



FIRST ITEM ON THE AGENDA

**Future orientation of the Sectoral
Activities Programme and proposals
for activities in 2008–09****1. Introduction**

1. This paper outlines some strategic concepts for improving the ILO's sectoral approach; encourages communication, collaboration and cooperation on sectoral matters, and proposes strengthening core areas of sectoral work and research and improving procedures for priority setting. It results from the discussions during the November 2006 session of the Governing Body and additional consultations with the tripartite constituents. It is based, in large part, on the strong interest of the social partners in making sectoral activities more relevant to their needs.
2. The context for the document is that, in recent decades, political and technological changes have greatly accelerated globalization, which in turn has had profound impacts on employment and the quality of work. For the ILO and its Decent Work Agenda, the changes are both a challenge and an opportunity. In a world in which democracy and human rights are increasingly recognized, even if weaknesses remain in implementing those rights, the ILO, with its principles of tripartism and social dialogue, is well placed to address the changes.
3. Sectoral activities address issues in a different manner from many other ILO programmes, dealing with specific issues in specific sectors at a specific point in time. As such, they make the ILO's mandate more meaningful to employers' and workers' organizations and governments who are engaged in improving working conditions and developing economic opportunities on a sectoral basis.
4. The ILO must focus efforts on promoting decent work at the level of economic sectors. This is where the social partners and governments are often best placed to shape the changes occurring in the world of work. There are three basic reasons for this:
 - (a) Globalization, economic and industrial restructuring and increased private sector participation have extremely important sectoral dimensions. To remain relevant to the ever evolving state of the world of work, the ILO must not only address global trends, but also the way in which they affect specific sectors.
 - (b) Social dialogue and the efforts of the ILO's constituents to achieve decent work take place primarily within a sectoral framework and on the enterprise level. The sectoral

approach offers an opportunity for governments and the social partners to foster the Decent Work Agenda, in particular within the framework of Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) in line with national priorities.

- (c) There are important sectoral variations in social dialogue and the principal aspects of decent work. Therefore, “one-size-fits-all” policies and programmes are unlikely to be successful. Programmes and activities need to address sector-specific needs in order to promote the Decent Work Agenda through existing structures, institutions and social dialogue mechanisms.

2. Sectoral characteristics differ

5. There are strong variations among sectors, both private and public, with respect to social dialogue, competitive environment, demographic composition of the labour force, vocational and educational profiles, occupations and working conditions. Earnings, social benefits, health and safety concerns and the incidence of child labour vary greatly from one sector to another.

Social dialogue

6. The sectoral characteristics of work, social dialogue and public policies are reflected in the sectoral nature of many employers’ and workers’ organizations, in their interest in sectoral issues, as well as in the fact that governments, employers and workers are often engaged in social dialogue, collective bargaining and other industrial relations practices along sectoral lines. As a result, social dialogue, collective bargaining and other industrial relations practices are most developed at the enterprise or sectoral level.
7. In certain traditional manufacturing industries, such as transportation equipment manufacturing, basic metals and chemicals, employers’ and workers’ organizations are relatively well established and there is a long tradition of social dialogue and collective bargaining. In others, such as agriculture, forestry and fishing, the social partners are not as well organized and consequently face difficult challenges without adequate channels of communication and negotiations. Similarly, there are major differences in service sectors and subsectors. Nobody would argue that characteristics, including social dialogue are identical, for example, with respect to maritime transport, banks, commerce, call centres, construction, education or health.
8. During the last decade, there have been important developments in and expansion of global social dialogue, both formal and informal. They include the negotiation of scores of international framework agreements that are most often built around the principles in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, 1998. Such agreements have been negotiated between global union federations (GUFs) and individual multinational enterprises. In addition, a collective agreement has been negotiated between a group of shipowners/shipmanagers and the International Transport Workers’ Federation.
9. Governments play a multifaceted role in social dialogue. On the one hand, good governance and the maintenance of social peace require the input of the social partners and, on the other, governments themselves are major employers.
10. ILO freedom of association jurisprudence has established that the rights of public employees to organize and bargain must be respected. Government as an employer at national, provincial or local level, may negotiate with workers’ organizations that represent one or more public services or enterprises. Even where this representation encompasses

many different types of public service activities (e.g. administration, waste collection, health services, police, utilities, etc.), negotiations are nevertheless commonly conducted separately for each distinct activity. In the case of major public service sectors such as education and health, negotiation practices and procedures are increasingly differentiated and varied.

Other sectoral differences

11. There are important sectoral differences in key areas of ILO work, such as occupational safety and health, gender, the employment relationship and child labour. Occupational hazards vary widely, such as those encountered in mining and other hazardous industries such as construction and agriculture or repetitive motion injuries that might result from certain factory and office work. There are considerable gender differences in the workforce composition of various sectors. Women tend to predominate in many service sectors and men in manufacturing, although there are important exceptions, for example, with regard to electronics assembly manufacturing. The employment relationship issues vary as well. Migrant labour in agriculture; freelance work in journalism; and unprotected, informal workers in construction, are some examples. Child labour is high in such sectors as agriculture, textiles, commerce, and food, hotel and tourism industries, but rare in health services. Knowledge of sectoral characteristics is critical to achieving results with regard to the strategic objectives of the ILO.

International labour standards

12. To respond to these widely varying characteristics of work, the ILO has adopted over 100 sectoral Conventions and Recommendations, including some of its earliest standards, which address sector-specific challenges in sectors such as agriculture, construction, mining or shipping.¹ In its sectoral work, the ILO has always attached great importance to promoting and facilitating their implementation. These standards are, therefore, complemented by a rich body of codes of practice, guidelines and manuals, which are translated and widely disseminated, for sectors and occupations such as health services, iron and steel production, mining, ports and shipbreaking.² These instruments are the outcome of intense tripartite discussions during meetings of experts to arrive at practical, meaningful advice for sectoral constituents.
13. As this short overview of the wide variations in the characteristics of the workforce and the nature of work in different industries demonstrates, the implementation of the Decent Work Agenda requires a clear understanding of each sector.

¹ Sector-specific standards include the: Maritime Labour Convention, 2006; the Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001 (No. 184); the Safety and Health in Mines Convention, 1995 (No. 176); the Working Conditions (Hotels and Restaurants) Convention, 1991 (No. 172); the Safety and Health in Construction Convention, 1988 (No. 167); the Labour Relations (Public Service) Convention, 1978 (No. 151); and the Nursing Personnel Convention, 1977 (No. 149).

² Recent sectoral guidelines, codes of practice and manuals recently adopted for these sectors include: the *Joint ILO/WHO guidelines on health services and HIV/AIDS*; the code of practice on safety and health in underground coalmines, 2006; the code of practice on safety and health in the iron and steel industry, 2005; Social dialogue in the process of structural adjustment and private sector participation in ports: A practical guidance manual; and Safety and health in shipbreaking: Guidelines for Asian countries and Turkey, 2004.

3. The changing world of work

Globalization

14. The world of work evolves continuously in response to political, social, economic, and technological trends.³
15. Globalization is not only the result of political decisions in various international bodies related to liberalization of trade, finance, and investment rules and developments at bilateral, subregional and regional levels. It also reflects developments at enterprise or sectoral levels. This helps explain the diversity and complexity of globalization.
16. In addition, although some developments may be in specific sectors with an impact on others (for example, the reduction of transport costs related to containerization with its effects on traded goods or the effect on financial markets and institutions of the Internet with their impact on capital movement and investment opportunities), not all technological advances affect all sectors equally or in the same manner. Technology advances, for example, in hotels and tourism although they have a major impact, do not fundamentally transform labour intensive industries into capital intensive industries, while, on the other hand, technology changes in steel and paper have had a great impact on employment levels and skills requirements.
17. The sectoral dimension of globalization is reflected in the fact that these trends leave their traces in virtually all economic activities (and are, therefore, often characterized as global), although regional, national, and sectoral impacts often differ considerably.
18. In the financial services and maritime sectors, for example, truly global markets have developed. Moreover, with the huge advances in communications technologies, the geographical location of these services is no longer a primary consideration. At the other end of the spectrum in the service sector, health, education, and other public services are essentially provided and used locally or nationally. However, global factors such as migration often have an impact on some sectors, such as agriculture, construction or health services or education, that, by their nature, are geographically stable.
19. In manufacturing, global trends have a wide range of effects. The sourcing of many component parts has become strongly “globalized”, but when it comes to the design, production and marketing of final products, the impacts of globalization are conditioned by certain product characteristics. Mass consumption items, such as consumer electronics or clothing, are largely produced for a world market; durable consumer goods such as automobiles are still primarily designed, assembled, and marketed on a regional basis, and for capital goods, such as production machinery, most of the value added still originates in the countries where they are produced.

Effects of restructuring and mergers and acquisitions

20. Economic restructuring, which can be related to such diverse phenomena as privatization or commercialization, outsourcing, mergers and acquisitions, and divestment, quite predictably does not affect all sectors or regions in the same manner or to the same extent.

³ *Changing patterns in the world of work*, Report I(c), International Labour Conference, 95th Session, 2006.

21. Concentration, through mergers and acquisitions, affects virtually all industries and private services to some degree. But there is an important countertrend. Wherever enterprises span large parts of the value added chain (i.e. with a high degree of vertical integration), or largely unrelated industrial activities take place in one large enterprise (i.e. conglomeration), a divestment trend, which aims to reduce the businesses to their core activities, can also be observed.
22. For example, the automobile industry, in recent decades, radically restructured its component sourcing. This led suppliers to concentrate, and created new giant component suppliers out of the formerly “in-house” parts operations. At the same time, transport, and other non-core activities that were previously performed in-house were outsourced. In the end, sales, spin-offs and outsourcing frequently result in the transfer of workers to other sectors, with changes to their wages, working conditions and representation.
23. Another example of the different impacts of concentration in specific sectors can be seen in the oil and textile industries. The major oil companies, as a result of mergers and acquisitions, have become ever more dominant in the worldwide processing and distribution of products or commodities which are virtually indistinguishable from each other (e.g. diesel fuel). In textiles, large international chains have developed, but goods are distributed under distinct brand labels. Moreover, these textiles are made by a multitude of suppliers, some of which are themselves multinational enterprises over which the marketing companies exercise little or no direct control. Such different degrees of vertical integration have strong implications for the quality of working life and for the implementation of the Decent Work Agenda.

Migration

24. Migration also has very diverse sectoral impacts. Some of the skilled and much of the unskilled labour in the construction industries of the developed world consists of migrant labour. Migrants are also increasingly important in agriculture and forestry, industries which are primarily in private hands. Migration is also an important factor in health care, where the public role is much more important. Moreover, in health care, an increasing portion of the most highly skilled professionals are migrants.
25. This high-skill aspect of migration is encountered in sectors as diverse as finance, education, and the information and communication technology industries. This type of migration from developing to developed countries is often referred to as “brain drain”. However, increasingly, migration by sector is also taking place among developing countries.

4. The sectoral dimension of ILO’s work

The ILO’s role

26. The ILO’s promotion of decent work depends crucially on the reliable identification of the trends shaping the world of work and on designing and implementing strategies to influence these trends in a positive direction. More effective global and national institutions and legal frameworks are crucial to promoting decent work.
27. Since the sectoral and enterprise level is the source of essential information and the focus of most social dialogue, careful observation of sectoral developments and detailed knowledge of the realities at the workplace level is necessary.

28. Governments, especially in the developing world, have a major interest in sectoral analyses and activities. Economic development in particular countries is almost invariably based on one or more competitive economic sectors, which governments tend to promote to foster employment creation.
29. The ILO itself plays a very important role in global sectoral dialogue. Its tripartite sectoral meetings have long brought employers, workers and governments together to discuss critical issues of common concern.
30. On the sectoral level, ILO has built a large knowledge base, conducted programmes, collected examples of good practices and developed instruments that have contributed greatly to the promotion of social dialogue and decent work. It has:
- experience and expertise;
 - links with employers' and workers' organizations, with labour ministries as well as other relevant government ministries;
 - networks of contacts within the United Nations system,⁴ the academic community and other organizations, public and private, working in their areas of competence;
 - databases and other collections of sector-specific information; and
 - standards, tool kits and sector-specific guidance (such as codes of practice).
31. Nevertheless, a knowledge base needs to be maintained and there are gaps, which need to be addressed due to major changes in existing sectors or the emergence of new ones. The following proposals intend to intensify collaboration and cooperation on sectoral matters, encourage communication, and propose strengthening core areas of sectoral research.

Strengthening collaboration and cooperation on sectoral issues

32. In order to further its knowledge base, it is suggested that collaboration on sectoral issues within the Organization be further encouraged. In order to foster synergies, it is also proposed that sectoral knowledge be more widely disseminated and a coordinated approach in relation to sectoral research and work be adopted.
33. For years, the Sectoral Activities Branch has collected information on developments in economic sectors, distilling what is relevant to the ILO's work. It has served as a clearing house for the exchange of information on sectoral problems and solutions. Cooperation with many units has been fruitful over the years, but on an informal and uncoordinated basis.
34. In order to strengthen cooperation between units, consideration might be given to the establishment of a focal point or other mechanisms within all sectors to facilitate the flow of information to and from the Sectoral Activities Branch. A similar approach has been successfully applied within the Office in relation to gender issues and for work in the

⁴ Cooperation within the multilateral system include: joint research and advocacy efforts in the postal sector through cooperation with the Universal Postal Union; work on the education sector with UNESCO; collaboration with WHO and IOM on migration in health services; and work on agriculture and fishing with FAO as well with IMO on fishing and shipping.

regions. In future, field specialists in Social Dialogue⁵ will be more directly involved in the implementation of sectoral activities as well as in providing information on countries' priorities and needs and thus contribute to creating stronger links between the international, regional and national levels.

35. In order to deepen the constituent-driven nature of the Programme, this approach would also be extended to reach outside the Office. The approach pursued by the Sectoral Activities Branch to better inform sectoral constituents – the idea behind creating the “one-stop-window” sectoral web site – could, for instance, be complemented in due course by a regular report that sums up new developments in the sectors, the Programme's progress and results of sectoral research.

Strengthening the Office-wide knowledge base on sectoral issues

36. While the Sectoral Activities Branch is the main unit carrying out research on sectoral matters, other parts of the Organization also sometimes examine specific sectors in relation to aspects of their work. In order to avoid duplication of effort and provide added value to constituents, the Sectoral Activities Branch will suggest the formation of a research network on sectoral issues to provide a more complete picture of all relevant work. Governments as well as employers' and workers' organizations are also major sources of information and analysis on sectoral developments and issues. Information thus collected could be presented in a regular report as well as on the web site.
37. This emphasis on sectoral research should be complemented by further efforts to gather sectoral statistics, in close collaboration with the Bureau of Statistics. In some sectors, gaps exist in relation to fundamental data such as sectoral employment statistics as well as reliable data on the impacts of global trends on sectoral employment, employment protection and security, and other aspects of decent work. Given the importance of this data for the orientation of ILO's sectoral approach and the fact that governments, employers, workers and their organizations all look to the ILO as a centre of information and expertise on the economic sectors of most concern to them, more attention could be given to systematic data gathering.

5. A new way forward for the Sectoral Activities Programme

Global dialogue forums

38. It is proposed that, as suggested in GB.297/STM/7/1, shorter, more focused, smaller-scale tripartite or bipartite meetings be introduced to provide additional opportunities for sectoral social dialogue on specific issues (global dialogue forums).
39. Such meetings could draw on the positive experiences of two-day meetings, which focused on the social impact of 11 September 2001 on civil aviation, and the hotels and tourism sectors. Those meetings were short, highly focused and did not involve the production of an in-depth sectoral report.

⁵ The Social Dialogue, Labour Law, Labour Administration and Sectoral Activities Department is composed of two branches. The field specialists in Social Dialogue are part of the field structure of the Social Dialogue, Labour Law, Labour Administration Branch.

40. It is hoped that the mix of these different elements would allow responses to be found to address the relevant issues and requirements of the sectors in a compelling manner. In its Programme and Budget proposals for 2008–09, the Office has therefore proposed to the Governing Body (through its Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee), a strategy that will give particular importance to the following elements:
- (a) key labour and social issues to be addressed by sectoral social dialogue at the international, regional and national levels;
 - (b) enhancement of constituents' capacity and developing opportunities for them to cooperate, share their concerns, address critical issues from a wider knowledge base, identify good practices and negotiate strategies to address sector-specific issues;
 - (c) provision of practical advice and guidance in industries and services of particular importance to governments, employers and workers;
 - (d) promotion of the wide range of sectoral international labour standards in addition to the body of codes of practice and guidelines, to be translated and widely disseminated;
 - (e) development and promotion of user-friendly and gender-sensitive training packages and other practical tools; and
 - (f) rigorous, timely research with a sectoral focus in order to help the Organization and its constituents to understand and address the rapid changes with the associated problems and opportunities in the world economy.⁶

Clustering or grouping of sectors

41. Due to the rapid changes in sectors, including the development of new sectors, as well as the rigidities that were perceived to be part of the approach in recent years, a new process is suggested for the purpose of improving the degree and quality of consultation, to better integrate international, regional and national elements, and to facilitate the setting of priorities. This is intended to ensure that ILO methods of work respond to changes in the way that constituents, particularly employers' and workers' organizations, develop their own social dialogue. The automatic rotation of activities among 22 sectors is no longer seen to be adequate. It can result in a long delay before urgent sectoral issues can be addressed and it oversimplifies and underestimates the actual number of sectors. There is a perceived need to be able to address, with a larger number of choices, specific sectoral issues where and when opportunities arise, in order to achieve greater impact and contribute more fully to the advancement of the ILO's strategic objectives. In an increasingly complex constellation of sectors, it is necessary to overcome the idea that "one-size-fits-all". Sectors would remain distinct and this manner of grouping sectors would not, automatically, lead to an increase in cross-sectoral approaches.
42. At its last session in November 2006, some Committee members expressed their interest in clustering or grouping sectors rather than retaining the current system of rotation, which was considered too rigid. Such an approach might offer an alternative to the current rotation system, if priority means of action and focus could be determined for each grouping or cluster. Subsequent informal consultations showed interest in this concept from employers' and workers' organizations as well as from government representatives.

⁶ For the full strategy proposal please refer to the Director-General's Programme and Budget proposals for 2008-09 (GB.298/PFA/13).

43. Grouping sectors could also allow the constituents with the Office to consider sectors not currently addressed in the framework of the Sectoral Activities Programme. In view of the continued requests by constituents for the ILO to give attention to sectors not covered by the current definitions, it is suggested that groupings or clusters should not only incorporate the current 22 sectors, but also include additional, not yet targeted, sectors, subsectors or occupational groups (such as call centres and IT services). This would not imply that more activities could be undertaken, but would provide greater flexibility in choice of sectors in responses to changes within sectors and the specific issues to be addressed.
44. The basis of such groupings or clusters could roughly correspond to the groupings found in the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC) and its various revisions. In cases where social dialogue contexts differed and clustering or grouping could lead to a blurring of sectoral focus, some adjustments might be needed.
45. Finally, clustering or grouping sectors may foster collaboration to allow sectors to learn from each other and to provide a clearer picture of emerging trends and their characteristics vis-à-vis specific sectors.

Strengthening consultation and priority setting

46. The positive experiences in the course of a five-year process of tripartite sectoral consultations and negotiations⁷ that led to the record vote in favour for the adoption of the Maritime Labour Convention 2006,⁸ demonstrated the value of constituents' involvement in and control of consultation and preparation processes. It also produced a strong commitment from constituents to ratification and implementation.
47. In order to facilitate the advancing of proposals and the participation of constituents in this process, a new mechanism for consultation is suggested in order to provide greater opportunity for constituents to ensure that their suggestions and concerns are reflected in the proposals put forward by the Office to the Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues (STM Committee) at its March session preceding the start of a new biennium.
48. To this effect, steering committees could be formed for each cluster or grouping. These could meet annually; with minimal cost to the Office, to prepare concrete proposals as a basis for discussion in the STM Committee.
49. Steering committees would cover the whole range of Sectoral Activities and do so with the necessary depth and specificity. Steering committee members could include employer and worker members, assisted by their group secretariats, as well as governments represented through regional coordinators or others designated by them. The Office would assist the steering committees in their work, including through relating the work to DWCPs so that this work could be effectively linked at the country level as well as with the strategic

⁷ Following the adoption of the ILO Joint Maritime Commission's Geneva Accord, fundamental concepts and draft provisions were examined by the High-Level Tripartite Working Group on Maritime Labour Standards, which met four times and its Tripartite Subgroup, which met twice. In addition, a Tripartite Intersessional Meeting on the Follow-up to the Preparatory Technical Maritime Conference had been organized in preparation for the International Labour Conference (Maritime Session).

⁸ 314 votes in favour; no votes against; 4 abstentions.

objectives of the ILO. The Office could use the committees' proposals for action as a basis for preparing final proposals to be submitted to the STM Committee.

- 50.** In addition to discussing programme proposals for each grouping or cluster to be submitted to the STM Committee, steering committees could also play a role in overseeing the progress of programmes and providing input on the work of the Office within each sectoral grouping, as well as propose topics for meetings budgeted, but not yet defined. Steering committee members would transmit information to their respective groups or governments. The steering committees might also be able, between the Governing Body sessions, to put urgent or compelling priorities to the officers of the STM and through them to the officers of the Governing Body, if necessary.

Building on success – Learning from the past

- 51.** Past successes should not be disregarded in moving towards a new and different way of working. Given the generally positive experience with the approach to addressing sector-specific problems with a mix of action programmes and meetings, it is suggested that these components should be retained.
- 52.** In the last biennium, the action programme for the textiles sector brought about constructive dialogue among the social partners in Morocco and culminated in the adoption of a national, integrated economic and social strategy to promote the competitiveness of the industry in the context of the phasing out of the Multi Fibre Arrangement (MFA). Thanks to the successful preparatory work, external funds were raised for its implementation and a national bipartite industrial council created.
- 53.** In Kyrgyzstan, the action programme in agriculture provided a remarkable example of the strengthening of social partner organizations, their outreach to the informal economy and the establishment of tripartite social dialogue mechanisms at national, regional and local levels. At the national level, these efforts led to the formation of a Committee of Agricultural Employers, the establishment of a National Commission on Safety and Health in Agriculture and a decision to create tripartite committees both at regional level and in every local administrative unit in Kyrgyzstan to deal with OSH in agriculture and related social issues affecting farmers.
- 54.** The action programme on education (2004–07), helped to move towards improvements in the status of teachers in several regions. Following ILO regional policy dialogue forums in Latin America and southern Africa, the constituents in Brazil organized a national policy dialogue forum to coincide with the adoption of a new national funding law for education. In Lesotho, the Government and social partners are considering good practices developed in South Africa on social dialogue mechanisms as a basis for discussions for possible technical cooperation.
- 55.** The Portworker Development Programme (PDP), an important package of materials, forms the basis of an active programme to help in the modernization of ports. It is being implemented in connection with substantial port reform activities to improve cargo handling performance, working conditions and practices and safety, status and welfare of port workers. The PDP has been used in more than 50 countries to ensure that social dialogue is at the heart of the process so that reforms can be fair and effective. Although work is conducted in a specific, well-defined sector, due to the importance of the port industry for the economic development of countries, these activities benefit trade facilitation in general as well as national and world economies.

56. A new approach, tested in 2006, to include meeting topics that deal with developing challenges that have not yet fully impacted on the specific sectors, has been widely welcomed. The Tripartite Meeting on Social and Labour Implications of the Increased Use of Advanced Retail Technologies provided a tripartite setting for governments, employers and workers to anticipate challenges resulting from nascent technologies and to jointly reach conclusions on how best to deal with these. This new orientation in meeting topics helps those taking managerial decisions in enterprises and the sector as a whole to gain insights into the developing regulatory and labour relations contexts and to make informed decisions with regards to development strategies that foresee and facilitate successful change. At the same time, such meetings also allow governments and workers to indicate specific concerns at an early stage and to contribute to achieving common ground.
57. Sectoral activities, incorporating varying and targeted approaches can focus on concrete and real concerns of the constituents that have real impact. For example a recent meeting of experts adopted a new code of practice on safety and health in underground coalmines. In less than a year, a number of countries, for which this industry is key, have indicated their interest in applying the code to improve working conditions in this hazardous industry. Sectoral activities thus provide a unique contribution to attaining the overall strategic objectives of the ILO. Additional flexibility to respond quickly to new challenges, opportunities and new sectors will further enhance their value and role.

Decent Work Country Programmes – Linking the international with national and regional levels

58. The introduction of action programmes preceded the Organization-wide move towards focusing on the national level and making DWCPs the main delivery vehicle for the ILO's programme and budget. Sustainability of national efforts will depend on their links with DWCPs and on the commitment of constituents themselves. DWCPs are expected to fully take into consideration sectoral issues and national level work should be taken on board in planning and priority setting on sectoral work in headquarters.
59. The Office could provide steering committees with timely information on the needs and priorities of countries, as provided through the ILO field structure, in particular social dialogue specialists as well as those of constituents. It is suggested that steering committees would make recommendations on countries to be targeted, before the biennial planning cycle commences. This would make it easier for the Office to liaise with national constituents and field offices in the framework of country programming and ensure support on the ground for the selection of countries.

6. Implementing changes

60. Through the new orientation of sectoral activities, it is hoped that the following issues can be addressed:
- Building a long-term planning process, that would reach beyond a single biennium, in order to determine priorities and effect change. The goal would be to render planning more flexible, timely and responsive.
 - Responding in a more timely and flexible manner to needs and opportunities in a wider range of sectors.
 - Strengthening the sectoral component and coherence of the ILO's overall work within headquarters and with the field, in particular with DWCPs.

- Associating employers' and workers' organizations, engaged in specific sectors, with the ILO's work in order to have maximum impact on the real conditions at the workplace.
 - Building an adequate knowledge base and creating better links with constituents on a wide range of information, materials, capacity building and training.
 - Make a strong contribution to the advancement of ILO strategic objectives by carrying them forward in a way that both makes a real difference at the workplace and increases constituents' involvement.
- 61.** Such fundamental changes cannot be implemented immediately. A short transition period will be needed during which the regular work of the Office will carry on as the steering committees are established and begin to function.
- 62. *The Committee on Sectoral and Technical Meetings and Related Issues may wish to invite the Governing Body to:***
- (i) recommend that fuller account be taken of the sectoral dimension of economic life and development throughout the Office and that cooperation and coherence in this area be improved so as to advance ILO strategic objectives more effectively;*
 - (ii) encourage the incorporation of sectoral considerations into the DWCPs and relate that work to the action programmes; and*
 - (iii) taking account of available resources, approve the setting of priorities through the creation of clusters or groupings of sectors with steering committees. Such committees would be composed of constituents and assisted by the Office, and would propose and review sectoral activities and assist the STM Committee and the Governing Body to carry out their work.*

Geneva, 6 February 2007.

Point for decision: Paragraph 62.