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Policy Development Section

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Development Cooperation Segment

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ILO Development Cooperation Strategy 2020–25: Implementation Plan

Purpose of the document

This document presents the implementation plan that accompanies the ILO Development Cooperation Strategy 2020–25. It follows up on the decision by the Governing Body at its 340th Session (October–November 2020) requesting the Office to submit such a plan for discussion and adoption to the Governing Body at its 341st Session (March 2021) and to undertake a mid-term review of the Strategy and the implementation plan in 2023.

ILO development cooperation is a key means of action to carry forward the Organization's ambition of a human-centred recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Framed by the objectives of the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work and the ILO Strategic Plan, ILO development cooperation contributes to the achievement of its policy outcomes and relevant Sustainable Development Goals as defined in the ILO Programme and Budget. The ILO Development Cooperation Strategy and its accompanying implementation plan set out how the ILO can enhance the effectiveness of its development cooperation services to the tripartite constituents in its Member States.

The plan provides an implementation framework, with key deliverables and timelines, outlining the action required in the four pillars of the ILO Development Cooperation Strategy: (i) Services to constituents; (ii) Partnerships for policy coherence; (iii) Partnerships for funding; and (iv) Efficiency, decent work results and transparency.

The Governing Body is invited to endorse the proposed implementation plan and to request the Director-General to consider the Governing Body's guidance when carrying out the plan (see the draft decision in paragraph 15).

Relevant strategic objective: All.

Main relevant outcome: Enabling outcome C: Efficient support services and effective use of ILO resources. Enabling outcome A: for 2022–23: Improved knowledge and influence for promoting decent work.

Policy implications: Yes

Legal implications: None

Financial implications: No

Follow-up action required: Yes

Author unit: Partnerships and Field Support Department (PARDEV).

Related documents: [GB.340/POL/6](#); [GB.341/PFA/1](#); GB.341/PFA/2; GB.341/INS/4; GB.341/INS/7; GB.341/INS/8.

▶ I. Background

1. This document presents the implementation plan that accompanies the ILO Development Cooperation Strategy 2020–25. At its 340th Session (October–November 2020), the Governing Body endorsed the Strategy and requested the Office to submit for discussion and adoption an accompanying implementation plan to the Governing Body at its 341st Session (March 2021) and a mid-term review of the Strategy and the implementation plan in 2023. ¹
2. The plan should be read in conjunction with other items that are submitted to the Governing Body at its current session: the Director-General's Programme and Budget proposals for 2022–23, ² Implications of COVID-19 for delivery of the Programme and Budget 2020–21, ³ COVID-19 and the world of work, ⁴ Update on United Nations reform, ⁵ as well as Proposals aimed at promoting greater coherence within the multilateral system. ⁶

▶ II. Strategic fit of the ILO Development Cooperation Strategy and its implementation plan

3. The ILO's contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development cannot be delivered without development cooperation. Fully aligned with, and supporting the ILO's overarching policy and programmatic framework, ILO development cooperation is a key means of action to achieve the ILO's strategic priorities and provide services to tripartite constituents, especially at national level. The Development Cooperation Strategy 2020–25 directs this effort, notably through giving effect to the 2018 ILC Resolution concerning Effective ILO Development Cooperation in Support of the Sustainable Development Goals, adopted by the 107th Session (2018) of the International Labour Conference. ⁷
4. The guiding objective of the ILO's Strategic Plan for 2022–25 is to apply the provisions of the Centenary Declaration for a human-centred recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The policy outcomes set out in the Programme and Budget for 2020–21 and in the Director-General's Programme and Budget proposals for 2022–23 are closely aligned with the terms of the Centenary Declaration, and place ILO standards, tripartism and social dialogue at the heart of the Organization's action.
5. The ILO policy outcomes set the thematic decent work priorities for the Organization. The Office systematically incorporates the relevant, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)

¹ GB.340/POL/PV, para. 156.

² GB.341/PFA/1.

³ GB.341/PFA/2.

⁴ GB.341/INS/4.

⁵ GB.341/INS/7.

⁶ GB.341/INS/8.

⁷ ILC, [Resolution concerning Effective ILO Development Cooperation in Support of the Sustainable Development Goals](#), International Labour Conference, 107th Session, 2018.

targets and indicators into its results framework, responding in that way to the UN Secretary-General's call for accelerated progress towards achievement of those goals. This enables the Office to track progress on decent work aspects of the SDGs in such areas as poverty reduction, social protection, gender equality, employment, labour rights, productivity and economic growth, enterprise development and value chains.⁸ The policy outcomes therefore embody a gender sensitive, inclusive and environmentally sustainable approach: the bedrock for building back better and leaving no one behind.

6. The ILO's work at the regional and country levels is contextualized in light of constituents' demands as reflected in the conclusions of ILO regional meetings⁹, relevant regional frameworks and Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs). DWCPs are derived from UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UN Cooperation Frameworks) and where relevant aligned with UN socio-economic response plans to the COVID-19 crisis (SERPs). DWCPs are the key vehicles for providing ILO services to constituents, including through programmes, projects and activities supported by development cooperation and partnerships.
7. Therefore, in this overall context, development cooperation supports the ILO-wide strategy to strengthen the constituents' institutional capacity¹⁰ and also contributes to the Office's commitment to continuous improvements in organizational performance and learning.
8. The Strategy implementation plan takes account of such relevant UN frameworks as the December 2020 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review resolution and the UN Funding Compact, particularly with regard to ways in which ILO development cooperation supports constituents' engagement in UN processes and, for instance, in South-South and triangular cooperation.
9. Finally, the principles of effective development cooperation, which stresses the importance of national ownership, a focus on results, inclusive partnerships and transparency and mutual accountability,¹¹ continues to guide ILO development cooperation. This principle was clearly recalled in the resolution concerning effective ILO development cooperation in support of the Sustainable Development Goals, and underpins the subsequent ILO Development Cooperation Strategy 2020–25.

▶ III. Framework of implementation

10. Effective development cooperation requires action in the four areas that make up the ILO Development Cooperation Strategy: (i) Services to constituents; (ii) Partnerships for policy coherence; (iii) Partnerships for funding; and (iv) Efficiency, decent work results and transparency. This section presents an overview of the strategic actions required

⁸ See for instance the summary of relationships between the SDG targets and indicators, and the ILO policy outcomes in Appendix II of the ILO Programme and Budget 2020–21 and the ILO Programme and Budget proposals for 2022–23 (GB.341/PFA/1).

⁹ For information related to ILO regional meetings, see the dedicated [web page](#).

¹⁰ GB.335/INS/9.

¹¹ [Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation](#).

under each of the four areas, specifying how the Strategy will be implemented. Some of these actions present a continuation of related activities that were initiated under the Plan of Action 2019–20, dealt with in the Update on United Nations reform.¹²

- 11.** To monitor progress of the implementation of the Development Cooperation Strategy, the table below presents the key deliverables and the time line for their accomplishment. As development cooperation is a key means of delivery of the ILO programme of work, the monitoring of the implementation plan will, where feasible, rely and build on existing results frameworks. Hence, the actions and deliverables reference, and align with, the outputs and indicators in the Programme and Budget for 2020–21 and the Director-General’s Programme and Budget proposals for 2022–23,¹³ where relevant. This will ensure that progress reporting on the implementation plan will complement, rather than duplicate, the established structure of strategic reporting to the Governing Body that takes place through, inter alia, the programme implementation report, evaluation reports, evaluation synthesis reviews and meta-studies of ILO effectiveness in achieving decent work results,¹⁴ and other ILO action plans.¹⁵
- 12.** A midterm review of the Strategy and the implementation plan will be presented to the Governing Body in 2023. The review will be prepared in close collaboration with the field offices and departments at headquarters, building upon experiences of constituents where relevant, of which it will include concrete examples. This will allow the Governing Body to monitor progress and, as appropriate, to provide guidance for the implementation during the second half of the Strategy timeframe.
- 13.** The learning that will emerge from the implementation of this plan as well as from ILO development cooperation programmes and projects, will also continue to enrich established knowledge production, management and sharing practices, and will also be integral to new knowledge management initiatives, helping the ILO to remain an agile, learning and innovating Organization.
- 14.** Development cooperation demands “whole-of-ILO” involvement. Office-wide, comprehensive and continued strong cooperation between field offices and headquarters will therefore be essential for the implementation of the plan. To this end the Office will put in place an effective system for operationalization oversight, monitoring and reporting on the implementation plan, including an internal management plan outlining responsibilities and timelines. The continued active support of governments and social partners in ILO Member States, together with that of all ILO development partners, is of key importance to the success of the Strategy.

¹² GB.341/INS/7.

¹³ For instance, five indicators proposed for the enabling outcomes in the Programme and Budget proposals for 2022–23 relate to the ILO Development Cooperation Strategy and its implementation plan.

¹⁴ For a list of synthesis reviews and meta-studies, see the dedicated [web page](#).

¹⁵ One example is the [ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2018–21](#), which will be evaluated in 2021.

► Overview of action per area of focus

Focus area 1 – Services to constituents		
Proposed action	Deliverables	Timeline
1.1 Development cooperation services respond to identified capacity-development needs of tripartite constituents based on priorities and institutional capacity-development plans.	Updated guidance tools on the design of capacity-development interventions are produced, including in collaboration with ITC-ILO.	2021–23
	Updated ILO evaluation methodologies and tools are developed, to improve the assessment of capacity-development results, and enhance organizational learning, including in collaboration with ITC-ILO.	2021–25
1.2 Strengthen constituents' ownership of needs-driven DWCPs, development cooperation programmes and projects.	Organizational processes, guidance and tools for DWCPs, development cooperation programmes and projects are enhanced and updated to ensure participation and ownership of constituents, including through social dialogue, in their design, implementation and evaluation.	2021–23
1.3 Support the effective engagement of ILO constituents in UN programming and partnership processes at country level.	Awareness-raising approaches, tools and capacity-building programmes on UN Common Country Analysis, UN Cooperation Frameworks and SERPs are developed and rolled out for constituents in the five regions, including in cooperation with the ITC-ILO.	2021–25
	Awareness-raising approaches and tools on the ILO's comparative advantage and the Decent Work Agenda are developed and rolled out for UN Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams.	2021–25
	Timely technical assistance in relevant policy areas is provided to constituents for their engagement in UN programming processes at the country level. ¹⁶	2021–25

Proposed actions 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 refer in particular to:

- ILO-wide strategy for institutional capacity development (GB.335/INS/9);
- P&B 2020–21, P&B 2022–23 ¹⁷ output 1.1: Increased institutional capacity of employer and business member organizations;
- P&B 2020–21, P&B 2022–23, output 1.2: Increased institutional capacity of workers' organizations;
- P&B 2020–21, P&B 2022–23, output 1.3: Increased institutional capacity and resilience of labour administrations;
- P&B 2020–21, P&B 2022–23, output 2.3: Increased capacity of Member States to engage in a forward-looking international labour standards policy;
- P&B 2022–23, output B.1: Enhanced leadership and strategic direction to ensure organizational impact.

¹⁶ For information on the UN Cooperation Framework cycles per country, see the [United Nations Sustainable Development Group](#).

¹⁷ All references to P&B 2022–23 relate to the Director-General's Programme and Budget proposals for 2022–23 (GB.341/PFA/1).

1.4 Promote and expand capacity development and peer-to-peer exchanges for the promotion of decent work between constituents and other partners through South–South cooperation and South–South and triangular cooperation (SSTC) modalities and partnerships.	Ten new ILO partnerships that promote SSC BAPA+40 principles ¹⁸ to support delivery of ILO policy outcomes are concluded.	2021–25
	New ILO approaches, methodologies and tools for increased results and sustainability of SSC and triangular cooperation partnerships are developed and supplied to ILO constituents and staff, including in cooperation with the ITC–ILO.	2021–25
	Twenty SSC capacity-development initiatives are undertaken with and for ILO constituents, in cooperation with the ITC–ILO.	2021–25
	UN Inter-Agency Mechanism for South–South and Triangular Cooperation integrates good practices from the ILO tripartite partners’ experience into its system-wide policy orientation to United Nations entities.	2021–23

Proposed action 1.4 refers in particular to:

- All policy outcomes of P&B 2020–21 and P&B 2022–23;
- P&B 2020–21, output A.4: Strengthened ILO partnerships within the multilateral system for greater integration of the human-centred approach to the future of work into global debates and policies for achieving the SDGs;
- P&B 2022–23, output A.4: Enhanced partnerships for policy coherence and cooperation to achieve decent work and sustainable development results.

Focus area 2 – Partnerships for Policy Coherence

Proposed action	Deliverables	Timeline
2.1 Promote the ILO’s comparative advantage and Decent Work Agenda in global multi-stakeholder partnerships, alliances and networks, including with the UN at global, regional and country levels.	Multi-stakeholder partnerships, alliances and networks convened by the ILO, or with ILO and its constituents’ participation, integrate the value of, and respect for, international labour standards, tripartism and social dialogue in support of decent work.	2021–25
	Involvement of ILO constituents is promoted in intra- and interregional partnerships for decent work with and between sub-regional and regional organizations as well as with UN system entities.	2021–25
2.2 Increase collaboration with international financial institutions (IFIs) including regional multilateral development banks, for greater policy coherence as well as in pursuit of financing of decent work outcomes at country level. ¹⁹	Three institutional arrangements on themes that advance decent work at regional and global level are in place between the ILO and IFIs and regional multilateral development banks.	2021–25
	The ILO maintains its leadership role in the Initiative on Financing for Development in the Era of COVID-19 and	2021–23

¹⁸ Buenos Aires outcome document of the second High-level United Nations Conference on South–South Cooperation, [A/RES/73/291](#).

¹⁹ See also ILO, Proposals aimed at promoting greater coherence within the multilateral system, GB.341/INS/8.

Beyond, ²⁰ in particular the cluster on “Socioeconomic response: social protection, gender, youth, health, education and human rights,” guiding, where relevant, policy advisory support at global, regional and country levels.

2.3 Develop constituents’ capacities and foster ILO partnerships with development actors within the framework of financing initiatives and integrated national financing frameworks ²¹ that promote decent work.	Capacity-development tools and initiatives are developed for and with ILO constituents on financing for decent work, including in collaboration with ITC–ILO.	2021–23
	National governments and ILO constituents at the country level are supported in development finance initiatives, including in the context of UN Cooperation Frameworks and the UN SDG Fund.	2021–25
	Approach and tools are developed with and for tripartite constituents for assessing opportunities and risks when considering innovative finance mechanisms.	2021–23
2.4 Increase collaboration with the private sector and other non-State actors (such as NGOs or universities) to leverage respective capabilities, knowledge and expertise in pursuit of the ILO’s decent work objectives.	Public–private partnerships, alliances and business networks are secured or facilitated by the ILO to promote decent work objectives.	2021–25

Proposed actions 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 refer in particular to:

- P&B 2020–21, output A.4: Strengthened ILO partnerships within the multilateral system for greater integration of the human-centred approach to the future of work into global debates and policies for achieving the SDGs;
- P&B 2022–23, output A.4: Enhanced partnerships for policy coherence and cooperation to achieve decent work and sustainable development results.

Focus Area 3 – Partnerships for funding

Proposed action	Deliverables	Timeline
3.1 Enhance the integration of ILO development cooperation into the ILO programme of work by mobilizing resources based on clearly defined ILO funding needs per policy outcome, major theme or country/region.	Two structured funding dialogues to mobilize voluntary funding are organized.	2021–23
	An approach to time-bound thematic campaigns is developed and one campaign piloted.	2021–23

²⁰ For more information on this multi-stakeholder initiative, see the dedicated United Nations [web page](#).

²¹ For more information on integrated national financing frameworks, see the dedicated United Nations [web page](#).

3.2 Expand voluntary funding sources and modalities for unearmarked and lightly earmarked funding.	Concrete modalities of unearmarked (Regular Budget Supplementary Account) and lightly earmarked funding are promoted with funding partners in support of policy outcomes, in line with the Funding Compact priorities.	2021–25
	A consolidated approach is applied, specifically to develop large and integrated development cooperation programmes, including Flagship Programmes, ²² making it possible to attract contributions from multiple funding partners.	2021–25
3.3 Expand and diversify voluntary funding sources and partnerships.	Four specific approaches are developed for mobilizing voluntary funding of ILO priorities respectively from the UN, domestic funding providers, private sector ²³ , IFIs and other development finance institutions, within the frameworks of the UN Funding Compact and the Programme and Budget.	2021–23
	Funding strategies are developed for the implementation of DWCP and decent work priorities in UN Cooperation Frameworks at the country level.	2021–23

Proposed actions 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 refer in particular to:

- All policy outcomes of P&B 2020–21 and P&B 2022–23;
- P&B 2020–21, output C.3: Effective development cooperation;
- P&B 2022–23, output A.4: Enhanced partnerships for policy coherence and cooperation to achieve decent work and sustainable development results.

Focus area 4 – Decent work results, efficiency, transparency

Proposed action	Deliverables	Timeline
4.1 Enhance ILO results-based management through improved accountability, monitoring, reporting and transparency in relation to how resources are utilized and results achieved.	Updated approaches, guides and tools on results-based management are put in place and applied.	2021–23
	Improved processes and systems to enable an increased level of compliance of ILO data with OECD-Development Assistance Committee, International Aid Transparency Initiative and UN data cube standards are put in place.	2021–23
4.2 Continuously improve the ILO's organizational performance and learning, and the provision of agile country services by expanding the use of existing, and by piloting new, service models, including reinforcing and deploying the ILO's surge capacity involving headquarters, field offices and ITC-Turin.	Concrete measures, including to improve accountability, are implemented, building on lessons learned and recommendations stemming from evaluations, including reviews of partners such as the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network.	2021–25
	Capacity of ILO staff is enhanced in areas related to partnerships, resource mobilization, quality design and implementation of large and integrated programmes.	2021–23
	New or enhanced service delivery models are piloted, ensuring relevant and timely technical assistance in relevant policy areas at the country level.	2021–25

²² For more information on the ILO's Flagship Programmes, see the dedicated [web page](#).

²³ See also ILO, *Independent Evaluation of ILO's Public-Private Partnerships 2008–18*, 2019.

<p>4.3 Promote organizational performance in meeting ILO and UN accountability standards, including through development cooperation, in areas such as environmental and social sustainability.</p>	<p>Tools are developed to apply the ILO's Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework in business processes and technical areas.</p>	<p>2021-23</p>
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Proposed actions 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 refer in particular to:

- P&B 2020-21, output C.2: Improved results-based programming and management systems;
- P&B 2022-23, output C.1: Improved operational strategies, systems and approaches to increase value for money.

<p>4.4 Enhance communication on, and visibility of, ILO results and the ILO's comparative advantage in partnerships for decent work.</p>	<p>An ILO business case for investing in decent work is developed and disseminated.</p> <p>An approach for costing of ILO's services is developed and communicated.</p>	<p>2021-23</p> <p>2021-23</p>
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▶ Draft decision

- 15. The Governing Body endorsed the implementation plan proposed in document GB.341/POL/4 and requested the Director-General to consider the Governing Body's guidance when carrying out the plan.**