. It is proposed that the ILO's ultimate goal be to incorporate rural areas, particularly their employment and decent work dimensions, as core elements of growth and development

⁴⁷ For instance, since 2004 Terra Madre, an international network of food producers, cooks, educators and activists from over 150 countries, has supported innovative production and marketing to ensure quality food and sustainable livelihoods for small-scale producers in the global economy. See www.terramadre.info.

⁴⁸ I.A. Mayaki, Chief Executive of NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, in African Union/NEPAD: *The Rural Futures programme: Rural transformation across the African continent* (Johannesburg, 2010).

strategies. This work is to be led by tripartism, supported by the Office, following the roles of governments, employers and workers as summarized in Appendix I(b).

62. Proper rural identity is important; particularly, rural development cannot be substituted by other important ILO work areas, such as informality, LED, the social economy, green jobs and agriculture. Each constitutes only one of many rural facets, although linkages between them and rural work are essential.
63. While supporting agricultural productivity and modernization with an eye towards linking small farmers with global value chains and empowering them, policies should also decisively target non-farm activities. Diversifying into productive, higher value added manufacturing and service work is increasingly important for household earnings as well as economic growth, sustained development and poverty reduction. Calls for industrialization are not new,⁴⁹ but there is now widespread impetus towards a dual approach.⁵⁰ This includes agribusiness chain activities to produce and distribute seeds, tools, and other inputs, and to process and market agricultural products. The current context also offers opportunities in sectors such as information and communication, tourism, energy-saving equipment, reforestation and water management. Some general strategy components are given below, although regional and subregional specificities will require adaptation.

Type of work

64. **Capacity building.** Work is to focus on developing and updating practical and user-friendly guidance and capacity-building instruments, from “How to” manuals and guides to action-oriented fact sheets on specific technical areas, groups and sectors and contexts. One example is a practical methodology to identify potentialities for, and binding constraints to, inclusive rural growth in specific contexts to guide analytical work preceding ILO interventions. This work could be complemented by a (course-type) instrument on employment and decent work-based rural development, prepared and delivered with the Turin Centre, field offices, sectors and constituents, to ensure broad ownership and take into account particular needs, specificities, experience and lessons.
65. **Knowledge building and sharing.** This would focus on information gaps that hinder action, and on major concerns and opportunities such as the impact of trade on rural producers and workers and the means to give them bargaining power in internal and global value chains. The emphasis should be on translating results into practical guidance, capacity-building and advocacy instruments.
66. **Technical cooperation.** This is to continue testing new approaches and proving their value, while strengthening its role as a “stepping stone” to policy. Longer time frames are vital to ensure national and local ownership and sustainability, and to achieve policy internalization.
67. **Policy advice and advocacy.** Rural-focused checklists and similar guidance instruments can be developed and used in policy development or reviews related to employment,

⁴⁹ For example, ILO: *Rural employment promotion*, Report VII, International Labour Conference, 75th Session, Geneva, 1988, p. 116; and R. Islam: *Rural industrialization and employment in Asia* (Geneva, ILO–ARTEP, 1987).

⁵⁰ For example, World Bank: *Implementing agriculture for development: Action Plan FY2010–12* (Washington, DC, 2009); IFAD: *Rural Poverty Report 2011* (Rome, 2010), FAO: *Guidance on how to address rural employment and decent work concerns in FAO country activities* (Rome, 2011).

education and training, social security, labour inspection or social dialogue. These tools would also enable the ILO to speak with one voice, giving its messages strength and coherence. Key messages should include: ensuring that rural-relevant ministries and other national and local institutions and groups are consulted; ensuring that macro-level decision-makers such as ministries of finance and planning participate; and facilitating linkages among them. Advocacy work should also include facilitating rural-related South–South collaboration and exchanges of experience – a phenomenon that is rapidly expanding.

Technical focus areas and groups

- 68.** Rural labour market and decent work data are the basis of all other rural work, yet they are still notably scanty. The Office proposes to pursue a three-pronged approach, combining: the provision of technical support to national statistical systems in selected countries with high concentrations of rural poverty; the expansion of the LABORSTA database to include short-term and annual indicators for key decent work indicators disaggregated by rural–urban areas; and working with selected labour ministries and national training centres to produce data on skills needs and development which can assist rural populations and employers to engage in productive relationships.
- 69.** Entrepreneurship development was clearly highlighted in the 2008 ILC conclusions which call for the ILO to “[p]romote the implementation of the 2007 conclusions on the promotion of sustainable enterprises in rural areas”.⁵¹ This is a clear priority in rural growth and job creation, along with skills development and finance, including microfinance, to complement it. Cooperatives are particularly adapted to seizing rural opportunities and compensating for shortcomings while ensuring equitable, inclusive growth.⁵² Stimulating and addressing hurdles to women’s entrepreneurship is also to receive special attention.
- 70.** Other core technical areas include employment-intensive works, ideal for developing infrastructure while maximizing local use of resources, creating direct and indirect jobs, and increasing household consumption;⁵³ skills development, through work on a diversified training system that should include support to formal and informal apprenticeships, community-based and rural-relevant national training systems, coupled with career guidance. The latter, where youth “discover” new businesses and occupations, is especially valuable in today’s rural contexts that call for diversification and modernization. Here too, young women require particular attention to overcome the disadvantages linked to a gender division of labour, which is generally stricter in rural areas.
- 71.** Basic social coverage remains pivotal, particularly combined with employment. The ILO’s strategy since 2003 in extending social security has proved effective and is worth

⁵¹ ILO: Conclusions on promoting rural employment for poverty reduction, International Labour Conference, 97th Session, Geneva, 2008, para. 77.

⁵² The UN’s declaration of 2012 as the International Year of Cooperatives underlines the link between the promotion of cooperatives and rural development (UNGA Res. A/RES/64/136, para. 4). It also calls for a rediscovery, updating and use of the vast “tool mine” within the MATCOM set of materials.

⁵³ GB.297/PFA/2/2; and ILO webpage: Employment Intensive Investment Programme: Country presence, see www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/recon/eiip/countries/index.htm.

continuing.⁵⁴ Occupational safety and health, and working conditions, sometimes lower priorities among national authorities and donors, are equally crucial and also important in attracting youth to rural work. The ILO needs to show the link between social protection and productivity and growth (for example, reductions in accidents and illnesses, stimulation of entrepreneurship and innovation through lower risk aversion), and to conceive manageable mechanisms in terms of cost and institutional capacity, such as WIND.

72. International labour standards, essential to address the types of decent work gaps in rural areas discussed in section III of this paper, warrant special attention. There will be continued focus on the fundamental standards: freedom of association (Conventions Nos 11, 87 and 141); collective bargaining (Convention No. 98); forced labour (Conventions Nos 29 and 105), including trafficking and bonded labour; child labour (Conventions Nos 138 and 182), particularly as children's most hazardous work is in agriculture; and equality of opportunity and treatment (Conventions Nos 100 and 111).
73. Work will also focus on the governance Conventions, especially Conventions Nos 122 on employment policy and promotion and 81 and 129 on labour inspection, which are intended to ensure application of other ratified Conventions. Labour inspection systems must be progressively extended to rural zones in practice and not just in law, including through education, awareness raising and capacity building. In November 2009, the Director-General launched a campaign for the ratification and implementation of these instruments, and the Governing Body adopted a plan of action for their promotion.⁵⁵ Further, the ILO is to devise practical means to reach rural areas, providing rural workers and employers with access to information and institutions that will help them grasp their respective rights and duties; and delivering sensitization campaigns using modern ICT technology as well as language, visual and other means adapted to local contexts.
74. The guidance provided by international labour standards, and CEACR's views on gaps in their proper implementation, could also serve as tools to ensure that technical assistance and cooperation on the ground are as targeted and effective as possible, while promoting ratification and improved implementation of standards. The expertise of the ILO's International Labour Standards Department (NORMES) should articulate with the technical units involved.
75. Organization, mobilization and empowerment of rural workers and employers, including small farmers and informal economy actors, is essential for ensuring that the real protagonists of rural economies can express needs, make choices, develop strategies and establish a rural presence nationally and internationally. National employers' and workers' organizations have a large role to play in this regard, building capacity, supporting and developing strategic links with them, with support from ACT/EMP and ACTRAV as well as EMP/COOP (which has expertise in organizing farmers and other producers operating in rural settings), field offices, ITC-ILO and relevant technical units.
76. Youth and women are to receive priority attention. This includes child labour dimensions, which are tightly linked to the employment and decent work prospects of both groups. Convincing youth of a future in rural areas requires a proactive, comprehensive and integrated approach, including investments, to stimulate and support entrepreneurship, particularly among women; to raise productivity, modernity, dynamism, diversification and worker-friendliness of farm and non-farm activities; to improve occupational safety

⁵⁴ See ILO: *The ILO's strategy to extend social security: An independent evaluation report* (Geneva, 2010).

⁵⁵ GB.306/LILS/6(&Corr.).

and health and social protection coverage; to provide quality training for high value added occupations; to provide economic and social infrastructure; to improve the image and social status of working and living in rural areas; to involve young women and men in planning and implementing community development strategies; and to use gender-sensitive and women-enabling approaches. The latter is particularly important, as rural women produce 60–80 per cent of the food in developing countries.⁵⁶

Work organization

77. This multi-facetedness of rural work calls for integrated approaches combining multiple technical areas, types of work, intervention levels (including supply/demand, rural/urban and national/international links), and actors both internal and external to the ILO. It requires shared responsibility, coupled with coordination and synergies.

Combining ILO-wide responsibility for, and coordination of, rural work

78. The involvement of the ILO in rural work first requires taking responsibility throughout the Organization. The rural perspective needs to be explicitly and systematically integrated into the work of ILO headquarters, field offices and ITC–ILO units, and including that of high-level ILO management and of the constituents. It cannot be an afterthought, assuming that regular work will somehow cover rural areas too.
79. ILO constituents need to take part by keeping the rural debate alive in ILO forums and in their own work, to facilitate and strengthen the impact of work by the Office. Real impact also depends on the coherence of national policies and the involvement of ministries of agriculture, local/rural development, industry, and finance, other relevant agencies, rural associations and NGOs. In its turn, national policy coherence also requires explicit consideration in setting targets for rural work in national employment policies and strategies, the extension of social security, industrialization and other policy frameworks.
80. ILO-wide responsibility needs to be coupled with mechanisms stimulating ILO units to work together and facilitating this – a major lesson from the 1970s and 1980s. A team could shoulder central tasks such as maintaining an ILO vision and general direction; prompting action, coordination and delivery ILO-wide; building linkages with external actors; and helping to deliver, disseminate and advocate specific products and approaches. Locating such a team at strategic level, with an official mandate, is important to ensure credibility and capacity to establish contacts at all levels, both internally and externally. The already-existing network of rural focal points, located in all main headquarters, field, and ITC–ILO units, will facilitate communication and synergies and should have this function acknowledged among their regular tasks. External rural resource persons could complement ILO expertise, as needed. An easily accessible electronic platform on rural work is being planned, to allow quick communication, collaboration, access to basic tools and lessons, and sharing information, and is to link up with the knowledge strategy and platform presently envisaged by the ILO. More generally, ILO rural initiatives are to link with other Office-wide strategies.
81. Top-level management involvement is important to support the responsibility for rural work Office-wide, to recognize the coordination role of the rural team, and to dedicate

⁵⁶ ILO: *Promotion of rural employment for poverty reduction*, Report IV, International Labour Conference, 97th Session, Geneva, 2008.

resources to joint work, as well as to include rural dimensions in its macro-level, inter-agency initiatives to reshape the global economic growth and development architecture.

Achieving focus and joint work through thematic clusters

82. Working in thematic clusters could help focus and prompt work on specific themes, while stimulating synergies. Such clusters need not entail “more work”, but “working differently”. Those proposed below constitute engines of job-rich rural development, and respond to a current market opportunity or emergency or to a serious decent work gap requiring specific ILO attention. The themes are those where the ILO has solid comparative advantage and the means to make a difference. The selection tries to achieve a balance between job quantity and quality concerns.
- *Rural-friendly agribusiness value chains.* These would have a special focus on the creation and strengthening of rural enterprises, ensuring a voice and good returns to local producers including small farmers and the local economy; on the role and responsibilities of large firms as organizers or flagships of value chains; on cooperatives; and on youth and women’s entrepreneurship.
 - *Career guidance and relevant skills acquisition in rural contexts.* This cluster would facilitate the transition of youth into rural labour markets through career orientation supported by practical labour market information and effective skills training, including technical and business skills as well as core and life skills. ILO work would include facilitating a broad dialogue involving the authorities and the private sector (both employers and workers) as well as youth groups, both at local level and nationally.
 - *Tourism in rural areas.* This cluster would particularly focus on the least developed rural areas, based on local communities’ choice of objectives and modalities, and with returns benefiting mainly them. It would build on the ILO’s experience in tourism among Latin American indigenous populations and elsewhere, and would be conducted in collaboration with the World Tourism Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).
 - *Food security.* This cluster would focus specifically on supporting HLTF’s initiatives in ILO comparative advantage areas, such as building the social partners’ capacity to play an active role and to dialogue with government on food security, and ensuring that employment and decent work dimensions feature solidly in HLTF’s planning, advocacy and operational instruments.
 - *Social protection floor.* This cluster would promote basic social security transfers and services and income security, thereby empowering rural disadvantaged groups to step out of poverty and find decent jobs. Work would take place within the frameworks of the Global Jobs Pact and the Social Protection Floor Initiative, contributing health and other basic coverage and employment guarantee schemes.
 - *A culture of rural occupational safety and health.* Including HIV/AIDS, this cluster would focus on cost-effective and sustainable practices; voluntary, participatory and action-oriented actions; and incorporating rural OSH culture in community development and primary health care. It would use ILO OSH instruments and practical tools such as WIND, Better Work, the ILO codes of practice on safety and health in agriculture and on HIV/AIDS and the world of work, and the practical manual on ergonomic checkpoints in agriculture, to improve the working and living conditions of rural people.

- *International labour standards rural coverage.* This cluster would particularly focus on labour inspection Conventions Nos 81 and 129, which are a means of ensuring application of all other Conventions. It would include a review of ratification and implementation gaps, and identify means of tackling them. This work would take place within the framework of the Director-General's campaign on the governance Conventions and the Governing Body's plan of action on these Conventions.
- *Reaching and giving a voice to rural employers and workers.* The remit of this cluster would include casual wage workers, to enable them to organize, be aware of and use their rights, and acquire the skills and means to be impactful in national and international forums. It includes support to and strategic linkages with local-level associations of farm, non-farm and informal activities.

83. One (or two) existing unit(s) in the Office would lead each cluster, working collegially within a group of core units, and prompting the involvement of others, as needed. The lead unit(s) would be responsible for delivery, ensuring coordination and, wherever possible, integrated work (see Appendix II). Financing would combine seed resources from the existing budget dedicated to each cluster, matched by resources from participant technical and field units, RBSA and partnerships with international agencies, as well as public and private partnerships.

84. Rural work in highly relevant areas such as employment policy, various other aspects of enterprise creation and growth, employment-intensive works, the Global Jobs Pact, green jobs, the informal economy and child labour, where a strategy and momentum already exist, would continue while benefiting from, and contributing to, thematic clusters.

External partnerships and impact

85. Coordinating and synergizing rural work with external actors is indispensable for ILO work to make an impact, given the size, multifaceted nature and technicalities of rural work, as well as the requirement for local presence. Partnerships would include other agencies and local NGOs – with divisions of labour reflecting respective comparative advantages – as well as social economy enterprises and organizations. They would also include the donor community, with whom longer term interventions need to be negotiated and broader relations established going beyond specific projects and involving mutually enriching rural knowledge development, advocacy and capacity-building initiatives.

86. Collaboration with FAO and IFAD deserves special attention. It is already well developed, as mentioned earlier, and can help the ILO to enter into other arrangements such as the FAO–UNESCO Education for Rural People (ERP) partnership flagship programme, strengthening collaboration with UNDP in rural areas as well as with the World Bank and with regional banks and institutions.

87. Also worth noting is the continued partnership with the ICA, the Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC),⁵⁷ and participation in multi-agency structures such as the International Forum for Rural Transport and Development

⁵⁷ Composed of the cooperative movement, farmers' organizations and UN agencies.

(IFRTD)⁵⁸ and the International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture.⁵⁹

88. The One-UN and other joint development platforms constitute unique opportunities. The ILO should especially harness the collective momentum generated by efforts to recover from the global economic crisis through the Global Jobs Pact and the Social Protection Floor Initiative and through its participation in G20 meetings and collaboration with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, as well as in the UN HLTF and its initiatives. It could also harness the MDG Acceleration Framework (2010–15) and the Second UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008–17) whose central theme is employment and decent work.
89. The ILO could also prompt coordination among rural-relevant agencies at country level, for instance within the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).
90. The Office intends to develop a practical tool sketching the priorities and direction of other main rural-relevant international agencies as well as of national and international institutions whose goals overlap goals with those of the ILO, mapping their respective comparative advantages and complementarities and main work priorities, as a basis for potential collaboration.

Monitoring progress and impact

91. Systematic monitoring and evaluation focusing on impact and lessons learned is an integral part of technical cooperation, capacity-building and policy advice. This requires the development of rural decent work impact indicators, including indicators of the sustainability of a given approach and of its mainstreaming into national policy. A set of indicators related to rural settings could be gathered in a user-friendly checklist, adaptable to context specificities. This work could draw on indicators the ILO has already established, fine-tuning them to cover rural aspects, and introducing new indicators specific to rural development.
92. This may also require longer term initiatives to allow time to produce meaningful results and strengthen institutional and individual capacity to make them sustainable; and arrangements to verify impact and sustainability years after their end.
93. Finally, rural institutional memory is indispensable. Monitoring and assessments are to be processed and kept in an accessible manner, to allow the Organization to build on past experience and sharpen future approaches.

Risks and downsides

94. The resources of the Organization and the Office are thinly spread over many demands. It is not realistic to expect a significant allocation of resources to this programme beyond the marginal reallocation across existing units as suggested. The existing Office-wide coordination team, located in the Employment Sector, is ad hoc and has minimal resources.

⁵⁸ A global network of individuals and organizations working jointly to improve access, mobility and economic opportunities of poor communities.

⁵⁹ With FAO, the IFAD, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP) and the International Union of Food Workers (IUF).

To guarantee continuity in this work and implementation of this strategy, making this team sustainable is a major priority.

VI. Proposed follow-up action

- 95.** In view of the potential of rural areas to become engines of much needed job-rich growth, recovery and equitable development, and given the ILO's comparative advantages in tackling the bottlenecks that impede these areas in playing such roles, the Committee may wish to provide guidance on the strategy outlined in this report.

Geneva, 9 February 2011

Submitted for debate and guidance

Appendix I

(a) Progress in implementing the plan of action for the Office as outlined in the 2008 ILC conclusions on promoting rural employment for poverty reduction

<p>➤ Employment-related action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Prepare a comprehensive report analysing the impact of prior ILO rural employment work ☞ Ensure that national employment policies and Decent Work Country Programmes include the promotion of productive employment in rural areas in accordance with the 2008 ILC resolution concerning the promotion of rural employment for poverty reduction (19.1) ☞ Encourage countries to adopt gender- and family-sensitive national rural employment policies ☞ Promote entrepreneurship and sustainable MSEs, cooperatives and other community-based organizations, along the lines of the 2007 ILC conclusions on the promotion of sustainable enterprises, with special attention to smallholders, youth, women and indigenous peoples (3.2, 3.3) ☞ Strengthen rural data collection systems ☞ Study the employment implications of biofuel production ☞ Identify employment strategies which have been helpful in creating decent rural employment ☞ Promote effective labour market institutions and employment programmes for rural workers such as employment guarantee schemes ☞ Develop territorial approaches to employment and poverty reduction (1.2, 1.4, 1.5) ☞ Help extend and make accessible education, training and retraining matching the local economy (2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5)
<p>➤ Standards-related action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Analyse gaps in coverage and barriers to ratification and implementation of international standards in rural areas ☞ Promote the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work ☞ Promote the ratification and implementation of relevant labour standards ☞ Promote the extension of national labour laws to all rural workers
<p>➤ Social protection-related action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Promote the extension of social protection to all, and explore the concept of a global social floor (4.2) ☞ Promote occupational safety and health in rural enterprises and communities (6.2) ☞ Promote adequately staffed and resourced labour inspection to ensure OSH in rural enterprises (6.2) ☞ Promote the ILO code of practice <i>HIV/AIDS and the world of work</i> in rural areas (8.2)
<p>➤ Social dialogue-related action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Support the development and strengthen rural employers' and workers' organizations (9.2, 10.1) ☞ Encourage links between rural employers' and workers' organizations and their national and international counterparts ☞ Promote effective social dialogue in rural areas ☞ Build the capacity of labour administration in rural areas, including labour inspection (11.1, 11.2)
<p>➤ Means of delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Use and articulate analytical work, technical cooperation, policy advice, capacity building, advocacy

➤ **Work methodology**

- ✎ Focus on selected interventions, within the ILO's core mandate and comparative advantage
- ✎ Take action rapidly and efficiently
- ✎ Focus on practical interventions
- ✎ Operate in a coordinated manner as concerns the various units involved
- ✎ Cooperate with the relevant international bodies at national and international level

☑ = Delivered. ✎ = Ongoing work. ☞ = Work foreseen for 2011. (...) = Action linked to the indicator in the Programme and Budget for 2010–11 (in bold if major emphasis).

Appendix I

(b) Roles of governments, employers and workers in rural work as outlined in the 2008 ILC conclusions on promoting rural employment for poverty reduction: A synthesis

<p>➤ Governments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Include rural employment issues in national development policies ■ Encourage a coherent and integrated approach to employment promotion and poverty reduction in rural areas among all relevant government ministries and agencies at all levels of government ■ Consult representative organizations of rural employers and workers at national and local levels in formulating and implementing national and local rural development policies ■ Invest adequately in agriculture and rural development ■ Support skills development for farm and non-farm activities ■ Create an enabling environment for sustainable rural enterprises ■ Promote the formalization of work in rural areas ■ Encourage the effective use of public–private partnerships ■ Ensure that national legislation guarantees and defends the freedom of workers and employers ■ Develop social protection for all ■ Review legislation with a view to extending existing employment and labour rights to all ■ Better inform employers and workers of their rights and responsibilities at work, OSH, HIV/AIDS at the workplace, and fundamental principles and rights at work ■ Promote gender equality and women’s empowerment ■ Improve access to basic services in rural areas, including on health, education, energy, transport, technology and communications ■ Ensure adequately staffed and resourced labour inspection ■ Collect and make available reliable, gender-disaggregated data on rural livelihoods
<p>➤ Employers’ organizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Advocate for effective rural economic and social development policies that produce an enabling environment for enterprises ■ Extend representation to rural areas to gain the benefits of cooperative action ■ Act as a coordinator or broker among value chain actors from rural and urban areas ■ Provide direct services to help rural enterprises develop ■ Promote training to improve productivity and good enterprise practices ■ Ensure adequate attention to rural employment and poverty reduction at all stages of Decent Work Country Programmes
<p>➤ Workers’ organizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Organize and represent rural workers, including at sectoral level ■ Extend representation to rural areas, including in the informal economy ■ Assist workers with information, services and education ■ Strengthen participation of women and youth in workers’ organizations in rural areas ■ Promote youth employment ■ Promote OSH in rural enterprises and communities ■ Ensure adequate attention to rural employment and poverty reduction at all stages of Decent Work Country Programmes

Appendix II

Thematic clusters

Thematic cluster	Emphasis	Lead unit(s)	Core units	Participating units
Rural-friendly agribusiness value chains	Rural enterprises, including cooperatives, SMEs, smallholders, youth and women's entrepreneurship	EMP/SEED + EMP/COOP	SECTOR, YEP, GENDER, Social Finance	EMP/MULTI, EMP/SKILLS, SafeWork, TRAVAIL, SEC/SOC, ILO/AIDS, IPEC, NORMES, EIIP, Green Jobs, field offices
Career guidance and relevant skills acquisition in rural contexts	Employment labour market information, relevant skills development, disadvantaged groups	EMP/SKILLS	STAT, EMP/SEED, WIIP, YEP, EMP/POLICY, GENDER, IPEC, ACTRAV, ACT/EMP	SafeWork, TRAVAIL, SEC/SOC, Green Jobs, field offices
Tourism in least developed rural areas	Least developed areas, local ownership, indigenous people	SECTOR	EMP/SEED, EMP/COOP, LED, SafeWork, TRAVAIL, SEC/SOC, ILO/AIDS, EIIP, NORMES	YEP, GENDER, IPEC, ACTRAV, ACT/EMP, field offices
Food security	Food accessibility, employers' and workers' joint work with governments, multi-agency collaboration	SECTOR	SEC/SOC, ACTRAV, ACT/EMP, EMP/SEED, EMP/COOP, agribusiness and fisheries sectors, ILO/AIDS	Green Jobs, CRISIS, EIIP, field offices
Social protection floor	Social security extension, income security, multi-agency collaboration	PROTECTION	SEC/SOC, SafeWork, TRAVAIL, EIIP, IPEC, EMP/COOP, EMP/POLICY	EMP/SKILLS, MIGRANT, GENDER, field offices
A culture of rural occupational safety and health	Cost-effective, voluntary, sustainable practices, link with community development, and primary health care	SafeWork	ILO/AIDS, IPEC, YEP, EMP/SKILLS, TRAVAIL, NORMES, SECTOR, ACTRAV, ACT/EMP	EMP/SEED, EIIP, EMP/COOP, Green Jobs, GENDER, field offices
International labour standards rural coverage	Labour inspection, filling ratification and implementation gaps	NORMES	LAB/ADMIN, IPEC, SafeWork, TRAVAIL, ACTRAV, ACT/EMP, GENDER	SECTOR, EMP/POLICY, EMP/SEED, Green Jobs, field offices
Reaching and giving a voice to rural employers and workers	Reaching, organizing and mobilizing rural employers and workers, including small farmers and informal economy actors	ACTRAV + ACT/EMP	DIALOGUE, EMP/COOP, GENDER, ITC-ILO	EMP/POLICY, EMP/SEED, Green Jobs, SafeWork, TRAVAIL, field offices